



# THE LION'S MARK

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR SAINT MARK'S CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA

A COMMUNITY THAT GATHERS IN FAITH, SERVES IN LOVE, AND PROCLAIMS HOPE, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

## A FORCE FOR GOOD

— FATHER SEAN MULLEN —

A hundred years ago at Saint Mark's, the parish history *One Hundred Years on Locust Street* tells me, the Easter offering of about \$3,000 "was given to the Belgian Children's Relief Fund... to support 450 children of the town of Hombeeck for six months." It's striking to think of children suffering the privations of war a century ago, just as the news is reaching us of desperately hungry children and families suffering because of the war in Syria today. As I review the history of the parish, I am struck, so often, by the outward focus, attention, and concern of this community, as well as its real commitment: \$3000 was no small sum in those days. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

Of the few items of note mentioned in the history for 1916, one is the establishment of an award (the Newbold Memorial Cross) to be given yearly "to an outstanding chorister." Again, I am struck by the continuity we have with the past, since we are again seeing the value of children in the life of this parish as they take a place of musical leadership in the worship of God.

The parish history assigns only 15 lines of text to the year 1916 – everyone was preoccupied with the war in Europe, no doubt – but even those scant lines show a healthy balance between the outward focus of the mission of the Gospel and the inner life of the community and its worship. It is enormously helpful to be a part of a parish whose own history offers so many cues to what it means to be faithful even in a rapidly changing, violent, and confusing world. As I write this, we are much involved not only in the search for a permanent Organist & Choirmaster, we are also busily planning the next medical mission trip to Honduras, the fourth such mission organized by the parish. I take these two current matters as signs of the



continuing balance between the outward focus of our mission, and the inner life of the community here on Locust Street.

When I was a boy in school, I had a headmaster who tried to instill in his students a singular idea of what we should aspire to be when we grew up: he hoped that we would each become "a force for good" in the world. He believed, I know, that this was a useful definition of Christian discipleship: a force for good. Nothing I have learned since my childhood days has ever dissuaded me of the wisdom of this outlook. In fact, I think, that this description would not be a bad one for the church as a whole: a force for good. If the world does not perceive the church as a force for good, then how can they see in the church the work and providence of the source of all goodness?

As we begin this new year, with so much in common with our ancestors of a century ago, it is my prayer that Saint Mark's will continue to work to be a force for good in the world – here on

Locust Street and far beyond. To do so will mean that we continue to keep a balance between our care for the inner life of this parish and those who worship here, and our attentiveness to the outward-looking mission of Christ, who is always telling us to "go" and do something. We already know that this means we are building up the place of children in the life of this place, and that we are equipping a group of missionaries to go care for the needy in a distant land. May God continue to show us many other ways to worship and serve him here and abroad, and may he continue to mold this parish community into a force for good on Locust Street, in our beloved city, and throughout the world.

# DATES TO REMEMBER

## FEBRUARY

- Tue 2**      **The Feast of the Presentation (Candlemas)**  
Choral High Mass, 7 p.m.  
Potluck supper following
- Tue 9**      **Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, 6 p.m.**
- Wed 10**     **Ash Wednesday**  
Low Mass with Imposition of Ashes, 7:30 a.m.  
Sung Mass with Imposition of Ashes, 12:10 p.m.  
Choral High Mass with Imposition of Ashes, 7 p.m.

## FRIDAYS IN LENT

### BEGINNING FRIDAY FEB 12

Evening Prayer and Stations of the Cross, 5:30 p.m.

- Thu 18 thru Sat 20**   **A Week of Mutual Discernment: Bishop candidate meetings**
- Sun 21**       **Annual Parish Meeting, 10 a.m.**

## MARCH

- Fri 4**        **Family Lenten Dinner, 5:30 p.m.**
- Sat 5**        **Lenten Clean-up Day, 10:30 a.m.**
- Sun 6**        **Choral Evensong and Benediction, 3 p.m.**
- Sat 12**      **Special Diocesan Convention for the Calling of a Bishop**
- Sat 19**      **Saint Mark's Academy, 10 a.m.**

