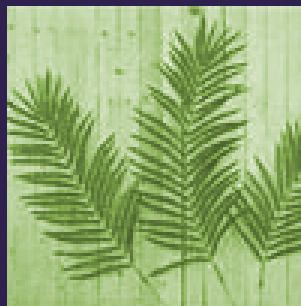
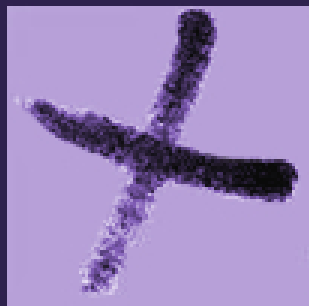


# St. Mark's Christian Formation



## LENT 2010

## A Holy Season at St. Mark's: Lent, Holy Week, and Easter

Like breathing out and breathing in, the seasons of the Church Year establish a natural rhythm of human life: times of quiet and times of celebration, times to look inward and times to look outward. The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday (February 17), and continues for forty days and forty nights, or about six weeks. Lent is one of our inward, quiet seasons. The name 'Lent' is derived from the Anglo Saxon 'lencten,' which was the name for the season of Spring, and a reference to the lengthening of days. But in a spiritual sense, these forty days are a time to live simply and intentionally, in remembrance of Jesus' forty days in the wilderness, where his call was both tested and deepened. In the early church, the forty days before Easter were a time for new converts to be prepared for Baptism, through study, prayer, fasting, and learning the practices of mercy that mark Christian life.

At St. Mark's, we have a variety of offerings during Lent to help us deepen the practices of our faith. It is our hope that, from these offerings, you will choose several to help you and your family experience the season in ways that are life-giving.

### February 16, Shrove Tuesday

*Pancake Supper & Parish Talent Show*

*Supper 5:30-6:30 in Gosnell Hall*

*Talent Show 6:30-8:00 in Tom Gish Hall*

Because the season of Lent is a time for simplicity in all things, Shrove Tuesday was traditionally the day on which families would use up all of their butter, sugar, and eggs, so pancakes were often served. The French name for the same day is *Mardi Gras*, "Fat" Tuesday. The word "shrove" is part of the English verb, to "shrive," or to receive absolution, a preparation for the introspection of Lent. At St. Mark's, we celebrate with pancakes and sausage for supper, and then a feast of talent by parish members of all ages.

### February 17, Ash Wednesday

*Morning Quiet Retreat, 10 a.m. to noon*

*Tom Gish Hall & the full parish campus*

The Revs. Mike Chalk and Mary Earle will lead this quiet time of reflection and prayer to help us prepare for the Ash Wednesday service at noon, and to help us choose and shape our Lenten practices.

### Ash Wednesday in the Church

*7 a.m., Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes*

*Noon, Proper Liturgy and Imposition of Ashes*

*6:30 p.m., Holy Eucharist and Imposition of Ashes*

Our services of worship on Ash Wednesday help us initiate a "Holy Lent" by drawing us into ancient practices of prayer, repentance and the imposition of ashes on our foreheads as the bodily reminder that "we are dust, and to dust we shall return."

**As every Wednesday, Café Kairos will be open for dinner in Gosnell Hall, 5-7 p.m.**

### Sunday, February 21

*Evensong in the Church, 4-5:30 p.m.*

*Gerre Hancock & the Parish Choir*

Evensong is one of the life-giving traditions of prayer in the Anglican tradition. This offering of prayer and song is the occasion of our annual visit from Gerre Hancock, internationally acclaimed organist, choir conductor, and improviser. Music by Hancock, Ayleward, Sumsion and Gibbons.

*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1)

## Adult Formation Wednesday Evenings

### *An Altar in the World*

February 24, March 3, 10, 17, 24

6:30-8:00 p.m., Tom Gish Hall

*Café Kairos*, 5-7 p.m.

As part of St. Mark's emphasis on living our faith in daily life, the clergy will lead a study of the book, *An Altar in the World*, by priest and best-selling author Barbara Brown Taylor. Taylor recounts, in the introduction to her book, how she was once invited to give a talk during Lent on "What is saving your life now." She says,

*What is saving my life now is the conviction that there is no spiritual treasure to be found apart from the bodily experiences of human life on earth. My life depends on engaging the most ordinary physical activities with the most exquisite attention I can give them. My life depends on ignoring all touted distinctions between the secular and the sacred, the physical and the spiritual, the body and the soul. What is saving my life now is becoming more fully human, trusting that there is no way to God apart from real life in the real world.*

Please join us for lively conversation around the topics of this very engaging book. Copies of *An Altar in the World* will be available for sale in St. Mark's Bookstore.

