

- A GRAIN OF MUSTARDSEED -

Dear Friends in Christ:

May 2023

May brings us to the end of Easter's forty days and with that ending, the Church has historically bid us ask an Eastertide prayer of renewal both for ourselves and all of God's creation. We do well to remember that when most turned their backs on Christ on the Cross, the very rocks themselves cried out in worshipful anguish, quaking and rending at the horror of man's sin and the wonder of God's love.

"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." (Romans 8:22-23)

Rogationtide, from the Latin "rogare..to ask or pray" is our participation in that fervent prayer for the redemption of the cosmos in anticipation of Christ's Ascension and Session at the right hand of His Father. On Rogation Sunday we process in solemn prayer in our own little corner of creation, bless seeds for planting and pray for Risen King to bring about the consummation of His victory over death and sin. The four days of Rogationtide are the proper summation of the Easter season: We give thanks to God for Christ's Glorious Resurrection, His corresponding defeat of death through His cross and empty tomb and the access we have to re-birth in this life and eternity in the next because of it all. The Eastertide Epistles and Gospels reveal the two-fold nature of the season's message in their testimony to the many proofs of Jesus' rising from the grave and the 'risen,' renewed, changed life that is expected from His disciples because of it. The Epistle for Rogation Sunday reminds us of this: **"Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." (St. James 1:22)**. We cannot call ourselves Christians, say 'yes' to the basic demands of our faith (belief in the tenets of the Creeds, daily prayer, Bible reading and study, offerings and deeds of charity, attendance in Church on Sunday and on the major festivals of the Church Year) and then turn around and not perform them. After Rogation Sunday comes the celebration of Christ's glorious Ascension and so I want to commend the worthy celebration of that feast to you all. We always keep this Thursday feast with morning and evening services, the evening Communion service followed by fellowship at the Rectory. Do remember that our keeping of these feasts is analogous to confessing the great events of our salvation in the Creeds ("...*The Third Day he rose again from the dead: He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty...*". To celebrate Easter, Rogation, the Ascension, etc., is to acknowledge the truth of these sacred events and to praise God for what He has offered us through them. And just what is it that God offers us? He offers us *His* victory over sin and death. It is only through Christ's victory that we gain victory, that we become "more than conquerors" on this earthly pilgrimage.

Yours in Christ, Edward L. Rix

ASCENSION DAY SERVICES & DESSERT PARTY- MAY 18th

On the Feast of our Lord's Ascension we will have two services of Holy Communion, 10:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (the evening service with hymns). Please note that the Ascension, one of the principal days of the Church calendar, is a day of obligation (mandatory Church attendance) for all Christian folk. After the evening service we will have a Potluck Dessert Party at the Rectory (723 Braeburn Lane). All are invited!

SEXTON AND VERGER

Our new caretaker, Timothy Broussard, has begun his duties as of the last week in April. Timothy, a native of Oregon and graduate of Oregon State University, is no stranger to our area, having completed a Master of Divinity degree at Westminster Seminary in Glenside. We are blessed to have such a hard-working and well-educated young man on our ministry team and pray that Timothy's time among us will be of great benefit both to the parish and to Him as he continues to discern the Lord's larger call upon his life with regards to his vocation. Do continue to welcome him and encourage him as he gets settled and sets-to his daily tasks. And thanks to all of you who have offered furnishings for the caretaker's apartment (Jon Wistar, Andy Wilson, Sierra Rix) and particularly Sierra and Benjamin Rix for moving and setting up many of these items.

WHITSUNDAY AND WHITSUNTIDE

The feast of Pentecost coincides with Memorial Day weekend this year and as we conventionally give our choir that weekend off, our celebrations will be somewhat subdued this year. Nevertheless, please plan on joining your brethren in worship on May 28th at one of our Sunday services and remember that, between the Prayer Book's appointed observations (Whitmonday and Whittuesday, the Whitsun Embertide) and our regular Thursday mid-week mass, there are Communion services each day of the week following at 10:00 am in the Lady Chapel. What better way could there be to keep one of the principal feasts of our Christian Year? With the choir returning for their final engagement before the summer break the following week, we will be sure to keep the feast of Trinity Sunday with great devotion.



"The kingdom of God...is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it." *St. Luke 13:18-19*