## HOLY WEEK AT SAINT MARK'S

- Sun 20**      **Palm Sunday**  
Low Mass, 8 a.m.  
Family Mass with the Liturgy of the Palms, 9 a.m.  
Choral High Mass with the Liturgy of the Palms and Chanting of the Passion, 11 a.m.
- Wed 23**     **Holy Wednesday • Tenebrae, 7 p.m.**
- Thu 24**     **Maundy Thursday**  
Choral High Mass with Foot-washing and Stripping of the Altar, 7 p.m.  
Vigil at the Altar of Repose follows until midnight
- Fri 25**      **Good Friday**  
Solemn Liturgies of Good Friday with Veneration of the Cross, 12 noon
- Sat 26**      **Easter Eve**  
The Great Vigil and First Mass of Easter, 8 p.m.  
Festive reception following in the Parish Hall
- Sun 27**      **Easter Sunday**  
Masses at 8 a.m., 9 a.m., and 11 a.m.

## A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF AN ORGAN SCHOLAR

BRYAN DUNNEWALD

*The music program at Saint Mark's involves many people: the members of our Parish Choir, our Choir of Boys & Girls (and their parents!) and, of course, the congregation for whom liturgical music is such an important part of their worship. This year we are also very fortunate to continue our long-standing relationship with the Curtis Institute of Music. There are very few churches that can count such a prestigious music school as their neighbor and it is important that parishes like Saint Mark's provide opportunities for young organists to immerse themselves in both our musical and liturgical traditions. Bryan reflects on his experiences.*

Since arriving in Philly for my second year at Curtis and my first at Saint Mark's, my organ life has become even more intense and more gratifying. It has also not conformed well to a daily routine so, despite the nice ring of the above title, I'm most interested in sharing with you what I'm learning and doing in the bigger picture. To make sure I don't completely break expectations, however, let's begin with a walk through a "normal" weekday.

I'm not sure how it happened, but in the fall semester I had class every day from about 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. These include everything from counterpoint and solfège to environmental ethics and modernist literature. Depending on the day, I might also have organ studio class or a lesson with my teacher, Alan Morrison. After the end of the school day, practice and study time, among many other things, can begin; on some days, rehearsals and meetings at Saint Mark's may take place. The day usually ends around midnight with some more practice or study. (If you walk by the church late at night and hear the organ, it could well be yours truly.)

Balancing all these things, particularly organ at Curtis – we perform a new memorized piece each week – and Saint Mark's, can be challenging (not to mention enjoying life outside music!). In high school I was lucky enough to have an organ teacher, Thomas Bara, who taught me what it really means to practice well. The demands this year have furthered his teachings and pushed me to be as efficient as possible, a valuable life skill as the "real world" gets closer and closer.

One of the most gratifying parts of working at Saint Mark's is getting to accompany our choir, and learning what it means to prepare the amount of repertoire we sing was a steep learning curve with a great reward. Preparation for anthems and masses usually begins four weeks before the date they're sung, sometimes. When I first arrived, Simon recommended treating each like solo repertoire, learning it inside and out. I've since found this to be the best way to approach any piece, "easy" or "hard." After methodical practice and learning the piece well, I can be wrapped up in the moment with the choir on Sundays, a highlight of playing at Saint Mark's.

The congregation is another especially great part of Saint Mark's. You all are some of the best hymn singers I've played for, and your interest in and knowledge of music is a unique asset in the church world. We, the parish musicians, know that our hard work is well worth it for a congregation that loves good music. It is also great to work with clergy who are musicians in addition to being great preachers. We get to speak a common language and truly notice what each other are doing.

The most influential mentor I have at the church is Simon. He is demanding in the best way, pushing us to get better and better each time we play and to always keep building our skill-sets. Having a boss to look up to as both an organist and choir trainer is not always a given, and I feel very fortunate to get to learn about both from Simon.

I am coming to learn that (to paraphrase Fr. Mullen) everything important and wonderful about Saint Mark's has to do with its people. From congregation to clergy to sextons to choirmaster, the people and our warm, friendly culture are what make Saint Mark's without question the most rewarding church job I've had yet. Thank you for welcoming me into the family!

# 10:00 FORUM

## LENT AT SAINT MARK'S: RESURRECTION WORDS

Join us this Lent for a program of reading and writing that centers on our sessions at the Sunday Forum at 10 a.m. in the Parish Hall. Come to one session or all of them, and learn more about how you can read, write, and pray like an Anglican.

