



Grace Church of West Feliciana Parish

"A loving congregation seeking unity with God and each other in Christ"

**Newsletter for
March 13 & 20, 2016**

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"It Just Isn't Fair..."

This is the exclamation the older son makes in the parable we read in the Gospel of Luke (15:1-3, 11b-32) this last Sunday. The Pharisees and Scribes are upset that Jesus is eating with prostitutes, tax collectors, and other sinners. In Jewish tradition, the type of guest you invite to dinner will either increase the honor and reputation of the host, or it will lead to dishonor. Few would invite thieves, prostitutes, tax collectors, or even shepherds to banquets. The Pharisees and Scribes are asking, "How can this man think of himself as a Rabbi and still eat with these kinds of people? What an example is he setting for his followers?"

Jesus responds by telling them three stories found in Luke 15. This Sunday we read the third story. Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.'" This is a provocative opening for several reasons: First, as a younger son in this culture he is not entitled to inherit, unless it is the father's will to leave him an inheritance. Asking for what "belongs to him" is presumptuous and it almost forces his father's hand. In this culture this is seen as dishonorable. Second, inheritances are only given after the father has died. In a way he is saying, "Father, I can't wait until you die, give me my money now!" This offends the father and the household.

Jesus continues, "So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living." By now, the Pharisees and Scribes are beginning to think the father is crazy. Why else would he allow a portion of the land to be sold, and then allow his younger son to leave the village to go to a foreign territory with all his money? This is very strange. The anger of the Pharisees now would be directed at both son and father. This kind of thing is not seen in their culture. The proper reaction of the father would have been to give the son a severe beating and expel him out of the village. But this is not what the old man does.

Jesus continues, "When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need... He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating." This young man has turned away from everything: His father, his village, his land, and now, he even turns away from his religion. He has chosen to work with pigs, an expressly forbidden profession for Jews. He would even eat the food given to the pigs if he could. The Pharisees and Scribes approved of this outcome. The young man has reached rock bottom and he is rightly punished by God. If the story had ended here, the Pharisees and Scribes would be happy. The unrighteous man is punished by God for his unrighteousness.

Jesus continues with a story of redemption and forgiveness the Pharisees and Scribes never expected. The young man "came to himself," and devised a plan to re-

store his relationship with his father and to prevent starvation, "I will say to my father, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.'" Hired hands usually live in a village and get paid a daily wage. The Pharisees and Scribes would have expected the father to be extremely tough. Perhaps refuse to see his son, refuse to give him a job, get him expelled from the village. The son has assaulted the family's honor and the father has the right to avenge his honor. But, this is not what happens.

"While the son was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him." He interrupts the son's prepared speech and orders his servants to bring the best robe, give the boy a ring, kill the fatted calf, and prepare a banquet, "For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!" I can picture the rage in the Pharisees and Scribes faces and can almost hear what they are saying, "This is just not fair! He should pay for his crimes. He doesn't deserve this royal treatment. He must pay it all back!" In fact, this is what the older son says, "Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you... But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!" This is how the Pharisees and the Scribes see themselves. They have followed the law and kept the commandments. They have kept themselves pure, not associating with sinners. They have done what God expected of them. The kingdom should be given to them, and it should not include any sinners. "It is just not fair!"

There is a subtle point of criticism Jesus is making. In Jewish tradition, it was the job of the older son to look for the younger son, to facilitate a reconciliation with the father, and to help the brother rehabilitate his standing in the community and repay his debt. The older son doesn't seek after the younger brother, he does not facilitate a relationship, he does nothing to bring the wayward son back into the fold. He has failed in his duties. He has been so concerned with the letter of the Law, that he forgets his duty as a brother and a son. The Pharisees and Scribes, likewise, have forgotten about the least and the lost among them. They have built walls of separation between them and "sinners" whom they no longer see as "brothers and sisters." Like Cain, they failed to realize they are called to be "keepers" of their brothers and sisters. Jesus, on the other hand, acts like the true older brother. He seeks after the lost and gives up his life to find them and rescue them. He is the true older brother who restores a relationship between the lost sinners of the world and their Father. This is the truth of this story. Jesus eats and welcomes sinners because he has come into the world to save sinners.

During this fourth week of Lent I invite us to forego any judgement of others we don't see as holy enough and to see ourselves as the younger brother in need of restoration. May we, forgiven younger brothers and sisters, become the good older brothers and sisters many in our community need, just as Jesus is our true older brother. Blessings, Fr. Roldan+

Welcome to Wayne and Kim Morgan who transferred their membership from Christ Church in Covington, Louisiana, to Grace Church.

Congratulations to Judy Nordgren on the birth of her grandson, Lewis Alston Sulzer on Feb. 10, weighing 7 pounds, 5 ounces. Proud parents are Blair and Eric Sulzer and other grandparents are Gerry and Pam Sulzer.

CMA: Next Sunday the Diocese will have the kickoff for the Community Mission Appeal (CMA). We will have a special collection during the 10am service. Envelopes will be provided that have the mailing address for the Diocese. 100% of the gifts received through CMA will go directly to churches in our Diocese to support the development and continuing strength of mission work. To contribute financially, please visit the Diocesan website at www.edola.org or send a check written out to Community Mission Appeal and mail to The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana, Attn: Community Mission Appeal, 1623 Seventh Street, New Orleans, LA 70115.

