

Fourth Sunday of Easter



Why We Do What We Do

Much of what we do in the Mass and other celebrations has a historical, cultural, or spiritual meaning that today is unknown or misunderstood. There is a purpose behind every action. Each comes from scripture or our tradition of worship.

The more we understand all the layers of meaning, the more we can enter into and fully experience all that is going on. This also adds to our understanding of what Christ is saying and doing; how He speaks to us and reveals Himself. And how the Holy Spirit is at work—helping us to hear God's voice; bringing forgiveness, healing, and renewal; uniting us in prayer and community; preparing us for loving and serving.

Our roots of worship are Jewish, Greek, and Roman. Each generation, each culture, each person has shaped things—some more than others. What lasts is what God wants and what is authentically consistent and faithful to our roots.

The mass is the Passover meal, the Last Supper, a taste of the Heavenly Banquet. It is past, present, future, all meeting at the cross and at the sacred table that is the altar.

Today it is often forgotten that Jesus was a Jew. That the roots of Christianity come from ancient Judaism. These roots are shaped, even before the time of Christ, through contact with Greek-speaking nations and peoples.

St. Paul's travels are to the Greek-speaking world—the Gentiles. The Council of Jerusalem (approx. 50 A.D.) deals with issues of the merger of Jewish rituals with Greek culture. St. Paul's letters include the theme of proper versus improper cultural adaptation. Culture can influence but not alter. Culture must be like seasoning—add to "the flavor", but not take away anything essential.

The Roman government also becomes a significant influence. Their lasting influence includes robes and stoles, structure of Church government, and the dates of some major church feasts. Emperors called for major councils that resolved major disputes.

Devotions such as the Rosary and the Scapular will come from individuals and religious communities trying to help people grow spiritually. Practices and traditions like Nativity scenes and Stations of the Cross emerge for the same reason.

One of the issues behind the Protestant Reformation was a misunderstanding of the role of history, of culture, of art, of tradition. An attempt was made to remove all these influences to ignore them, and to throw out 1500 years, valuing almost nothing after the time of the Apostles. They failed to see the connection, the continuity, the Apostolic roots in the Catholic Church of the 1500s.

We see the same tension today in the Catholic Church and in mainline Protestant churches. A misunderstanding of the role of history, of culture, and of tradition is leading to the creation of many new non-denominational churches that have no roots.

Their worship is a mixture of music, a variety of beliefs and rituals, and sermons by self-appointed ministers with little or no study or training. They ignore even the Jewish and Greek roots of Christianity. A rootless society is increasingly drawn to these rootless churches.

We must understand, value, and pass on our roots. We must preserve them and benefit from them. To get the most out of Mass, we must enter into the world of Moses and the Passover Meal and the

world of Christ and the Last Supper. To value our devotions and traditions, we must learn more about where they came from and how they benefit us. They are tools for spiritual growth and for life. They help us learn the language of faith and love.

Prayer

Many times our prayers are an attempt to place restrictions on God. We state the preferred outcome as if it is the only option He has. We sometimes say "If you love me..." (you'll do things exactly the way I'm asking). And then we give a time limit.

Part of human nature is to want things my way. Christ wants us to come to Him honestly, expressing what we feel and what we want. But in the end He wants us to trust Him and believe He wants our best.

Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane asks that the cup of suffering be taken away. But He also adds, "But not my will, but your will be done" (Mt 26:39, Mk 14:36, Lk 22:42).

Christ believes that if suffering is part of the plan, that it will be for a greater good and that the Father will be with Him and help Him endure. His prayer says, you know more than I and you know best.

Christ also does not blame His Father or reject other options. He states His wishes and desires, but entrusts the outcome (His future) to the Father. And He accepts the outcome once it is known. The first part of the plan (suffering and death) is difficult and could be seen in the moment as all there is. The final part, resurrection and Heaven comes out of the fruit of prayer and trust ("Into your hands I commend my spirit.")

We pray God removes our suffering or gives us the strength to endure as He uses it to help others. And that He helps us carry our crosses through His constant presence.