The Anglican Church was founded in a culture that loved words. The printing press, the King James Bible, the Book of Common Prayer are all landmarks in the cultivation of English as a language not only for literature but for prayer, for expressing God's mysteries, God's grace, and God's beauty. People who lived in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England were surrounded by verbal imagery the way we are surrounded by advertisements and computer screens, and they could almost literally hear more than we can: a full Shakespeare play without reading the script, a three-hour sermon, a rich, dense poem. We scan language for information; they reveled in language for inspiration.

This Lent we will take a giant step backwards (and who among us doesn't love that?) to revel in some founding Anglican language. We'll look at how early modern readers were taught to read, how they kept notes, how they thought about selecting the precise word or phrase or quotation when they composed their own sentences. We'll move from that to consider how Lancelot Andrewes taught us to pray, how George Herbert taught us to dwell in a temple of verse, how the wealth of language that is our spiritual tradition can prepare us anew to hear words of Resurrection as Easter approaches.

— MOTHER NORA JOHNSON

**FEBRUARY 7: PREPARING FOR LENT.** Get yourself a notebook. Bring a notebook and a pen (or a sheet of paper, or whatever else you might want to use—a cell phone?) so you can learn about how Renaissance readers took notes. We will look at wonderful examples of the verbal life of the early Anglican church, and we'll talk about how you might use your journal all during Lent to open your eyes and your ears to the words of Resurrection that are coming to life all the time around you. It's optional to keep a journal, of course, but give it a try, and come learn about this even if you never want to try it yourself.

**FEBRUARY 14: LANCELOT ANDREWES' "DIRECTIONS TO PRAY."** We'll look at how Andrewes, one of the most prominent religious figures of his day, worked with wordplay as a powerful spiritual tool. Bring your notebooks if you can! There will be simple writing exercises for those who want to try them.

**FEBRUARY 21: ANNUAL PARISH MEETING.** Join Father Mullen as we talk about key issues in the life of our parish. This is a wonderful opportunity for asking questions, giving feedback, and learning more about how the parish operates and where it is heading. Lenten programming will resume on February 28.

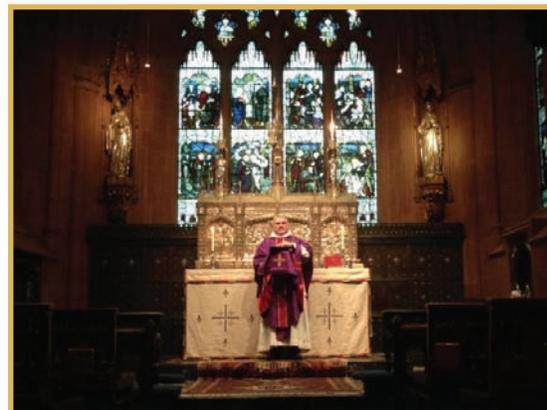
**FEBRUARY 28: HOLY WORDS.** In this session Mother Johnson will lead us in more discovery of early modern writing practices and their relationship to prayer, and we'll take another look at Lancelot Andrewes. Join us even if you've lost your notebook or you never had one. You can start this process at any time.

**MARCH 6: POETRY AND PRAYER.** We'll look at George Herbert's great poem "Prayer" in this session, and we'll experiment with our own ways of talking about what it means to talk to God. Don't forget your notebook, and don't hesitate to join us even if you haven't been "keeping up" with the class during Lent.

**MARCH 13: A TABLE OF WORDS.** This class will look at how prayerful poets like George Herbert saw their reading and writing as form of communion. All are welcome, with or without notebooks.

**MARCH 20: PASSION SUNDAY.** We will arrive at George Herbert's Temple in this class, and we'll look at how and why his poems look like the holy things they represent. Like the Word made flesh, these words came to life on the page and in their readers. We'll also talk about how our practice of Lenten reading has prepared us to celebrate the Passion and Resurrection.