## Continuing Evening Class

### *The Virtuous Woman: Shattering the Superwoman Myth* Wednesday Evenings, 5:30-6:30 p.m., Room 305

With humor, realism, and wisdom, the author Vicki Courtney discusses Proverbs 31, a passage in the Bible describing the "ideal" woman – or a variety of qualities that might characterize a woman of strength and spiritual stature. Maurleen Cobb will facilitate this conversation-based class. The timing is intended to be especially easy for parents of members of the children's choir to attend. Come have dinner at the church and enjoy the community of other women.

## Adult Formation Sunday Mornings

10:10-11:00

### *Episco-Basics: Body and Soul, the Episcopal way of following Jesus*

*The Rev. Jonathan Wickham, Dean Richardson Room*

What does it mean to live our everyday lives, rooted in the living stream of the Episcopal traditions of Christian thinking and practice? This conversation-based course will explore the basic beliefs of our Church, with a view toward how our beliefs arise from and shape our daily lives. The book, *An Altar in the World*, by Barbara Brown Taylor, will be a resource for the class [see the Wednesday evening program for a description of the book, which is available in the St. Mark's Bookstore], but full participation in the class does not depend upon reading the book.

## *The Spiritual Journey of Lent*

*The Revs. Mike Chalk, Mary Earle, and friends*

Room 305

The Revs. Mike Chalk, Mary Earle and others will alternate leading this conversational class on how we engage the classical spiritual practices of Christianity in our own lives.

## *Learning to Think Biblically*

*The Rev. Drs. John Lewis and Jane Patterson*

*Tom Gish Hall*

This class continues from the fall, addressing contemporary issues from the perspective of the New Testament.

## Lenten Resources

Available in the narthex (vestibule) of the church, and in various other locations on our campus.

*For families with children, please see our flyer on Lent, Holy week, and Easter for families. It is being given out in children's Sunday School classes and is on the St. Mark's website, [www.stmarks-sa.org](http://www.stmarks-sa.org).*

## *"2010 Lenten Meditations:*

### *Healing Ourselves and a Hurting World"*

A book of daily readings and reflections by Sister Claire Joy of the Community of the Holy Spirit in New York City. This book is sponsored by Episcopal Relief and Development, and is a way to ground oneself, spiritually, in the Lenten discipline of care for the neighbor.

## *Hope Chests*

"Hope Chests" are the small cardboard boxes distributed by Episcopal Relief and Development for children and adults to deposit coins into during Lent. These are the boxes that many of us knew as "mite boxes" when we were children, in honor of the poor widow who put into the Temple treasury her two copper coins, which were all she had to live on (her "mite," Mark 12:42). The coins are collected by the church in Easter Season, and the money given for the relief of the world's poorest people, through the ministries of ERD.

## *Forward Day By Day*

If you have never used the "Forward" before for your daily reflections, perhaps this Lent would be a good time to start. The meditation for each day relates to one of the biblical passages assigned for the day in the "Daily Office Lectionary" (see pp.934-1001 in the Book of Common Prayer). The daily office lectionary is a cycle of readings designed to help Christians be nourished by the word of God, by reading the entire Bible every two years. "Forward Day by Day" relates one of the readings to our everyday lives.



## Holy Week: Palm Sunday to Easter

The dramatic services of Holy Week offer us a chance to walk in the footsteps of Jesus and his closest friends on the journey to the cross. By following the readings for each day, we have the opportunity to internalize the mystery of Jesus' Death and Resurrection, so that we may learn to recognize how God creates and re-creates *us* in the events of our own lives. This year, our story will be grounded in the Gospel of Luke, 19:29-24:12.

### March 28

***Palm Sunday Services at 9:00, 11:11 and 11:15 Begin in Travis Park***

Hosanna in the Highest! Our Palm Sunday procession, commemorating Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem, begins in Travis Park with song and prayer and the blessing of the palms. One of the most powerful signs of the day is the presence of a real donkey, whose gentle, humble walking with us is a reminder that the power of Jesus' Kingship was known principally through the ways he gave his life completely for the well-being of others. For children, there will be a chance to pat the donkey and enjoy pony rides on the front lawn from 10:00-11:00 a.m.