"2010" Weekly Budget.....	\$5,350.00
Offertory collected April 18 th	\$5,361.92
Difference.....	+\$ 11.92
Second Collections	
Second collection April 18 th "Right to Life Fund".....	\$1,211.55
Campaign '10 Pledges:	
Total donations made (from pledges) as of 03/21/10.....	\$91,753.33
April 18 th collection.....	\$ 1,288.00
New Campaign total donations from pledges.....	\$93,041.33

Next Week's Second Collection

Next week's second collection will be for the Archdiocesan Hispanic Ministries only. If you receive envelopes you will also have one for Building Fund this week. To make things easier we have moved the Building Fund collection to the following week, May 9th. We are in great hopes that this will be the last move of collections, and appreciate your patience and understanding.

Our Newly Baptized



The parish of St. Clement's would like to welcome our newest members Ashley Jasmin Cruz Ruiz, Michael Glyn McGuffey, Yordi Arreaga Brito, Wilber Steven Cordero Brito, Anderson Quintana Moran, and Julissa Benitez. The children were baptized into the Catholic Faith on Saturday, April 17th and Sunday, April 18th, 2010. May the Lord protect them and their families as they begin their walk with Christ.

Thank you



A special thank you to the Bereavement team, Hispanic cleaning team, parishioners, friends, family, and parish staff for the use of their time and talents. Pearl's mass of Celebration and luncheon were a beautiful dedication to the honor of her memory. What a wonderful family we are blessed to have in the parishioners of St. Clement's.

Fourth Sunday of Easter

April 25, 2010

First Reading: Acts 13:14, 43-52

We now turn to the Gentiles.

Second Reading: Revelation 7:9, 14b-17

The Lamb will shepherd them and lead them to springs of life-giving water.

Gospel: John 10:27-30

I give my sheep eternal life.

Living the Paschal Mystery

Most of our reflections on the paschal mystery revolve around reminders that being plunged into the dying and rising mystery of Christ through our baptism means we must die to self if we wish to share in Jesus' eternal life. We look for opportunities in our daily living to die to self and thus transform what appear to be ordinary, human actions into extensions of the ministry of the Good Shepherd himself. For example, comforting the sick and dying isn't simply a caring human action; in the context of our baptismal commitment it is an expression of Jesus' love for us and the dignity of the other as a member of the Body of Christ.

This is true and surely the heart of the mystery. This Sunday, however, we might turn this around and rest a bit in what the Good Shepherd offers us when we live the paschal mystery: eternal life, the assurance that we will never perish. For all our efforts to die to self for the good of others, they do not equal the gift of self that Jesus gives us. Sometimes we are so caught up in the effort of dying that we do forget that new life is already within us and among us. This is a good Sunday to bask in Jesus' care and protection; listen to his voice calling us to his loving, embracing hands; and rejoice in the goodness showered upon us who are faithful to his call. This, too, is living the paschal mystery. ~Living Liturgy

Stewardship Thought

Paul and Barnabas encountered both violent rejection and joyful acceptance of the message that they preached. We, too, may meet with mixed reactions when we use our gifts in the service of God. But, the Gospel assures us, the reward for those who follow faithfully is eternal life.

Saturday April 24, 5:30pm.....Eleanor Schwark (RIP)
 Sunday, April 25, 8:30am..... Our Parish Family
 Sunday, April 25, 10:00am.....(Spanish Mass) Javier Zavala (RIP)
 Sunday, April 25, 11:30 am.....Heston Suit (Baptism)
 Sunday, April 25, 1:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Ana Moreno Rivas (RIP)
 Sunday, April 25, 7:00pm..... (Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
 Monday, April 26, 12:15pm.....Daily Mass
 Tuesday April 27, 12:15 pm.....Daily Mass
 Wednesday, April 28, 12:15pm.....Daily Mass
 Wednesday, April 28, 6:30 pm.....Rosary
 Thursday, April 29, 12:15 pm.....Communion Service
 Friday, April 30, 7:00pm.....Prayer Group/ Adoration
 Saturday May 1, 5:30pm..... Our Parish Family
 Sunday, May 2, 8:30am..... Our Parish Family
 Sunday, May 2, 10:00am.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
 Sunday, May 2, 11:30 am..... Our Parish Family
 Sunday, May 2, 1:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family
 Sunday, May 2, 7:00pm.....(Spanish Mass) Our Parish Family

SPIRITUAL WARFARE



The closer we get to Jesus, the more we will deal with Spiritual warfare. The more we pray, the more we love, the more Satan will fight back.

