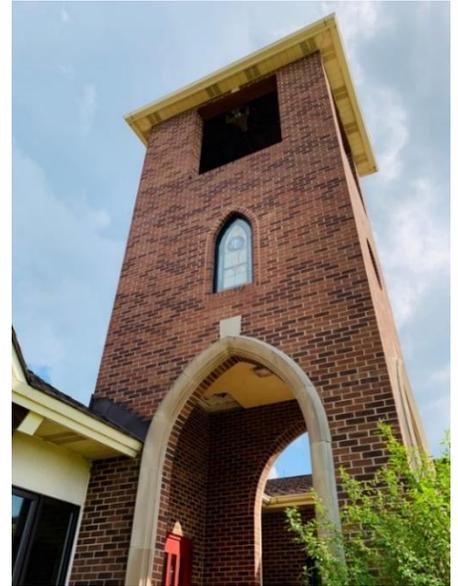
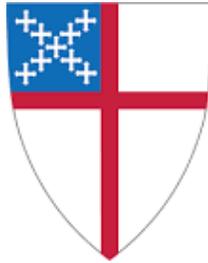


THE GOOD NEWS

March 2023



Digging into Our Certainty

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

Martin Luther called John 3:16 “the Gospel in a nutshell.”

Without a doubt, this is the most famous verse in the New Testament. And yet, as most preachers know all too well, the more popular a Biblical text is, the harder it is to preach! Such is the case here.

The popularity of John 3:16 has, in a sense, robbed it of its power. Far from the “heart of the Gospel,” it now seems like nothing more than Christianity’s catchphrase—the logo of the Christian brand.

John 3:16 pops up on tee shirts, on bumper stickers, on billboards, on Facebook, and (most annoying of all) on those little pamphlets that get wedged into the screen door on Saturday mornings! It’s the equivalent of the community choir singing Handel’s “Messiah” at Christmas: much-appreciated, well-

loved, but just a bit taxing to hear recited over and over and over again in exactly the same way time after time after time.

But there’s another, more dangerous side to John 3:16 that cannot be overlooked.

Regardless of what we make of this text’s familiarity, the truth of the matter is that John 3:16 has been used time and time again in Christian history to hurt, divide, and demean people. For some, the requirement that we “be born again” is code for “you have to look, sound, and act like us.”

The Gospel becomes a proof-text by which we determine if other people’s salvation is as certain as ours is. From this vantage point, the text loses its transformative power altogether and becomes a weapon to re-enforce a particular worldview.

As is the case with the whole of Scripture, when we read John 3:16 apart from its larger context, we run the risk of missing the point. John 3:16 isn’t a

theological maxim in and of itself; rather, it is part of a much richer conversation between Jesus and a man named Nicodemus.



Nicodemus, says John's Gospel, was a leader among the Jews. In public, Nicodemus's loyalties were clearly devoted to

the Jewish establishment. But in private, Nicodemus had his doubts. And so, he visits Jesus under the cover of nightfall.

"Rabbi," Nicodemus says, "we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God."

To put it another way, Nicodemus saw that Jesus was clearly mediating the presence of God, and Nicodemus wanted that kind of experience, too.

Then, as Jesus so often does, he says something that utterly astounds everyone: "Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the Kingdom of God without being born from above."

In other words, glimpsing the Kingdom of God isn't a matter of praying a certain way or believing a certain way or following a certain set of liturgical customs; it's about a complete rebirth of our entire existence!

On hearing this, Nicodemus asks an honest albeit naïve question that sounds funny to our 21st century ears: "How can an old man like me go back into my mother's womb and be born again?"

Nicodemus makes what is perhaps the most common mistake when it comes to reading and interpreting

Scripture: confusing something meant as metaphor with something meant to be literally true.

Like all of us, Nicodemus had already been born once into both a physical and a spiritual context: He was born into a Pharisaic Jewish home, with all the customs and traditions of the day.

But this second birth that Jesus is talking about comes not from below—with all the physical and visceral mechanisms of childbirth—but from above.

