

# The Rock

St. Peter's Episcopal Church

April 2023

## From the Priest's Desk

Dear People of God,



You've probably heard the phrase, "C and E Christians." It refers to Christians who only go to church on Christmas and Easter. It's pretty



much always used negatively—indeed, judgmentally. And to be honest, I don't much like it.

For one thing, some of the finest people I've ever known were "C and E Christians" (and some weren't Christians at all, but that's another column). So why disparage them? Moreover, those of us who attend Sunday worship more regularly might wonder, if some people only feel drawn to worship twice a year, is worship *failing* to meet their spiritual needs, and if so, how, and what can we do about it? Maybe we need to get the log out of our own eye before getting too focused on the speck in our neighbor's (Matthew 7:3).

Mostly, however, I don't like "C and E Christians" because it's one more phrase that serves only to separate the Body of Christ, to break us down into subsets and hierarchies when the reality is each and every baptized person is equal to every other (Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus"), and each and every baptized person is "marked as Christ's own forever" (*Book of Common Prayer*, p. 308).

The fact is, in a different sense, we're all "C and E Christians," no matter how frequently we go to church.

None of us would have any connection to St. Peter's, however often we come to church, were it not that we each hold deep in our hearts the knowledge that there really is Love to be found in this world, the ultimate source of that Love is the One we call God, and God's love for us is so great He became human to show us just that. We wouldn't be Christian if we didn't have a personal experience of the reality of Christmas.

And none of us would have any connection to St. Peter's, however often we go to church, were it not that we each hold deep in our hearts the knowledge that there really is Love to be found in this world, that the ultimate source of that Love is the One we call God, and God's love for us is so great that He suffered death to show us Resurrection is reality, and so there is hope for us all. We wouldn't be Christian if we didn't have a personal experience of the reality of Easter.

In other words, God's great acts of love on "C" and "E" are what make "Christians" possible.

I write this greatly anticipating our celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus the Messiah on Easter Sunday, April 9, and giving thanks for *everyone* who is reading this message. May you find yourself experiencing the loving presence of God throughout the coming Easter season, and indeed this very day.

Fr. Dan+

## Diakonia Musings



Holy Week

As you read this, we will be in the middle of Holy Week, with all its symbolism unfolding to reveal the last week of our Saviors life, death and resurrection. Since Christmas, we have moved from Jesus' birth, to meeting His cousin, John, as he announced Jesus' coming and Baptized Him, and on to the calling of the disciples to leave their lives behind and follow their Rabbi. We have witnessed miracles and healing Jesus performed to glorify God, have heard thought provoking parables and references to the Hebrew Scriptures challenging the status quo and the hypocrisy of the high priests, and now we are walking with Jesus as the scriptures are fulfilled through His death, with all its pain and sorrow, and into the mystery of resurrection.

For me, some years are easier than others to stay focused during this week when I feel the intensity of the pain, suffering, and humiliation our Lord endured. Sometimes I just can't bear to hear the story one more time because I want Christ to be alive, alive in me, me in Him, and the fear of my own death overwhelms.

There have been years when I was just a bystander watching the story unfold from a distance, maybe to protect myself from my own pain, my own sin, or maybe my curiosity was stronger than my commitment. And, there have been times when I was fully immersed in the week and emerged from the darkness of my own tomb as a butterfly, singing praises to God for all that had been done for me and in me.

I believe that we enter into Holy Week from different places that reflect where we are on our spiritual journey. It is equally important to ask "why", why we are on the outside looking in, or why we are able or not able to open our hearts to suffering this time.

This year, more than ever, I am looking forwards to singing "alleluia" once again and leaning into the knowledge that we are resurrection people who are strong enough to take the troubles and pain in the world, the

country, and even the changing Church, in stride, without fear, knowing the triune God is with us and all we are really asked to do is spread the light of love to all people.

