

# ~ The Epistle ~

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NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST  
ANGLICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CANADA • TRADITIONAL ANGLICAN CHURCH  
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THE MOST REVEREND SHANE B. JANZEN, ARCHBISHOP & RECTOR

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## Lent begins

WITH the Blessing and Distribution of Ashes on Ash Wednesday, we have entered into the holy Season of Lent. Lent is the ideal time to focus our mind, soul, and body on the things of God. It is a Season in which we are called back to the things which matter most; it is a time of reckoning, repentance, and renewal. I urge you to participate in the prayers, worship, and devotions offered to us by the Church during the next forty days. Only by entering into the fullness of Christ's Passion and Death may we hope to enter into the fullness of His Resurrection.

Lent provides each of us an opportunity to reflect on our lives and on God's place in it. We are exhorted to examine our thoughts, words, and deeds in light of His commandments; and to undergo a *metanoia* -- a change of heart -- that our old lives may be transformed into the likeness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Lent also draws us back to a simpler life -- a life focused on God and His saving actions in our lives; principally the salvation wrought for us by the Passion and Death of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Through fasting and self-denial we are provided opportunities to spend time with God in prayer and meditation. By forsaking some temporal nourishment and entertainment we are able to partake of eternal nourishment -- fortifying our spiritual lives by reading and meditating on God's holy Word, and feeding on the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ in Holy Communion. We are reminded in Scripture, "Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God."

Lent is also a time for quiet. It is difficult to find a time and a place in which to enjoy some solitude and quiet these days. Yet this is essential to the spiritual life. I would encourage

you to make time and space in this Lent for quiet prayer and meditation. Like regular exercise and a healthy diet, regular time spent in prayer and meditation on God's holy Word will nourish and strengthen your spiritual life, and enable you to live a more peaceful, secure, and happy existence.

At Saint John's we are offered a number of ways to enhance our spiritual lives during Lent and to progress along our journey to God: Mass on Thursdays and Holy Days; our Lenten Series on 'The Creed' by Bishop Robert Barron at our Thursday morning Study Group; and on Fridays, the Stations of the Cross at 5:00 pm. Most importantly, the Sacrament of Penance (Confession) is available throughout Lent; and I encourage you to avail yourself of this Sacrament. We are all sinners and fall short of the glory of God; we need to seek His forgiveness and receive His pardon.

We will conclude the Season of Lent with Palm Sunday on April 10; followed by Maundy Thursday on April 14; Good Friday on April 15; and Holy Saturday on April 16; with the joyous celebration of Easter Day on April 17. With all these Services and commemorations before us, it is all the more important for us to prepare ourselves spiritually in this holy Season.

Finally, do not forget to practice acts of charity and self-discipline in memory of our Lord's great act of love and self-denial on the Cross. 'Give up' something in order to 'give of' yourself to God and others. Your Father in heaven sees what you do 'in secret' and will reward you, both in this life and in the life to come.

So, as I did from the altar on Ash Wednesday, I invite you, "in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance, by prayer, fasting, and self-denial, and by reading and meditation upon God's holy Word." (BCP, p. 612)

Archbishop Shane B. Janzen

## GOD'S GRACE: STRENGTH IN WEAKNESS

by Archbishop Shane Janzen

EACH of us at various times in our lives is faced with temptation. It may take the form of desire for material goods or comforts that go beyond our needs; it may be pleasures of the flesh (not just sexual but also food and drink, or the desire to escape life's demands through worldly entertainments and distractions); it may even be a temptation to doubt God's love or providence in our lives.

We may be tempted by our own pride, believing that we, and we alone, are capable of dealing with life in all its circumstances. Fortunately, God knows us better than we know ourselves. Even in the face of temptation, He provides a way through it – not just around it, or over it, but power to overcome it – even the most subtle of temptations. For God offers us the supernatural power of His grace.

The grace of God is not wholly understood, for it is a power that emanates from God beyond our human comprehension; beyond any power or strength of will known to man. What we do know is that by means of God's grace we are given the strength and the ability to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and to walk in the way of God.