So how do we do that?

More than saying the right prayers or professing the right statement of faith, being born from above is about a way of life. It's about living so that those around you will see you and know about Jesus.

For Nicodemus, being born from above happened slowly. The Gospel of John tells us that he came to Jesus under the cover of nightfall. He wasn't quite sure he believed just yet. He didn't want anyone to recognize him.

Then, after he leaves Jesus, he returns to his position among the Jewish establishment. His conversion doesn't happen with a bolt of lightning or sudden blindness; it doesn't draw the same kind of attention that the Apostle Paul's conversion does; and there's no incredible dream that converts or upends Nicodemus's life like the dreams of Saint Peter or Saint John the Divine.

But deep down, and ever so slightly, something begins to turn.

Nicodemus's rebirth happens over the course of a long journey, which began under the cover of darkness when he took a chance on Jesus. He was an uncertain, fly-by-night, wanna-be disciple.

And the truth is, with the exception of one brief mention in John chapter 7, we never hear from Nicodemus again—that is, until the end of John’s Gospel. And it is here that Nicodemus’s birth from above is laid bare.

As Jesus hangs crucified, after all of the other disciples had fled for fear of persecution, there stands Nicodemus at the foot of the cross, armed with myrrh and aloes and the other provisions for Jewish burial, ready to bear the broken and lifeless body of the crucified Lord to its grave.

Jesus said, “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

We can never fully know what Nicodemus was thinking as he departed Jesus’ company after hearing these words. But we can be sure that something within him began to turn. And then, little by little, his heart was broken open and he was born anew, finding his way through darkness and doubt, to the cross.

In his poem, “From the Place Where We Are Right,” the great German-born Israeli poet Yehuda Amichai put it this way:

From the place where we are right flowers will never grow in the Spring.

The place where we are right is hard and trampled like a yard.

But doubts and loves dig up the world like a mole, a plough. And a whisper will be heard in the place where the ruined house once stood.

In the midst of this Lenten journey, may we allow our doubts and questions to dig into our certainty. May we be broken open by a love that evades even

our wildest imagining until, at last, we come to the foot of the cross.

Amen.

-Marshall A. Jolly

The Way of the Cross

A devotion to the Passion of Christ which recalls a series of events at the end of Jesus’ life from his condemnation to his burial. The Way of the Cross imitates the practice of visiting the places of Jesus’ Passion in the Holy Land by early Christian pilgrims. The first stations outside Palestine were built in Bologna in the fifth century. This devotion was encouraged by the Franciscans, and it became common in the fifteenth century. The number of stations for prayer and meditation in the Way of the Cross has varied, but it typically includes fourteen stations.

The Book of Occasional Services (BOS), includes the following stations in the Way of the Cross:



1. Jesus is condemned to death.



2. Jesus takes up his cross.



3. Jesus falls the first time



4. Jesus meets his afflicted mother.



5. The cross is laid on Simon of Cyrene.



6. A woman wipes the face of Jesus.



7. Jesus falls a second time.



8. Jesus meets the women of Jerusalem.



9. Jesus falls a third time.



10. Jesus is stripped of his garments.



11. Jesus is nailed to the cross.



12. Jesus dies on the cross.



13. The body of Jesus is placed in the arms of his mother.



14. Jesus is laid in the tomb.



The BOS notes that eight of the stations are based on events that are recorded in the gospels. The remaining 6 stations (3,4,6,7,9,13) are based on inferences from the gospels or pious legends.



Letter from your Wardens

Dear Family of St. Ignatius,

At our February 15th Vestry meeting the following 2023 Commissions were filled:

- Administration & Outreach- Jack Fields
- Building and Grounds- Jim Bletsch Sr.
- Fellowship- Diane Cinnick
- Formation- Renee Garrett
- Worship & Gods Will- Kathy Kraak

There was a motion approved that St. Ignatius records will be kept for a maximum of 7 years. The Vestry is in discussion of hosting a retreat focusing on the discussion of a 1/3/5 year vision for the church campus. This will be discussed and decided on at our March 22nd meeting- All Are Welcome!