**THERE WILL BE NO FORUM ON MARCH 27, EASTER SUNDAY.**



# ARCHITECTURE OF BAPTISM

FATHER SEAN MULLEN

Thanks to a generous donor and following years of consideration, I am currently consulting with the Vestry, our colleagues at John Milner Architects, and with parishioner Davis d'Ambly (who has provided so much liturgical artwork and design for the parish) about the possibility of moving the Font from its current position in the corner by the Fiske Doors to a more prominent position toward the west end of the center aisle.

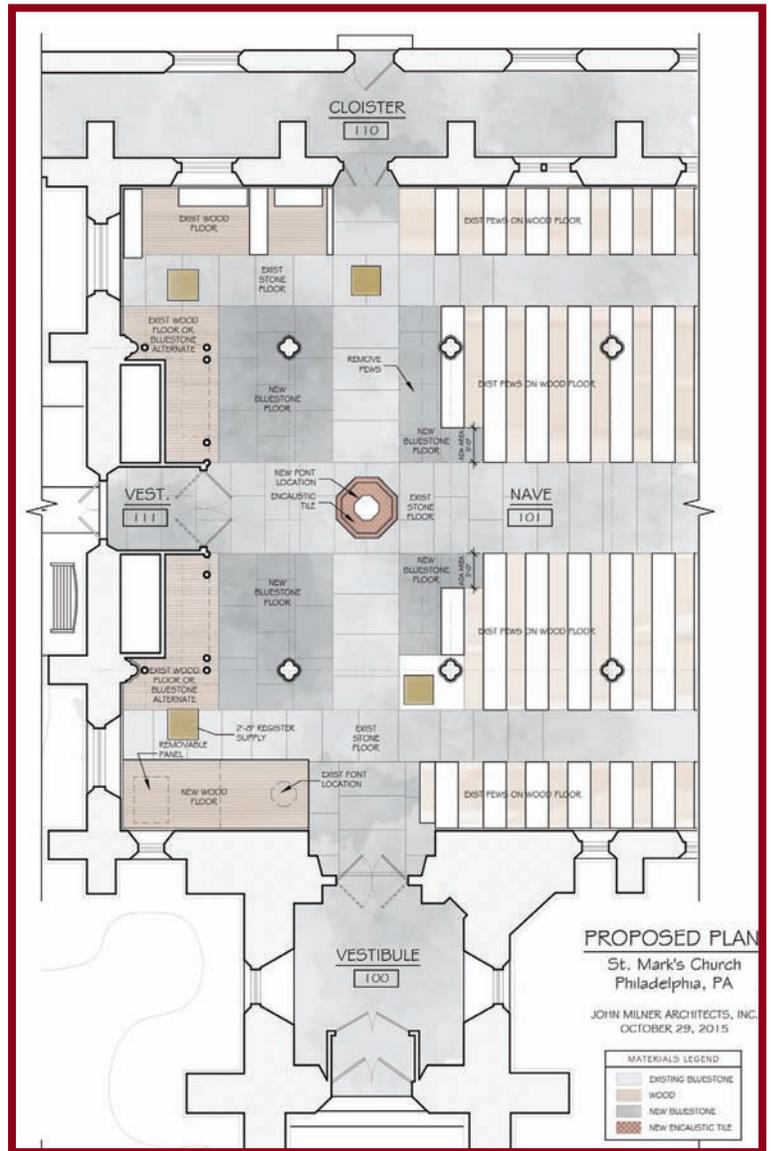
Making this change to the church interior would strengthen the sense of connection of the two dominical Sacraments along the long east-west axis of the church, and it would place the Font—a symbol of the promise of eternal life in Jesus—in proximity and relationship to the Columbarium where the remains of the dead are in repose.

The Font would have a location in the church that is far more conducive to the public celebration of Holy Baptism, and would serve as a stronger reminder of the importance of our inclusion in the Body of Christ by our baptism.

The plan we are discussing involves paving most of the west end in bluestone similar to the existing bluestone paving, as well as restoring the Tabernacle to its traditional (and original) place at the High Altar.

The work would be done as a memorial to beloved parishioner Richard Swayze.

I'll be talking about this possibility at a parish Forum on Jan 24, and as plans are developed we will share them with the parish community at large.