But there is a catch to God's grace – you have to use it! Grace, like faith, is a divine gift. As Christians, we can be guilty of receiving 'the grace of God in vain'. This is what Saint Paul is writing about in today's Epistle reading.

How then can a Christian be guilty of receiving the grace of God in vain? We may have an intellectual understanding of the Christian Faith but not have the Word of God written on our hearts. Knowledge of the faith, even with pious devotion, does not pass for living faith. We must 'walk the talk', as they say' we must 'live the faith' we profess.

On the flip-side, we may accept the grace of God in vain if we are so caught up by and with the love of God that we live without the power of God's love in our lives. The Passion and Cross of Christ can be or can become for some merely a moving spectacle, an event in time which passes away without subduing our will; or, indeed, without transforming our love of God into the service or sacrifice that makes that love real. Our Lord said: "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and not do what I tell you? (*St. Luke 6:46*) Unless the Cross of Christ produces in us both the desire and the will to live our faith in God each day, then we may indeed be guilty of accepting the grace of God in vain.

Yet again, we may accept the grace of God in vain if we do not allow our conversion in Christ to rule in every part of our lives – work, leisure,

relationships with others, our political and social associations, our membership in the Body of Christ. If we live as 'Sunday Christians' only; if we compartmentalize our faith such that it has no influence on our daily conduct or transactions, then we have failed to receive the grace of God as it was meant to be received. And the love of Christ may not have taken root within us.

Lent is an opportunity to examine our walk in faith. It is a time in which to ask ourselves the tough questions; and it is a Season in which to renew our faith and start living afresh the life of a true disciple of Christ. We are given an opportunity and a time in which to put away old habits, old sins, our old selves; and turn back to Christ. An opportunity to place before God our worldly cares and concerns which rob us of peace; to place before God our whole lives, the good and the bad, the love and the sin. An opportunity to ask God for His grace and mercy to turn our lives around, back to Him; and so be worthy of His Passion and Cross.

Throughout this holy Season, our little acts of self-denial, our little acts of kindness, our times of prayer and meditation, are intended to remind us that we do not truly belong to this world at all. We have been bought with a price; and our lives are hid with Christ in God. We have freely renounced this world in order to affirm the claims of the other, unseen world with its entirely different set of values and standards. We have chosen God, and God's way; or, more accurately, God has chosen us, and shown us the way to happiness and fullness of life.

As Saint Paul so eloquently writes in his Epistle to the Corinthians, the life of a Christian is one marked by contradictions. It is a life lived in contradiction to the standards, the ideals, the pursuits of the world. It is marked by a constant 'No' to the world, the flesh, and the devil, and a constant 'Yes' to all that is true and lovely and good – that is, to all that is of God.

As the expression states: 'We live in the world but not of the world'; and this apparently paradoxical attitude to life is at the heart of the Christian vocation.

Our Lord withstood the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil to restore the obedience of fallen man to the commandments of God. Our Lord offers to each of His disciples the grace to withstand these same temptations; and to offer in the place of sin and death, blessings and life. In His Body and Blood offered for us and to us, our Lord gives us sacramental grace to live the life we are called to live. And the grace of God is powerful; it is capable of transforming the lives of sinners and shaping the lives of saints.

## *"Confession is Good for the Soul"*

FREQUENTLY in the Gospels we read of people bringing sick and possessed loved ones to our Lord for healing. Jesus likened Himself to a physician -- one who has come to heal the sick and to save the sinner. Our Lord viewed evil and sin as a sickness, one which afflicts the very soul of man, even unto death -- eternal death.

The sickness of the soul is still with us; each of us stumble and fall -- wounded by our sins. But even in our sins the Cross of Christ stands before us and we are reminded that He died for us that we might turn from the death of sin and live only unto God. In our sinfulness, Christ provides to His Church the Sacrament of Penance, or Confession, whereby the sinner receives assurance of God's pardon and mercy; is reconciled with the Church, the Body of Christ; and is restored to the life of grace. It is significant to note that the *Book of Common Prayer* places the Sacrament of Penance, called 'A Form of Confession and Absolution', amidst the Ministry to the Sick (see p. 581) for Confession is truly a remedy for spiritual illness caused by sin.