*Speaking of bringing love to all people...*

Thank you to all of you that bought tickets for the quilt raffle that is supporting the work of Episcopal Relief and Development in Ukraine. We sold \$100 worth of tickets that will be added to what St. James sold to parishioners and the public that came through to pick up their Lenten fish fries. Your generosity is appreciated.

*Count on some Summer Fun.....*

Summer seems like a long way off, but mark your calendars for a day retreat in East Otto on August 12. It may be hot, but my daughter assures me the bugs won't be as bad as they are in July. Heat....bugs.....I chose heat.

*Deacon Diana*

## Need some EASTER Food?

Well, we don't have pussy willows or butter lambs to sell for Easter, but we DO have



pierogies. We will bring the Broadway market to you-the good people of St. Peter's.

Looking for a meatless dish for a Good Friday dinner? Try some pierogies. I am ordering a major bunch of Ukrainian ravioli @ \$10 per dozen, that will be available on Palm Sunday. If you are unable to pick 1 or 2 up in church, I am willing to deliver them to you at no extra cost. All you need do is to call your male deacon!

Keep in mind that the mother of the Ukrainian family we are helping to sponsor is the one happily making them; as it serves as a source of income for them until they can secure full-time employment.

Peace, blessings, and tasty meals to you all!

*Deacon Tom*



- 4/02 8 and 10am Palm Sunday Service
- 4/05 7pm Stations of the Cross  
(No evening prayer on zoom)
- 4/06 7pm Maundy Thursday Service
- 4/07 7pm Good Friday Service
- 4/08 10am Clean the church for Easter  
Help with Easter flowers
- 4/09 8 & 10am Easter Service
- \*\*\* 10am services have Zoom

### Return to Alcatraz! (not really)

It has been 3 long years since CCM (Collins Christian Ministries) held their ecumenical retreat for prisoners at Collins Correctional Institution, and now it is close to being a reality once again. Missy Lopat will once again work for the outside team, and Deacon Tom will again serve on the inside team, for the 3-day event between April 28-30.



The St. Peter's congregation members have been generous supporters of this

ministry for many years, in which we bring the Good News of Jesus Christ through the barbed wire and into the hearts of those who have strayed from God in one way or another. You can help once again by filling the following needs as a support parish:

- Baking cookies and/or muffins that we bring in each morning to start the days off right with some home cooking. The only no-no's are jimmies, sprinkles, or icing on the cookies, and poppy seeds in the muffins. Package them in dozens if you can.

- Pray for both the inside and outside teams during that time, as well as for the minds of the inmates to be opened to our presence and our mission.
- Write an encouraging card, note, or letter to an inmate. Do not seal any letters or cards, and do not sign your name or leave an address or phone number. You should address it "Dear brother" as we will not know yet who will attend; and you can sign similarly and anonymously "**your friend**" or "**A Christian brother/sister**"

Outside participation by parishes go a long way to making these retreats a success. One of the key points is to show those inside that Christians can "**love thy neighbor**"- even one in prison. I will need any and all of your donated items by the Wednesday of that week, which is April 26. You may bring them into church that week, or my house. I will pick them up from you if needed. Please let me know of your intentions so that I may plan in advance. Mucho Gracias.

Peace and Blessings,  
Deacon Tom

### Our Little Roses Lenten Donation

There is still time to make a Lenten donation to Our Little Roses phase 2 capital Funds collection for the Holy Family Bilingual School. The enrollment that has taken place since the "end" of the pandemic. The reason for the sudden increase is wealthier families have decided a bilingual education for their children (usually boys) has its many advantages. There are still envelopes on the white tree in the narthex or include it with your weekly pledge. If paying by check, make it out to St. Peter's and mark OLR in the memo section.

### Linen Pantry Update

In March we assisted 12 families from 6 Agencies. I took 6 bags full of brown paper grocery bag to the Church of the Good Shepherd Food Pantry for them to use in distributing food.

to  
who

**Brain cells die, skin cells die, even hair cells die.**

**But FAT CELLS... must have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior because they seem to have eternal life.**

We

Thank you everyone turned in Dash's Market receipts. just received a

\$300 check from them. Every receipt no matter how big or small is worth money to us.