**Please note that the 7:45 a.m. service will begin, as usual, in the church.**

### March 29, 30, 31

***Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday***

***Holy Eucharist at Noon in the church***

It is traditional in the Episcopal Church to celebrate Holy Communion on the weekdays of Holy Week (Thursday, Friday and Saturday have their own proper services). At St. Mark's, our services are held at noon in the church on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

### Wednesday, March 31

***4:30 p.m., Holy Week Footwashing especially for children***

The children in the cherub choir, their siblings, and children in the Parents' Day Out program will have a chance to learn about Jesus' model of service by engaging in the story and actions of footwashing (the story is told in the Gospel of John 13:1-20).

Jesus said, "If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." Through the symbolic action of footwashing, children have a chance to learn what it means to imitate Jesus in his care for others. Other children are welcome to come, with their parents.

### Thursday, April 1

***Maundy Thursday, 6:30 p.m., in the church***

Maundy Thursday is the night on which we remember the Last Supper of Jesus, in two ways: as the beginning of our Eucharistic meals; and also as the night when Jesus put a towel around his waist and washed his disciples' feet as an example for how we are to practice our faith. Our service will include both the symbolic action of footwashing and the Holy Eucharist. The service will finish with the startling stripping of the altar area, the darkening of the church, and the reading of the Gospel story of Jesus' anguished night in the Garden of Gethsemane.

### Friday, April 2

***Good Friday, noon in the Church***

The stark simplicity of the cross sets the tone for the service of Good Friday in the church at noon: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, we pray you to set your passion, cross, and death between your judgment and our souls...." The service offers stillness and quiet in which to reflect on our lives in the light of the unsearchable love of God. Music at this service is offered by the Parish Youth Choir.

***Good Friday, The Way of the Cross, 6:30 p.m., beginning in the Church***

The youth of the parish offer this interactive experience of prayer, song, and meditation on Jesus' journey with the cross. For many, it is at this service that the events of Holy Week really come alive in their hearts, as they hear the story and carry the cross right here in downtown San Antonio.

### Saturday, April 3

***Easter Egg Hunt and picnic***

***Bishop Jones Center, 10:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.***

Our first celebration of Easter begins with the parish children (and many friends!) on the grounds of the Bishop Jones Diocesan Center (111 Torcido, San Antonio, TX 78209). The Jones Center

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

comprises a beautiful park, at the springs of the San Antonio River. The hunting of eggs reminds all of us that when we seek Christ, we will find him, and the sweetness of life *in* him.

***Easter Vigil, 6:30 p.m., starts in the Tucker Courtyard, continues in the Church  
BRING BELLS FROM HOME TO RING!***

Easter Vigil gives us an experience of the sharp joy of seeing darkness give way to light, grief give way to rejoicing, death give way to life. The service begins in the Tucker Courtyard, with the lighting of the Easter Fire and Paschal candle. From there, all proceed into the darkened church, and share the light of Christ, candle by candle. The principal stories of our faith are told by candlelight, as stories of hope in the darkness. At the midpoint, the Celebrant proclaims, "Alleluia! Christ is risen!" and all the lights come on; bells are rung; organ, choir, and people burst forth in song. This service proclaims the deepest realities of human life and of God's love for us.

Do not miss it!

## Sunday, April 4

***Easter Day, 7:45, 9:00, and 11:15 in the church  
BRING FLOWERS from your yard and garden to  
"flower" the cross.***

***CAYA (Come As You Are), 11:11 in Tom Gish Hall***

"Welcome, Happy Morning!" we sing on this purely joyful day. The movement from Lent to Holy Week to Easter is now complete. We have lived these six weeks with our eyes open, so that we may also recognize how Christ is present in the ordinary, how he suffers, and how he rises in the lives of all who "clothe themselves with Christ" (see Paul's letter to the Galatians 3:27). Alleluia!



## Thursdays and Fridays in Lent March 4-5; 11-12; 18-19; 25-26.

***11:00am to 1:00pm each Thursday and Friday in March***

St. Mark's will once again host its now legendary Lenten Luncheons for the 58th year. This is an exciting opportunity for us to welcome some of our downtown neighbors to St. Mark's. As we prepare, serve, and eat lunch with them, we will be raising money for outreach ministries of St. Mark's, including those that provide food for some of our other downtown neighbors. If you want to join this important aspect of St. Mark's Kitchen Corps ministry, please phone Julie Van Zandt at 210-296-8706.