The Sacrament of Penance goes by many names, yet all of them are one and the same: for the Sacrament is, in the words of the Fathers of the Church, the 'medicine of the soul' and the 'remedy for sin'.

It is called the *sacrament of conversion* because it makes sacramentally present Jesus' call to conversion, the first step in returning to the Father from Whom one has strayed by sin.

It is called the *sacrament of penance*, since it consecrates the sinner's personal steps of conversion and penance.

It is called the *sacrament of confession*, since the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament. Confession is good for the soul, as the saying goes; and the acknowledgment of our sins before God and His minister is an important element in our spiritual healing.

It is called the *sacrament of forgiveness*, since by the priest's sacramental absolution God grants the penitent "pardon and peace".

It is called the *sacrament of reconciliation*, because it imparts to the sinner the love of God Who reconciles us to Himself and to the community of believers which His Church.

In this Sacrament our offences are blotted out, our sins forgiven, and our souls healed from the disease of sin. We acknowledge and confess our sins, confident in the Lord's forgiveness and mercy. We acknowledge evil in our lives but confess the power of the Cross of Christ to overcome sin and to conquer evil.

Sickness not only carries with it pain, weakness, and suffering -- all conditions associated with the body; but may also carry with it anguish, self-absorption, self-pity; and even despair causing one to turn away from God. On the positive side, illness can also lead to a greater maturity, a stronger faith, and a greater appreciation of God's blessings in our lives. It can lead the soul to search more deeply for God and to return to Him.

Holy Scripture places before us men and women of faith who lived out their suffering and sickness in the presence of God. It is before God that they placed their pain and illness; and it is to God that they implored healing. In the Scriptures we find the mysterious link of illness to sin and evil; but we also find the link to conversion, healing, and wholeness.

The Gospels record that our Lord was deeply concerned with sickness and human suffering. Over and over again He healed those who came to Him; over and over again those who touched Him, and were touched by Him, were healed and made whole again. We read that "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases." So linked was human sickness and suffering to the problem of sin and evil, that our Lord commissioned His disciples to go forth in His Name to heal the physically and spiritually sick; and to lift the hearts of those weighed down by sin and evil.

Finally, in the midst of our struggles with illness, suffering, and pain, we must never lose sight of the fact that our Lord came not only to heal individuals of sickness and disease; but to announce a more radical healing: the victory over sin and death. On the Cross, Christ took upon Himself the whole weight of evil and took away the "sin of the world." By His Passion and Death, our Lord has given a new meaning to human suffering, in all its dimensions.

O HEAVENLY Father, I confess that I have sinned greatly against thee in thought, word, and deed, and have done that which is wrong in thy sight. I ask thee to forgive me my sins, and to give me grace always to resist temptation and to do thy holy will; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen.

O GOD, whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive: Receive my humble petitions; and though I be tied and bound with the chain of my sins, yet let the pitifulness of thy great mercy loose me; for the honour of Jesus Christ, our Mediator and Advocate, who with thee and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest, ever one God, world without end. Amen.



## SPIRITUAL LIFE

His life drawn from the Holy Spirit,  
who raised Jesus from the dead  
and turns the whole world into a new creation.

The Spirit within you will bear fruit  
of simplicity and goodness, modesty and joy,  
sobriety and gentleness.

He will give you interior freedom  
and bring your love to perfection.  
He will make you into a new person.

So don't carry on a futile battle against yourself  
don't divide yourself into good and evil.  
Resist the temptation to analyse yourself –  
turn your attention to the Lord instead,  
and be deeply receptive.  
Accept yourself in His light  
and concentrate on the mission  
you have to accomplish.

