



Holy Trinity Hillcrest

News Letter March 2015

Dear God's people

Rector's Reflections



By the time you receive this Newsletter we would be well into Lent and will probably be considering the second step of our Lenten programme. As we are reminded at this time, Lent is the season of self-introspection and repentance. In God's grand and perfect design of the human body we have been given the sense to look outward and see all that happens around us. But we have also been blessed with emotions to feel and a conscience to inwardly know whether the things we do are in keeping with God's commands for us. It is the time we are particularly encouraged to engage with our emotions and our conscience, to take stock and seek to align ourselves more closely to our call as the sons and daughters of God the Holy Trinity. Jesus proposed a simple instruction, He told us to love. Our experience has shown that the complexities, sensitivities and fragility of humanity makes this a lot more difficult than the proposal may appear.

Richard Rohr in his book, *Breathing Under Water*, published a series of talks on Spirituality and the Twelve Steps compiled by Bill Wilson that are recorded in the Alcoholics Anonymous' Big Book. The first step for a person dependant on substances is the acknowledgement of their powerlessness over it. It reads:

WE ADMIT WE WERE POWERLESS OVER ALCOHOL – THAT OUR LIVES HAVE BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

The Bible is full of examples of people who are powerless. King Hezekiah in Isaiah 38 is rendered powerless because of sickness. He feels like a weaver whose life is cut loose, like a tapestry from the Loom and roll it up; A separation from the one that gave him life. St Paul writes in Romans 7 about the continuous tension in his life of doing the things he does not want to do and not being able to do the things he has to do. Jesus in Matthew 9 describes the community as 'helpless and harassed'. These are similar to the various experiences in our own lives that result in rendering us feeling powerless. Spiritually, we are all prone to commit sin. The Bible clearly states, "all have sinned" and elsewhere 'we deceive ourselves if we claim that we do not sin.'

Rohr suggests that the disease for the religious person, as alcohol to the alcoholic, is our EGO. According to the dictionary it means, "a sense of self-esteem or self- importance". But the danger lies more in its derivatives: egocentric (self- centred), egoism (treating self-interest as the foundation of morality), egotism (excessive conceit or self-absorption).

The difference between the world's view and its expectation is that it thrives on ego. We adore power, strength or wealth. Spirituality cannot operate in that arena of competitiveness, spirituality excels in human weakness. St Paul in 2 Corinthians 12: 9-10 – "when I am weak..." "Some topsy-turvy God has decoded that those on the bottom will be revealed as the true top, and those who try for the top will find nothing of substance." P2 Scripture puts it like this, "the last shall be first and the first shall be last"

God's greatest Surprise and Constant Disguise

Rohr observes: "People who have moved from seeming success to seeming success seldom understand success at all, except a very limited version of their own." "People who fail to do it right, by even their own definition of right, are those who often break through to enlightenment and compassion.

With reference to the generosity of God's graciousness which he calls 'The **cosmic economy of grace**' and explains it as God's greatest surprise and God's constant disguise. He asserts that we will only truly know and experience it if:

- ♦ But you only know it to be true by going through it and coming out the other side yourself. You cannot know it by going to church, reading Scripture, or listening to someone else talk about it, even if you agree with them." One must experience it to fully appreciate it.

- ♦ “Until you bottom out, and come to the limits of your own fuel supply, there is no reason for you to switch to a higher octane fuel...You will not learn to actively draw upon a Larger Source until your usual resources are depleted and revealed as wanting. In fact you will not even know there is a Larger Source until your own sources and resources fail you.” P3
- ♦ Many Christians whittle down the great gospel to some moral issue over which they can feel totally triumphant and superior, and which usually ask nothing of them personally. The ego always insists on high moral ground, or as Paul puts it “sin takes advantage of commandments to mislead me, and through obeying commandments kills me.” (Romans 7: 11-13)
 - ✦ Celibate priest focusing on birth control and abortions.
 - ✦ Heterosexuals seeing gay marriage as the ultimate threat to society
 - ✦ Liberals investing in political correctness while living lives totally isolated from actual suffering in the world
 - ✦ Bible thumpers ignoring most of the Bible when It asks them to change
 - ✦ Nation of immigrants being anti-immigrant

According to Rohr we cannot change on our own in our own strength or power or ability. “Unless imperial ego goes we will try to engineer our own transformation by our own rules and by our own power.” If we try to change our ego with the help of our ego, we only have a better disguised ego. Albert Einstein said, “No problem can be solved by the same consciousness that caused the problem in the first place.”

Mature Spirituality begins by letting go. In the same way that an alcoholic needs to acknowledge the devastating effect of alcohol and that it would render him or her powerless to change so our ego renders us powerless in deepening our spirituality.

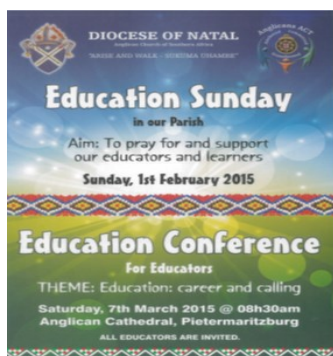
I pray that as we all journey towards Easter we would be conscious of our drives and give special attention to the small but powerful three letter word that influences the way we live and behave.