In Satan's mind, we're his, claimed by him when he brought down Adam and Eve. Christ claims us back on the Cross, but Satan will not let go.

Satan wants those who love to suffer greatly. He wants us to think that following Christ is too costly. That living for Christ is not worth it. He cons people into living for themselves.

Satan sells the temptations of today making it seem like Heaven is so far away and a promise that will never be kept. He lures with false lights and temporary pleasures. Satan offers the forbidden fruit, distorting the good and making evil seem like the best option.

"Everybody does it." "Just once." "You deserve it." Admission to Heaven requires the price of sacrifice now and following Christ's example by cooperating with His grace. It means discipline, dedication, and determination. And seeing today's decisions through the lens of eternity. Today could cost me Heaven or help me get there.

Please pray for the people who are suffering:



Donna Thibault - respiratory illness, Barbara Smith- cancer, Marty McKinnon- ovarian cancer, Cayla Johnson-hydrocephalus, Joe Campbell-follicular lymphoma, Tonya Isham-tumor, Curtis Lunt-ill health, Melissa Silva-health, Juanita Rochester-cancer, Chuck Terry- prostate cancer, June Macejkovic-heart condition, Fr. Denis Kolumber-health, Ernie -leukemia, Maria Farias- breast cancer, Jeanne Walraven-health, Jean Seitz-cancer, Angie Defalco-health, Erna Wyatt-health, Jim Rorer-special intention, Michael Llop-brain tumor, Janice Miller-health, Lou Brown-brain cancer, Jaden Bates-health, Roy Davies- safety, The people of Haiti & Chile-health & safety, Chris Wable-health, Jim Wable-lung cancer, Marilyn Clayton-health, Ashlie Warren-health, Jenna Proctor-health, Jeff Elder-health, Serge Kastorsky-cancer, Terry Alan-bladder cancer, Lisa Clark-failed surgery, Betty Maddox-chemo, Donna Ivey-surgery, Cory Ivey-surgery, Darrin Ivey-health, Jeff Bigelow-health.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 1, 5:30 p.m.: First Communion Mass (English)

May 16, 11:30 a.m.: Graduation Mass (English)

1:00 p.m.: Graduation Mass (Spanish)

May 22 and 29 (varying times): First Communion Masses (Spanish)

May 23, 5:00 p.m.: Confirmation with AB Gregory

May 28, 5:00 p.m.: Parish Picnic @ Calhoun REC Center

Archdiocesan News

The ATLANTA AREA OF WORLDWIDE MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER is on FACEBOOK. Look for AtlantaWWME and become a fan.

Upcoming dates and important WWME news can be found there. In 2010 Weekends are April 23, June 11, Aug. 20, Sept. 24 and Nov. 12. Contact: (866) 285-9963 or www.wmearthlanta.org to register.

Unemployed? MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT CHURCH, 2971 Butner Road, SW, Atlanta, hosts **GO-UP (GET OUT OF THE UNEMPLOYMENT PIT)** each Tuesday at 7 p.m. in the parish center. Interested individuals gather in a Christian setting to reflect on the call of God in these difficult times, discuss how to find resources in the job search, network with the employed and unemployed, and increase skills to look for new employment. This ministry joins with other churches and other agencies in reaching out to those finding these economic times hard to live with and understand. Contact: (404) 349-0176 for more information.

A LIVING IN THE SPIRIT WEEKEND with Father Tim Hepburn will be held at HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, 101 Walt Banks Road, Peachtree City, May 21-22. This weekend is an experience with the Lord in prayer, Scripture, praise and worship, teaching and small group discussion. To register call(678) 464-5986 or e-mail lsmit23@emory.edu.