God's Spirit will bring you to simplicity  
in an undivided dedication  
to Him and to your fellowmen.  
He gives you no programme  
but the chance of turning yourself towards love  
hour by hour.

And so spiritual life is not a burden  
but a liberating vocation.  
It is much more a matter of simplifying  
than of complicated methods  
and extraordinary performances.

In special cases it can be good  
to impose some specific discipline on yourself.  
Your daily life among your brethren and others  
in service, openness and fidelity  
is the usual form of asceticism,  
which is both effective and enough.

Every day look at the way you are living  
in the light of God's Word.  
Let it warm you when you are cold,  
encourage you when you are disappointed.  
You must not only be a hearer of the Word –  
you must also bring it to fulfillment.  
Blessed are you if you meditate upon it  
daily in your heart:  
you will be like a tree by the running water,  
whose branches will stay fresh and green,  
and they will keep bringing forth new fruit.

Spiritual life will develop  
only in a climate of silence.  
Bring the warring voices within you to  
stillness.

Create an atmosphere of tranquility and silence  
even within your daily living.  
You will surely have realized  
that you cannot become a spiritual person  
without an interior discipline in your  
dealings with the world.  
Don't let yourself be trapped into the unrest  
that comes from excessive talking and noise.

Be discerning in your choice  
of what the television, radio and papers  
offer you.  
Without a personal control  
on your imaginations and emotions  
you will undermine your spiritual strength  
and lessen your changes  
of genuinely meeting and loving others.

You will find a source of wisdom  
and spiritual joy in the feasts of the Church.  
The year is crowned with the signs  
of God's goodness.  
If you celebrate these feasts with the Church  
then your own life and suffering,  
your enthusiasm and work,  
your dying and rising  
and your waiting for the Lord  
will receive significance and impact.

Never be misled by the thought  
That after failing and sinning  
There can be no forgiveness,  
Look critically at your own shortcomings,  
But be sure that with the Lord  
There is always abundance of redemption.

Your way through life  
will not remain the same.  
There are years of happiness  
and years of suffering.  
There are years of abundance,  
and years of poverty,  
years of hope, and of disappointment,  
of building up, and of breaking down.  
But God has a firm hold on you  
through everything.

There are years of strength  
and years of weakness,  
years of certainty, years of doubt.  
It is all part of life,  
and it is worth the effort  
to live it to the end  
and not give up before it is accomplished.

You need never stop growing.  
A new future is always possible.  
Even on the other side of death  
a new existence waits for you  
in the fullness of that glory  
which God has prepared for you  
from the beginning.

*~ Rule for a New Brother.*

## STATEMENT ON UKRAINE AND THE DOCTRINE OF JUST WAR

Archbishop Shane B. Janzen  
Primate - Traditional Anglican Church

THE Traditional Anglican Church worldwide stands in solidarity with the people of Ukraine. We pray for peace; we pray for the end of the war, aggression and violence from Putin's Russian forces; we pray for a free, united and independent Ukraine.

As Primate, I invite all the Bishops, Clergy and People to continue prayers for President Volodymyr Zelensky, for the Ukrainian people, and their armed forces, as they defend their country and freedom. I would also ask as many as are able to contribute to the Red Cross or other humanitarian organizations helping the thousands of Ukrainians forced to seek safety in neighbouring countries.

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GOD'S call is always to peace; but it is also to justice and mercy. When those latter ideals are trampled upon with force and impunity; when innocent lives are threatened, and the peace and security we love is taken from us, then war sadly becomes inevitable and even necessary. It is often the best we can do when faced with great evil in an imperfect world.

In *Ecclesiastes 3*, we read: "To everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace." In *John 15:13*, our Lord told His disciples: "Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." We are called upon by Holy Scripture to be a people of peace not lovers of violence; we are called upon to seek every means possible to promote peace and reconciliation. We must be slow to resort to arms; but we must also not be afraid to do so when it is necessary – for evil cannot go unchecked.