May God, the Holy Trinity grant you an inner peace and the consciousness of God’s presence in your journey.

May God bless you



On the 1st February we celebrated Education Sunday. All the schools in the area were invited by Holy Trinity to send two representatives from their school to share in worship and prayer with us. Each educator including our own past and present teachers were upheld in prayer and given a bookmark with a special prayer. For those who were unable to attend a letter and bookmark was posted. We received really positive appreciation which we share with you.



From Roseway Waldorf’s Mrs Tessa Dawson. “Thank you very much for your kindness in sending us the Bookmark with the prayer. We are grateful for your prayers and support.”

Hillcrest High’s Mr Girvin wrote “We really appreciate the prayerful support we receive from local churches and thank you for specifically remembering us at the special service. Education is a challenging, but still enormously rewarding, profession and your prayers certainly help us to do the important work that we do in moulding this country’s future leaders and citizens.”

Mr van den Aardweg from Kearsney College said “I really appreciate the concern shown for Education and schools in particular by Holy Trinity. Thank you too for the ‘Teachers Prayer’ bookmark gift which came with the letter.

The Principal of Hillcrest Primary School, Mrs Sally Chapman sent “thank you for holding a dedicated service for Educators and for the special book mark I received today. It will be a daily reminder of the responsibility we carry in working with young minds, and your prayers and support are much appreciated. May I wish you and your Parish a blessed 2015 as you work in Christ’s service.”

“Thank you for the encouraging words in your letter to us and for the meaningful bookmark, which spoke to our hearts. We appreciate your church’s initiative to pray for the schools in our community, and we value your continued support and prayers” was sent from Mr Melville Temlett of Curro, Hillcrest Christian Academy.

ARE WE "A PEOPLE" PLACE?

If this is not a place where tears are understood
Where do I go to cry?
 If this is not a place where my spirit can take wind
Where do I go to fly?
 If this is not a place where my questions can be heard
Where do I go to seek?
 If this is not a place where my feelings can be heard
Where do I go to speak?
 If this is not a place where you will accept me as I am
Where can I go to be me?

This poem by William J. Crockett was pinned up on the wall at the Methodist Retreat in Muswell Hill, North London. Submitted by Rosemary Combes

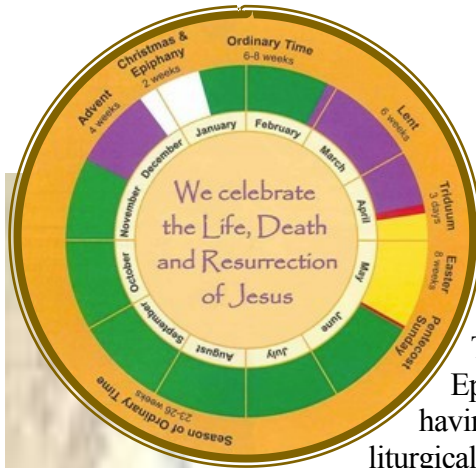


It's funny how,
 in this journey of life,
 even though we may begin
 at different times and places,
 our paths cross
 with others so that we
 may share our love, compassion,
 observations, and hope.
 This is a design of God
 that I appreciate and cherish.

-Dr. Steve Maraboli



A Series on Anglican Worship. Part 2 - The Church Calendar.



The church's calendar reflects the way in which the liturgy revolves around the history of Jesus Christ. The central themes therefore which are commemorated are the incarnation and the resurrection of Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit. In the **APB** the collects and readings for the Sundays of the year start on page 149. The first section (pp 149-160) covers the period of Advent ("coming") to the Epiphany (6 January). The Advent season reverts to the more familiar pattern of having only four Sundays before Christmas, whereas L75 started the church's liturgical year with the ninth Sunday before Christmas. During Advent the church looks

forward to the second coming of the Lord and to the commemoration of the incarnation, his first coming. The two are inextricably related, since our hope for the future is based upon, and guaranteed by, God's coming to live among human beings in Christ. The meaning of this is summed up in the feast of the Epiphany ("manifestation" or "revelation"), where the themes express God's purpose for the whole of his world.

For the period between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday, the date of which changes from year to year, the collects and readings are found on pages 247ff. The first four Sundays of the year always occur after Epiphany, the fifth to the ninth Sundays sometimes occur after Epiphany and sometimes after Pentecost, depending on the date of Easter. The remaining Sundays of the year until Advent occur after Trinity Sunday, which is the Sunday after Pentecost.

The central section of the calendar is concerned with the determinative events of the Christian faith - the death of Christ on the cross (usually referred to as the Passion), his resurrection and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The section is completed by Trinity Sunday and the feast of Corpus Christi on the following Thursday (APB pp 161-246). The dates of these celebrations are controlled by the date of Easter. APB pages 30 to 33 gives a list of the dates up to the year 2025 A1).