## NEW CLASS FOR FAMILIES: PREPARING FOR FIRST HOLY COMMUNION

MOTHER ERIKA TAKACS

“Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ’s Body the Church. The bond which God establishes in Baptism is indissoluble.” So reads the Book of Common Prayer in the introduction to the baptismal liturgy. In more common parlance, you are never more a Christian than you are the moment you’ve been baptized. Confirmation may be an important adult affirmation of faith, or the way you first claim your identity as an Episcopalian, but baptism is baptism is baptism. The baptized are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked as Christ’s own forever.

Any baptized person, regardless of age, is welcome to receive Holy Communion. Our congregation includes children as young as two or three who regularly receive Holy Communion with reverence and great joy. While this is a good and beautiful thing, it is also completely appropriate that some parents would like their children to receive a little instruction before first receiving Holy Communion. Why not spend some time in conversation about the wondrous gift we are given at the altar? Why not instruct our children in the proper way to show their devotion as they receive the body and blood? Why not take some time as a family to share with each other the experi-

ences we have of coming to the altar to find that, once again, Christ is present for and with and in us in the most remarkable, most tangible, most generous way? And why not celebrate one’s First Holy Communion as a family and as a church community?

This Lent we will be offering First Holy Communion classes for our children and their families. The traditional age for making one’s First Holy Communion is seven years old, but these classes would also be appropriate for younger children who are curious about Communion, who have asked questions or expressed an interest in the bread and the wine and who might be interested in having a conversation about what Communion means for them, the Church, and the world. Our First Holy Communion classes will meet on two separate Sundays at our normal 10 a.m. Schola time, on February 28 and March 6. Families are welcome to come to one or both of these classes with their children. In our classes, we’ll prepare our children to receive their first Holy Communion in Eastertide, on Sunday, April 24, at the 9 a.m. Family Mass, when we will celebrate this great occasion as a community with great joy! All children and families are welcome. Please contact Mother Takacs with any questions.

# HONDURAS ON THE HORIZON

KEN PEARLSTEIN

In 2011, the Diocese of Honduras sent us far above sea level to a mountain overlooking desolate clay-red rivers. Here, huts with dirt floors and no running water surrounded a cinderblock church with a tin roof. In the remote village of Concepción del Norte, on the first clinical day, the desperation was palpable. The Diocese provided us five guards with semiautomatic rifles. That first day, we treated more than 150 patients. Mostly, we treated predictable problems: hypertension, gastric reflux, diabetes, parasites, muscle aches, ear infections and the like. There was one twelve year old boy, however, with a dangerous staph infection extending from a wound on his hand well past his elbow. He was feverish and verging on sepsis. His life we saved — with surgery, intravenous antibiotics and persistent daily washouts. We put a silver cross around his neck



and instructed his mother: if the wound persists, sell the cross, traverse the mountain and seek further medical assistance. We sat down every day for a debriefing. We worked out the kinks. We talked about how we could do better the next day. And the next day. And the next.

In 2014, the Diocese of Honduras sent us to the hub village of Colonial Episcopal, where we treated over six hundred patients. One determined missionary from the South American Missionary Society (SAMS) had turned this village around. Here, there was less desperation. Here, one security guard sufficed. Here was a village whose dignity was being restored by one visionary, Ana Reid, who has since become our mentor and guide as we plan for our return in June of this year. We are not sure what Ana has in store for us. This we know: when we leave Honduras for home, we will have impacted the lives of the locals in a meaningful way. In doing so, our lives, too, will be changed.

At the end of each Mass we are instructed to “go forth in the name of Christ!” We belong to a church that takes this command seriously. We belong to a church that envisions its reach far beyond the city of Philadelphia. We belong to a church that insists on emulating her master. No doubt, there will be challenges. The market is restricting the availability of medications and supplies. Costs are soaring, but orders are orders: go forth in the name of Christ!

Over the next several months, the Saint Mark’s community will have opportunities to support its doctors, nurses, interpreters, and laypersons traveling on mission to Honduras. Look to these opportunities as a means of strengthening your commitment to our Lord and his instructions for us. Most importantly, pray for our safe passage. Pray that we do no harm. Pray that we act with sound clinical judgement and maintain a vigilant eye. Pray that we honor our baptismal promise to honor and respect the dignity of every human being.