All social media sites, (websites and Facebook), for St. Ignatius and God's Will Resale Shop have been

continually updated and are current. Anyone needing or wishing to take “Keeping God’s Children Safe” courses please contact Jack for updated link and passcodes to do them online. We are registered for 2023. On March 1st our 2022 Parochial Report was submitted to “The Episcopal Church” as required.

Last week and this week there has been a lot of activity on the campus of St. Ignatius. Over 70 people came to worship, 300 community members visited God’s Will, and around 140 came to dine and help out at our 1st Fish Boil of the season.

May our family at St. Ignatius continue to be blessed by God’s will and grace!

Peace,

-Jack & Renee

Search Committee Update:

Rector Search Committee meets with Rev. Reyes:

Reverend Sierra Reyes joined our congregation on Sunday, February 19 to serve our community in two important ways: leading both Sunday Services and to facilitate a meeting with the Rector Search Committee. Rev. Reyes is the Interim Associate for Transition Ministries and is the key guide from the Diocese of Chicago during our search for a full-time rector. Rev. Reyes took the opportunity, on Transfiguration Sunday, to connect the spiritual lessons to our transition journey as a parish community. Her words were inspiring, and helped us to visualize this time of preparation and readiness for change.

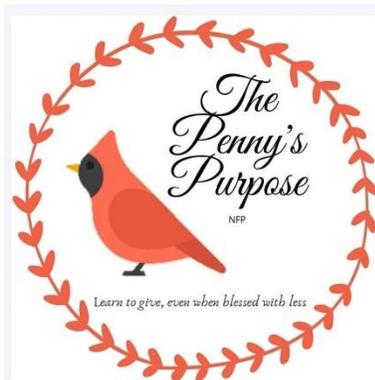
During the meeting with the Rector Search Committee, which consists of co-leaders Linda Mizwicki and Warren Cinnick and members Jim Halwas, Ernie Kraak, Kathy Fields, and Roger Van Patten, Rev. Reyes provided context for our search within the Diocese of Chicago and the Episcopal Church in the US. First, she acknowledged that St. Ignatius of Antioch had come together as a parish very positively in the process of transition. In particular, Sierra noted the depth of our small group conversations, the quality of our Parish Profile, and the clarity of our community about the work of a new rector: attract younger congregants and families, guide life-long formation and learning (young folks through all adult stages), and serve the local community in ministries especially through God’s Will Resale Shop. Second, she let us know that 20 of the 120 congregations in the Diocese are in some form of transition and search process. For St. Ignatius, and the Search Committee, these facts highlighted our need to be optimistic and upbeat as we reach-out and attract candidates.



Outreach Summary

The **December & January Mission** for Heifer International was a great success with a \$500 monetary donation sent from the church.

Our **February & March Mission** for The Penny’s Purpose is still up and running. This is a local charity in Antioch. We have currently collected over 20 new, gently used, or homemade blankets!



Cathy Ehlers

The specific guidance for the Rector Search Committee from Rev. Reyes is very action oriented. We agreed together to spend more funds on the job posting advertisement, to ensure it reaches as many eyes as possible. In addition, we gained consensus on the Committee to reach-out to Episcopal Seminaries in the US to make connections and share the over 100 year story of our community. And, we got excellent advice and ideas for how to ask questions of our eventual applicants and candidates. The Committee began and concluded our time with Rev. Reyes in prayer and reflection, which reminded us all of the spiritual nature of our journey to discover and discern a new rector.

The Rector Search Committee will report monthly to the congregation, through this Newsletter and at Sunday Services, on relevant progress. While we won't be sharing detailed specifics about applicants and candidates, we continue our three commitments to the parish as a committee: to work diligently and make progress, to be transparent, and to present recommendations on qualified candidates to the Vestry for their decision.