Whereas it can be said that the Sundays of the year after the Epiphany and after Trinity Sunday remind believers of the response due from them to God's revelation in Christ, the central section of the church's year is focused upon the person and work of Jesus Christ himself. This does not mean for a moment, however, that this period simply commemorates a series of historical events. The events of Christ's life are always of intimate concern to believers, since their life is involved with, and united to, the life of the risen Lord.

Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and the accompanying rite of the imposition of ashes, symbolizing the fragility of human life - "Remember that you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (APB p 164, § 8). Lent seems to be derived from the practice in the early church of baptizing new believers on Easter eve, who were required to fast for the previous week. This fast was later extended to forty days, corresponding to the forty days of our Lord's fast before the start of his ministry (Mk 1:13), and applied to all Christians! The season of Lent therefore is the time when we are to recall our own baptism and discipleship, and we look forward to the resurrection of Christ in whose risen life we share.

The last week of Lent is traditionally called Holy Week (Palm Sunday to Easter eve). It has always been marked as a period of special solemnity, starting with the commemoration of the Lord's entry into Jerusalem as king, but in humility. It continues with special readings for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. The next day is called

Maundy Thursday (from the Latin *mandatum*, meaning "command-ment", with reference to the Lord's command to his disciples to love one another as he has loved them - Jn 13:34 and 15:12). On this day it has been traditional for the bishop to celebrate the eucharist and bless the holy oils (for use in the anointing of the sick and in confirmation), when opportunity is given for priests to renew their ordination vows. In the evening the eucharist commemorates the institution of the sacrament at the Last Supper and often includes the washing of the feet of members of the congregation by the celebrant, following the example of our Lord (Jn 13:1-17). After this the altar is stripped, in readiness for the celebration of the Lord's passion on Good Friday.

The special liturgy for Good Friday celebrates the Lord's passion, and may include a celebration of the eucharist (APB pp 188-199).

The Easter Vigil, usually celebrated very early on Easter morning, consists of three parts - the service of Light (with the lighting of the Easter candle), the liturgy of the word (when readings from the Old Testament are taken to represent God's acts in the history of the Israelites as anticipations of God's victory in Christ), and the liturgy of the eucharist. The Easter season continues for forty days until Ascension day, which symbolizes the permanent lordship of Christ. Ten days later Pentecost Sunday celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit to the church.

This central season of the church's year is completed by Trinity Sunday and the feast of Corpus Christi. Trinity Sunday is the summary of God's work as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, so that the transcendent and infinite God is known by what he has done and continues to do. The following Thursday was deliberately chosen as the day when the institution of the eucharist was specially remembered, since the eucharist is the liturgical way in which the transcendent Lord is shown to be present in his world and with his people. The name Corpus Christi means "the Body of Christ", and can refer to the people of God as well as to the sacrament. The ending of this central season of the church's year with this feast helps us see that every eucharist is itself a proclamation of the whole gospel of Christ, as the following notes try to indicate.

Saints' Days, Other Festivals and Commemorations

Besides the calendar of the church's year based on the events of the 'life of Christ' certain other festivals are observed on fixed days, whereas the date of the Sundays of the year is determined by the date of Easter. Most of these festivals commemorate apostles and other saints of the church. One of them, All Saints' Day, 1 November, is described in **MB** (p 19) as a Great Festival. The others (pp 19-21) are described as festivals, and when they fall on a Sunday they may be transferred to the next day. There is however much to be said for keeping these festivals on a Sunday (unless the Sunday is of special importance) since otherwise few people are likely to observe them or to know of them. The rules for the observance of the calendar are found in **MB** pages 27 to 29.

In addition to the Festivals there are Commemorations and other special days which *may* be observed, subject to the rules already mentioned. A list of these is to be found in APB pages 22 to 26.



His 5 year-old daughter noticed that her father always paused and bowed his head for a moment before starting his sermon. One day, she asked him why.

"Well, Honey," he began, proud that his daughter was so observant of his messages. "I'm asking the Lord to help me preach a good sermon." "How come He doesn't answer it?" she asked.



12 - Elizabeth & Vernon Lavender
14 - June & Tony Tucker

Bits and Pieces!

March Birthdays

03-Ella Baxter
04-Cecil Rhodes
12-Sally Lovemore
12-Bob Mickel
20-Elise Brink
20-Belinda Royston

21-Sally Smyly
23-Sean Kelly
24-Noline Dunn
26-Brian Kear
27-Elaine Hutt
27-Genevieve Serfontein
27-Megan Pennefather
29-Barbara Mercer
30-Margie Cooper
31-Brenda Parry-Hughes

PARISH CONTACT DETAILS:

Cnr Elangeni & Nqutu Roads, Hillcrest
P O Box 148 Hillcrest 3650

☎: 031-765 5941

☎: 031-765 5077

✉: office@holyltrinity.co.za / Website: www.holytrinity.co.za

Banking details:

Account Name: Hillcrest Anglican Church
Nedbank Hillcrest Branch 1338 26
Account No. 1338 034 057

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