## PARISHIONER PERSPECTIVE

LILY DIDEBAN

*Lily Dideban is an attorney currently serving as a judicial law clerk at the Court of Common Pleas in Philadelphia. She is an active member of the Philadelphia Bar Association, Young Lawyers Division, and Vice Chair to the International Law Committee. Lily discovered Saint Mark’s in the fall of 2013 and was baptized and confirmed in the spring of 2014. Lily attends the 9 a.m. Family Mass and occasionally the 11 a.m. High Mass. She participates in the 20s/30s group, volunteers with the garden and soup bowl, and delights in providing coffee hour treats.*

I stumbled upon Saint Mark’s on a sunny fall day with the blessing of the animals in honor of Saint Francis of Assisi. I was in awe of everyone congregating for a sprinkle of holy water and a prayer over their beloved creatures, as tiny as a bird and as large as a horse! I felt the warmth of the parishioners as they delighted in hoisting their pets over to the priest to be blessed. At that moment, a thought crossed my mind: if this community loves their animals this much, how much must they love each other and God? And I smiled with the thought of returning.

What originally attracted me to Saint Mark’s was the garden. It struck me like an oasis amongst the grey and brown buildings of Center City, but the people keep me coming back. Our members have open hearts and arms. I have always felt welcome and at home with Saint Mark’s. I like to think in speaking with other parishioners that it is our recognition that our journeys to Christ may be different but that finding a home at Saint Mark’s is what brings us closer.

Stewardship means protecting God’s gifts. The best way I know how to do this is by being an ambassador of my faith and my parish. I choose to connect with others, friends and acquaintances, to share the best of myself and what I can give to this world. As an attorney, I find that making time for this can be difficult within the profession because of time constraints, but it is not impossible. I manage to volunteer at an immigration non-profit and the Philadelphia Bar Association’s Legal Line to share my education and knowledge at no cost. Here at Saint Mark’s, I am drawn to support the Soup Bowl as a volunteer. We all have felt despair and lost hope at one time or another in our lives. Although I may not have faced homelessness, poverty, or hunger in my life, I can relate to a time where I felt abandoned by God. The Soup Bowl mends my spirit. A kind word, a moment to trade weekly life events, keeping a person in your thoughts, or just an acknowledgement that we are all neighbors, is what it takes to pass on the peace that I feel in my heart with Christ.

Being a member of a parish family means I have a purpose. Every member of a family has a role and I feel it is essential that I can be of help to other members. Whether it is a warm greeting or a needed prayer, staying connected in each other’s lives is what is most important to me to live our faith.

## ST. JAMES SCHOOL UPDATE

After returning from Christmas break, St. James School students, staff and volunteers gathered at Mass to celebrate the Feast of the Epiphany. During this special celebration, Mother Lorna Williams shared the story of the wise men, explained the meaning of the gifts that they carried, and blessed the church's crèche.



## AROUND THE PARISH

### ORGANIST & CHOIRMASTER SEARCH

Having received expressions of interest from about 45 candidates from all over the globe (from 5 continents), the Music Advisory Committee has reviewed all of the submissions with the Rector to come up with a short list of about eight candidates for closer consideration. Perhaps as many as three of those eight will be invited to be final candidates who will come to Philadelphia to meet the committee and the clergy for conversation, and to audition in several ways. Interim Organist, Simon Thomas Jacobs, will be considered as a finalist as well. The Rector hopes to have an appointment made by about Easter. Please pray for the process of discernment in this important position of ministry at Saint Mark's.

### RECTOR'S SABBATICAL

Fr. Mullen will be on sabbatical for nearly four months this spring and summer, thanks to a generous grant by the Lilly Endowments that provides funds for travel as well as funds for the parish to cover the costs related to the rector's absence. The first stop is Spain, spending the month of May in Madrid and Salamanca doing intensive language study and providing assistance to Anglican Communion parishes in Spain. Next he will spend forty days walking the thousand-kilometer Via de la Plata – the route of the Camino de Santiago that begins in Seville and leads the pilgrim to Santiago de Compostela. Fr. Mullen's journey will continue to Tanzania to climb Mount Kilimanjaro, and then to Kenya for a horseback safari before resting up and returning to Philadelphia late in August. We expect to have some visiting clergy throughout the duration of the sabbatical, not only to help with preaching and liturgical responsibilities, but also to provide some enriched opportunities for learning and spirituality for the parish.