The 5th century Church Father, Saint Augustine, was the first Christian theologian to put forth what we now know today as the 'doctrine of just war'. It is founded upon the Gospel of Christ, and the demands of that Gospel for peace, justice, sacrifice, reconciliation, and the defense of the poor, the weak, and the down-trodden. It recognizes the reality of evil and hatred in the world, while always seeking for peace and understanding. The doctrine of just war sets out the necessary requirements and limitations for armed conflict between nations within the terms of the Gospel of peace; and these are:

- The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave and certain;
- All other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;
- There must be serious prospects of success; and
- The use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. 'The mere fact that war has regrettably broken out does not mean that everything becomes licit between the warring parties'.

Into the context of this doctrine of just war, individuals and nations must judge the actions of their leaders and that of their enemies before embarking on the most supreme and the most destructive of humanity's endeavours – that of war. Unfortunately, the modern age of warfare has totally and radically changed the nature of war. It is now war whose casualties are not soldiers, whose targets are not military, and whose weapons are used against innocent lives for malevolent ends.

Holy Scripture records our Lord Jesus Christ: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God." (*St. Matthew 5:9*) Jesus commands us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us. And, so we do; we pray that those people intent on war and hatred, those governments and their leaders intent on aggression and violence, may turn from their evil ways and seek for the true face of God. The God, not of hatred but of love, not of vengeance but of reconciliation, not of war but of peace. We pray too for our political and military leaders, for those serving in the Armed Forces, and for all who take counsel for the nations, that peace and justice may prevail.

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O GOD, who makest wars to cease, and by thy mighty arm dost overthrow the adversaries of them that put their trust in thee: Come to the help of thy servants in Ukraine who humbly call upon thy mercy; that being delivered from the violence of the enemy, they may evermore praise thee with thanksgiving; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

ALMIGHTY God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed: Kindle, we pray thee, in the hearts of all peoples the true love of peace, and guide with thy pure and peaceable wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth; that in tranquility thy kingdom may go forward, till the earth is filled with the knowledge of thy love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

## MY LENTEN RULE OF LIFE

*The Season of Lent affords Christians an opportunity to renew their faith and devotional life. You are invited to fill out this Lenten Rule of Life, sign it, and keep it close at hand as a guide for your Lenten observance this year. This Lenten Rule of Life is your free offering of devotion, self-denial, and sacrificial giving that you may continue to grow in grace and Christian discipline, to the glory of God and the deepening of your own life of faith, prayer and service.*

### I UNDERTAKE, AS MY LENTEN RULE, THE FOLLOWING:

1. I will set aside the following time daily for Prayer and Meditation:

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2. I will attend the following Service(s) in addition to my usual Sunday worship:

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3. I will read a chapter or portion of the Bible daily or weekly:

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4. I will read at least one religious or devotional book during Lent, other than the Bible:

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5. I will serve others by undertaking the following volunteer activities:

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6. I will give up the following food(s), activities, or pleasures during Lent:

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7. My Lenten fast will take the following form in the meals I eat during this Season:

*[The Lenten Fast is generally observed by simple, traditionally meatless, meals; the exact nature of the fast is up to you. Medical diets must be observed; nutritional needs should not be ignored. Sundays in Lent are not days of fasting and abstinence.]*

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8. My Lenten Offerings I shall devote to:

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**ALL THIS I UNDERTAKE TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND BY HIS GRACE.**