A thank you also to Mike Taube who last weekend went to a garage sale and an estate sale. By the looks of all the stuff he brought to the Linen Pantry he must have bought both events out. There were so many things it took us 2 days to unpack it all and put it on our shelves.

*Merrie Hill*

### Blessing Box News



We have some great news to report! Tori Paradise has offered to help fill the blessing box on a regular basis. Thank you, Tori, this is an answer to a prayer! Thank you again to Gary's stepson David, for helping us keep

our inventory system up and running. Our inventory system has helped give us a greater understanding of the needs of the community. Gary has done inventory for March. We have donated 369 food items, 28 baby items, toiletries 185 and 72 Cleaning items to our Eggertsville community. This does not include items that have been placed into the box by our neighbors! Please consider donating jars of **Spaghetti sauce and boxes of pasta for April**. Wegmans always sells their brand for .99 a jar. Our Pet Ministry requests **canned cat food for April**. Donations can be placed in the large shopping cart in the narthex. Thank you all for your continued generosity.

Shalom,

*Gary Donhauser, Alison Mohr, & Lois Tripp*

### The Women's Retreat date is set!

The retreat date and time for The Center for Renewal @Stella Niagara is confirmed for **4pm, Friday September 8th - 3pm**

**Saturday, September 9th.** If you would like to come up earlier in the day to relax on the grounds, walk or use your room, that is allowed.

Our retreat leader will be \*Elizabeth "Suzy" Shallowhorn. I talked to her last week regarding the Prayer, Meditation, and directed quiet time I had mentioned. She has lots of great ideas but would also like to know what your Intentions and expectations are for this Women's retreat. More information to follow.

I realize that this is months away, but we need to get your names onto the list, even if you just think you are attending. She is saving 15-20 rooms for us. (Sixteen parishioners have expressed Interest) **You can cancel up to two weeks before.** (I will call the confirmed numbers two weeks before the date). \*The cost is \$87 per person. This includes three meals and your room.

\*In conversation with Father Dan, and our Sr. Warden, Elizabeth Ann, we would like as many interested parishioners to attend. Scholarships are available and confidential. Please speak to Fr. Dan, Elizabeth Ann or me. Please call if you have any questions.

***Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, he said to them, "Come with me by yourselves to a quiet place ... Mark 6:31***

Shalom,

Lois Tripp

## The Center for Renewal @ Stella Niagara



Prayer  
Requests



Labyrinth

Relaxation

**Long Term:** Becky, Jim G, Kristie P, Ron B, Gino L, Alfred, Lee & Jessica M, Judy E, Joanne U, Beth, Sue & Dave S, Ron W, Lynda C, Dominic, Lindsey V, Jason, Bill, Finnegan M, Nicole, Dan & Sue H, Joyce J

**Short Term:** Michael M, Larry, Emma B, Kimm, Kathy and family, Bill and Cynthia G, Jerry M, Amanda, Lee, Ruth E, Steve U, Bruce D, Lori S, Chris M.

**Military:** Ben M, Brandon G, Richie, Quincy

Please contact me with any updates, corrections or Thanksgivings, thank you.

*Sue Gunn*



04/01 Mary Reed  
04/04 Michael Gale  
04/06 Joanne Frake  
04/06 Sue Horey  
04/12 Tina Passariella  
04/21 Scott Millar  
04/22 Thomas Halterman  
04/22 Kirsten Reitan



4/23 10am Baptism of Gus and Ruth Lewis  
4/23 or 4/26 Cookies/ muffins for Prison  
Ministry  
5/06 10am Dismantling Racism Class  
5/23 5:30pm Rackettes at Family Tree  
6/24 CPR Training  
8/12 Summer Retreat in East Otto  
8/27 Parish Picnic at Ellicott Creek Park  
9/03-04 Woman's Retreat at Stella Niagara