## A BISHOP IN THE CHURCH OF GOD

This year our diocese is preparing to call and ordain a new diocesan bishop, the culmination of several years of transition and healing in our diocesan life. In February, the candidates identified by the Bishop Search Committee will visit the diocese for a Week of Mutual Discernment: meetings at which convention delegates and anyone from the diocese will be able to meet the candidates and learn more about their ministry and calling.

**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 18**  
Church of the Good Samaritan, Paoli  
6 p.m. – 10 p.m.

**FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 19**  
Trinity Church, Ambler  
6 p.m. – 10 p.m.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20**  
African Episcopal Church of Saint Thomas, Overbrook  
8 a.m. – 12 noon

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20**  
All Saints' Episcopal Church, Torresdale  
3 p.m. – 7 p.m.

You are warmly encouraged to attend one of these meetings; Saint Mark's clergy and delegates plan to attend the meeting at Saint Thomas on February 20.

The special convention to call the 16th Bishop of the Diocese of Pennsylvania will be held at Philadelphia Episcopal Cathedral on Saturday, March 12, with the ordination of the bishop-elect planned for July. Please hold the nominees, the search and transition committees, and the clergy and delegates of our diocese in your prayers as together we discern the next steps in our common life.



MARY STRAND

The first time I attended Mass at Saint Mark's, I stood, sat, and knelt with incredulous, wide eyes. My Wesleyan and Mennonite background had not prepared me, it seemed, for the Anglo-Catholic style of worship that takes place here. The procession of robed altar servers and ornately vested priests through the bronze gates at the front of the church and up the tiled steps to the high altar felt intimidating and foreign.

Participating in the Saint Mark's community has required that I learn a new way of approaching the altar, a new way of relating to the Eucharist, and a new way of approaching God. In a way, living and working here has required that I learn a new language for engaging with the triune God, and I'm learning it. I now not only know what vestments are, but also know how to set them out properly before a mass. I am learning when to bow my head and when to bow "profoundly," when to ring the bells during a Mass and the right words to say. As a result, I have found myself re-examining my own understandings of who God is and what Christian life looks like. I am learning more about God and experiencing new aspects of God. I'm learning a new appreciation for the Eucharist and finding my way through the rhythms of the liturgy, discovering for myself what an incredibly beautiful way it is to worship.

At Saint Mark's I have found a gracious community that allows me to ask questions, make mistakes, ask more questions, and slowly learn what it means to serve here. By hearing this community's stories and perspectives, my sense of myself, of others, of the world, and of God has expanded.

I remain hopeful as I continue my year here, excited to learn more as I play my part in this community that seeks to gather in faith, serve in love, and proclaim hope, through Jesus Christ.



Seek & Serve Christ in All Persons

Curious?

**We are accepting applications for the 2016-17 Ministry Resident program at Saint Mark's Church.**

Are you or do you know a recent (or soon-to-be) college graduate interested in a year of spiritual formation, intentional community, and service to others? Ministry Residents live in an intentional Christian community with other members of Servant Year (a program of the Episcopal Service Corps) and participate in monthly formation seminars, small groups, and mentoring partnerships. Ministry Residents are invited into a year of integral leadership in our ministries of outreach, children's formation, and worship. These positions begin mid-August and include housing and a modest stipend; health insurance is also available. For more information, email inquiries may be sent to Mtr. Erika Takacs at [etakacs@saintmarksphiladelphia.org](mailto:etakacs@saintmarksphiladelphia.org).

PATRICK KEOUGH

Archbishop Oscar Romero urges each of us to be God's microphone: people who work tirelessly to amplify the voices of the poor, the marginalized, and the oppressed. As I approach the midpoint of my tenure here at Saint Mark's, the greatest lesson I've learned is to mind the microphone feedback and adjust the levels when required. In practice, this sometimes is an easy fix and can be as simple as ordering more green beans and spinach for the food cupboard instead of carrots (by far our least popular offering). Other times, the adjustment needs to be greater, whether it be fixing my attitude, making healthier choices, or being more mindful of my interior life. These adjustments are necessary so that the voices of those who must be heard the most are not drowned out and are heard loud and clear.