**CALENDAR OF THE  
CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE EVANGELIST**

**MARCH 6** FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT  
MATTINS 9:15 AM  
SUNG MASS 10:00 AM

**MARCH 10** LENTEN FERIA ~ MASS 10:00 AM  
"THE CREED" LENT SERIES ~ 10:45 AM ~ 12:15 PM

**MARCH 11** STATIONS OF THE CROSS ~ 5:00 PM

**MARCH 13** SECOND SUNDAY IN LENT  
MATTINS 9:15 AM  
SUNG MASS 10:00 AM

**MARCH 16** PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 1:30 PM

**MARCH 17** ST. PATRICK OF IRELAND ~ MASS 10:00 AM  
"THE CREED" LENT SERIES ~ 10:45 AM ~ 12:15 PM

**MARCH 18** STATIONS OF THE CROSS ~ 5:00 PM

**MARCH 19** ST. JOSEPH OF NAZARETH ~ MASS 10:00 AM

**MARCH 20** THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT  
MATTINS 9:15 AM  
SUNG MASS 10:00 AM

**MARCH 24** LENTEN FERIA ~ MASS 10:00 AM  
"THE CREED" LENT SERIES ~ 10:45 AM ~ 12:15 PM

**MARCH 25** ANNUNCIATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY  
MASS 4:30 PM  
STATIONS OF THE CROSS ~ 5:00 PM

**MARCH 27** FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT (MOTHERING SUNDAY)  
MATTINS 9:15 AM  
SUNG MASS 10:00 AM

**MARCH 31** LENTEN FERIA ~ MASS 10:00 AM  
"THE CREED" LENT SERIES ~ 10:45 AM ~ 12:15 PM

**APRIL 1** STATIONS OF THE CROSS ~ 5:00 PM

**APRIL 3** LENT V: PASSION SUNDAY  
MATTINS 9:15 AM  
SUNG MASS 10:00 AM

**APRIL 7** FERIA IN PASSIONTIDE ~ MASS 10:00 AM  
"THE CREED" LENT SERIES ~ 10:45 AM ~ 12:15 PM

**APRIL 8** STATIONS OF THE CROSS ~ 5:00 PM

**APRIL 10** PALM SUNDAY ~ BEGINNING OF HOLY WEEK  
MATTINS 9:15 AM  
BLESSING OF PALMS, PROCESSION & HIGH MASS 10:00 AM

**APRIL 14** MAUNDY THURSDAY  
 MASS OF THE LAST SUPPER ~ 7:00 PM

**APRIL 15** GOOD FRIDAY  
 MATTINS & THE LITANY ~ 10:00 AM  
 LITURGY OF THE PASSION ~ 2:30 PM

**APRIL 16** HOLY SATURDAY  
 MATTINS & ANTE-COMMUNION ~ 10:00 AM  
 PREPARATION OF THE CHURCH FOR EASTER ~ 10:30 AM  
 EASTER VIGIL & FIRST MASS OF EASTER ~ 8:00 PM

**APRIL 17** EASTER DAY  
 MATTINS ~ 9:15 AM  
 HIGH MASS ~ 10:00 AM

**APRIL 20** PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 1:30 PM

**APRIL 21** THURSDAY IN EASTER WEEK ~ MASS 10:00 AM  
NO STUDY GROUP

*THE ARCHBISHOP AWAY ON EPISCOPAL VISITATIONS TO THE PRAIRIES  
 APRIL 22 TO MAY 2*

**APRIL 24** OCTAVE DAY OF EASTER (LOW SUNDAY)  
 MATTINS ~ 9:15 AM  
 HOLY EUCHARIST ~ 10:00 AM

**APRIL 28** NO MASS OR STUDY GROUP

**MAY 1** ST. PHILIP & ST. JAMES, APOSTLES  
 (COMM. EASTER II)  
 MATTINS ~ 9:15 AM  
 HOLY EUCHARIST ~ 10:00 AM

**MAY 5** ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST IN EASTERTIDE  
 MASS 10:00 AM  
 STUDY GROUP 10:45 AM

**MAY 8** THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER  
 MATTINS ~ 9:15 AM  
 SUNG MASS ~ 10:00 AM

**MAY 12** FERIA IN EASTERTIDE ~ MASS 10:00 AM  
 STUDY GROUP 10:45 AM

**MAY 15** FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER  
 MATTINS ~ 9:15 AM  
 SUNG MASS ~ 10:00 AM

**MAY 18** PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 1:30 PM

*THE ARCHBISHOP AWAY ON PRIMATEIAL VISITS TO THE USA  
 MAY 20 TO MAY 27*