Blessings and peace,

-Committee Co-Chairs-Linda & Warren



Thank you to our Fellowship providers for the month of February:

Carolyn Van Patten

Lillian Golonka

Bonnie Ebler

Kathy Fields

Liz Wood

Mary Haviland

If you would like to volunteer for future dates, the sign-up is on the table in the Narthex. If you have any questions about volunteering, please let me know. It's not difficult and I'll be there to lend a hand.

Our FAT SUNDAY celebration was a hit and we are looking forward to our April events on Maundy Thursday and after Easter Vigil on Saturday. Sign up sheets will be available in March for the Agape Dinner on Thursday (at 5:30) and an appetizer/champagne event after Vigil Service.

Remember Fr. Jim's take on Field of Dreams...'feed them and they will come'. Fellowship is a great tool to introduce someone to our community!

-Diane Cinnick



Sharing Our Faith



We recently moved to Antioch from St. Louis, Missouri and were looking for a place of worship when our neighbors, Diane and Warren Cinnick, invited us to visit St. Ignatius of Antioch. St. Ignatius offers the services, fellowship and community outreach we were seeking.

What a wonderful ministry with a very welcoming Congregation. We look forward to getting to know each of you and becoming involved in the Parish Community...especially at this exciting time!

-Mark and Karen Leverenz

ADULT FAITH FORMATION



Starting on Feb. 26th thru March 26th on Sundays from 9-9:45am. Fr. Jim will lead an Adult Education group. Fr. will follow a book by Kennon Callahan titled “12 Keys to an Effective Church”.

Lent Commitment- Please Join!



This past week, we began our Sunday morning Children's Formation class. We had 5 kids participate who were all eager to be a part of our activities and discussion on “The Temptation of Jesus”. We look forward to our next lesson as we will be hearing the story of Nicodemus' night time visit with Jesus. Thank you to all of our wonderful participants and to our classroom helpers for making all of this possible.

-Libby Deichsel



Fish Boil

Our 1st fish boil was a great success with around 130 diners. This is due to all the hard work that everyone gave. We would like to thank everyone that helped. We have two more to go, 3/10 & 3/24. Please continue to help make these successful also!



March 1st- 7pm Stations of the Cross

March 5th- 8 & 10am Mass. 9am Adult Formation

March 8th- 7pm Stations of the Cross

March 10th- 2nd Fish Boil 4:30pm- 7pm

March 12th- 8 & 10am Mass. 9am Adult Formation

March 15th- 7pm Stations of the Cross

March 19th- 8 & 10am Mass. 9am Adult Formation

March 22nd- 7pm Stations of the Cross

March 24th- 3rd Fish Boil 4:30pm-7pm

March 26th- 8 & 10am Mass. 9am Adult Formation

March 29th- 7pm Stations of the Cross

April 2nd – Palm Sunday 8am & 10am

April 6th- Maundy Thursday at 7pm

April 7th- Good Friday at 7pm

April 8th- Easter Vigil at 5pm

April 9th- Easter Day at 10am (only service)



The Moncrieff Family-The Daehler & family
Elizabeth Johnston - Jim & Pat Bletsch - Clare
Coleman - The Deichsel Family - Mildred Hamlin-
Dave Schoenbeck- George Pahlke- Mike Culat-
Pam Anast- Felix Cizewski- Ian McDonald
Margaret Slamar- Chris Szafranski
Family of Tom Haley

GOD'S WILL RESALE SHOP

March Special:

50% off all GREEN sticker items!

Let's Celebrate!

March Birthday's

- 3/1- Augustina Deischel
- 3/6- Sue Hallwas
- 3/8- Robyn George
- 3/12- Kathy Kraak
- 3/14- Felix Cizewski
- 3/19- JoAnne Kriens
- 3/28- Jim Bletsch
- 3/29- Carol Hawkins

March Anniversary's

- 3/28- Bill & Linda Malinow



A BIG THANKS
to all of our
volunteers and
customers!!

questions call the shop at 224-321-4475