The beauty of being a Ministry Resident at Saint Mark's is that with the position and the housing also comes a supportive and loving community. I am graciously given the space to stumble, and when I do, I have a loving group of people that help me get back up and move forward. This is one of the tangible ways I encounter Christ at Saint Mark's: through the feedback that challenges me, catalyzes growth, and propels me to amplify the voices of those who need to be heard the most.



SHROVE TUESDAY...

...is early! Mark your calendars now for our annual Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper on Tuesday (of course), February 9. That's right - February 9! This is about as early as Shrove Tuesday can be on our calendar, and our celebrations are right around the corner. Pancakes hit the griddles early so that we can start serving at 6 p.m. Once again this year our 20s/30s group will be staffing the kitchen, and there will be pancakes, bacon, and sausage to spare.

Shrove Tuesday also means the return of the Saint Mark's Annual Pancake Races. Which one of our children will take home the prize this year? Who's been perfecting their running-while-flipping skills? Which of our parents will show their own poise, excellence, and athleticism whilst flipping a fat carb-loaded crepe high into the air of the cloister? Do come and find out!

JOIN US!

# 20s/30s SIMPLE SUPPERS

CONTINUING  
IN LENT

In Advent, our 20/30s group held their normal monthly Simple Supper, but with a twist. We gathered for dinner in the rectory, but instead of just having our normal simple celebration of Holy Eucharist, we entered into a longer period of prayer and worship, one which included not only Mass, but also our meal and a profound conversation about our hopes and longings, and how God is working in our lives. It was a sacred experience, one that provided us with a moment of still reflection in an otherwise busy season.

Our Simple Suppers will continue throughout Lent and Easter on our regular third Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m., February 17 and March 16. This Lent, I invite you all to make an effort to bring one new person to one of our suppers – perhaps a friend from work, a neighbor, or someone you've just met at church. We're having too much fun to keep it all to ourselves; let's spread the joy and reach out to those who might be looking for a home, a church community, and a place to meet Jesus again or for the first time.

## A LENTEN FAMILY SUPPER

FRIDAY MARCH 4, 5:30 P.M.

It won't be news to anyone at Saint Mark's that eating together can be a profound way of meeting God in the other. Sitting down to table and breaking bread after offering our prayers of thanksgiving quite simply helps us to grow our faith. Common meals help us to slow down, to see and listen to one another in new ways, and to gratefully enjoy the fruits of our labors.

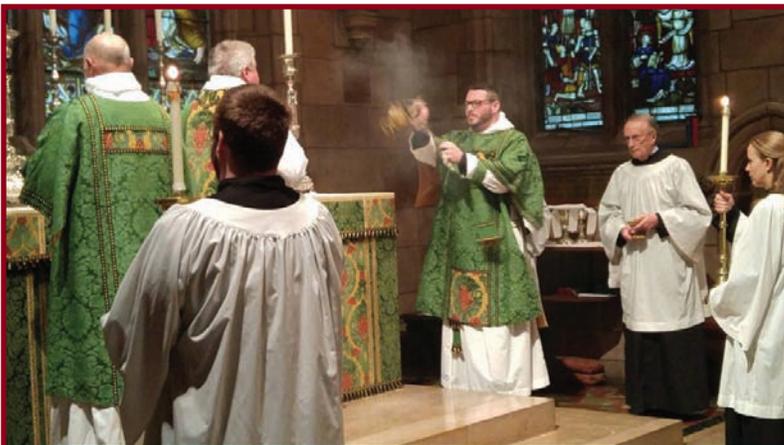
On Friday, March 4, the Saint Mark's children and their families are warmly invited to a simple Lenten Family Supper, at 5:30 p.m. in the Library. We'll share in a simple supper of soup and sandwiches, offer prayers for our families, our Church, and for the world, and enjoy the richness of each other's company. We'll also spend some time talking about our Lenten practices and where we have found God's hand at work in this holy season. All children and families are most welcome to join us.

To respond to this invitation, or to ask any questions, please contact Mother Takacs.



SAINT MARK'S CHURCH  
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In January, Bishop Clifton Daniel ordained parishioner Andrew Kellner to the transitional diaconate, and the new deacon joined us the following Sunday for his first Mass. Andrew will be ordained to the priesthood this summer. Congratulations, Andrew!