Intercessory prayers are asked for Grace Church members who are ill:

Mark Armstrong, Landon Anderson, David Barnes, George Black, Wayne Blake, Russell Daniel, Cecil May Dwyer, Rob Fisher, Kent Mitchell, Tom Morris, Sara Nelson, Emile Pourciau, Margie Sheets, Anne Timmons, Wendell Wade, Jeremy Willis, Pam Willson, Donna Wright, Madeline Wright.

Birthdays

Beau Farmer, Lyn Lokey-March 13; Jim Weller, Eddie Gore, Sarah Roland-March 14; Beverly Walker, Cozette Stevens-March 17; Allen Senior-March 18; Denis Brown, Asher Simcoe-March 19; William Klein, Tom Tully-March 21; Cora Fuller-March 22; James Harvey III, Bob Finley-March 23; Lynn Leak-March 24.

Wedding
Anniversaries

Glenn and Anne Timmons-March 16; Troy and Lynn Ballard, Ken and Dixie Blue-March 17; Christian and Chip Tregle-March 24;

Other persons prayers are asked for:

Charles Barham, Mercer Barney, Jolie Berry, MiMi Bornman, Leo Brown, Ben Brown, Steve Brown, Willie Bryant, Randy Bryant, Debbie Bunch, John Caruthers, Jenny Clark, Bodo & Kitty Claus, Troy Cothorn, Kathleen Davis, Debbie Desmar, Helen Desselles, Molly Douglas, Mark Ellison, Gretchen Epling, Jennifer Erickson, Louise Ewin, Mark Felner, Dennis Flynn, Matthew Gill, Myron Hamey, Roy Hardin, Parke Henderson, Elmo Hegwood, Wayne Hudnall, Joel James, Lindsey Johnson, Jill Joffrion, Mary Jo Kaly, Cecil Kelly, Jody Lemoine, Bob Lewis, Jessica Liddle, Max, Paul McGuff, Ralph McKenzie, Laine Martrain, Mary Anne McCrory, Ruby McKee, Robin Michel, Dorothy Anne Millikin, Jim Mire, Jimmy Mitchell, Rusty Melton, Alice Mier, Mike Morris, Randall Nachman, Emily Neumann, Ashley Palmer, Barton Platte, Susanna Prescott, Holly Price, Peter Purpera, Carol Ratcliff, Tammy Riggs, Gwin Shanks, Kaizlyn Shockley, Cade Stapleton, Gary Thomas, Glenn Thomas III, Terri Thompson, Denham Turner, Darold Whitmer, John Woodward. Those serving in the armed forces: Parker Blanche, Amanda Browning, James Boucher, Jay Christopher, Ryan Coacher, Ben Colia, John Davis, Joseph Dooley, Bryan Geltz, Edward Jenkins, Laura Latson, Shawn Lemons, Terry Palmer, James Powers, Jeff Ragusa, Christopher Willis, Matthew Young, 745th & 746th Exped Squads, 379th & 926th Exped. Support Squads.

Donations for Easter lilies for Easter Sunday may be given by putting a check in the offering plate on Sundays or by mailing a check with a list of who is to be memorialized, who it is in honor of or what it is in thanksgiving for. Donations need to be received by March 18th.

Bike Race this Sunday: Parishioners, please be aware of the Rouge Roubaix Bike event this Sunday, March 13. **The race will start at Parker Park on Commerce Street at 8am** and the finish will be coming up from Mahoney Road onto Ferdinand Street. The actual finish line will be on Ferdinand Street at Prosperity St, crossing the street from the Court House over to the sidewalk in front of the Grace Church Cemetery. The officials believe the **earliest riders will be coming to the finish line around twelve noon.** The Town of St. Francisville will have Commerce Street at Parker Park closed to vehicular traffic as well as the intersection of Commerce and Highway 61 at the north end (by the Exxon Station) to allow the riders a safe departure. Parishioners who attend 7:30am service are encouraged to use the south side of Commerce Street (stop light by Que Pasa and The Francis) to access Ferdinand Street, so they will not be inconvenienced.

The ECW will have a brief meeting following the 10am service on Sunday, March 13 in Bp. Jackson Hall. The group will discuss plans to attend the Annual ECW meeting on April 22 and 23 in Baton Rouge, All women are invited to attend.

Your prayers are asked for the family of John E. Dougherty, who died last week. Funeral services will be held on March 12 in Los Alamos, New Mexico where John lived since the death of his wife Jean Dougherty.

****Choir Corner**** As we approach Holy Week, the Grace choirs ask for your prayers and support. Singers and bell ringers continue to be needed. Come join us if you can. You will receive a warm and grateful welcome. We have guest instrumentalists for Maundy Thursday & Easter Sunday. If you would like to help underwrite the cost of these and future guest musicians, contact Mel or Fr. Roman. Peace & Love. 🎵

Spring Forward! Don't forget to move your clocks an hour ahead this Sunday, March 13



Please Mark Your Calendar

Palm Sunday Services: March 20 at 7:30AM at Saint John's and Grace and at 10:00AM at Grace.

Wednesday of Holy Week: March 23, Holy Eucharist at 5:15PM

Maundy Thursday: March 24, Holy Eucharist and Washing of Feet at 7:00PM at Grace.

Vigil at the Altar of Repose begins at 8:15PM.

Cleaning of the Church by the Youth Group begins at 8:30PM, followed by TBA activity.

Good Friday: March 25, Passion of our Lord Service at 12:00Noon.

Stations of the Cross in Grace Cemetery at 3:00PM.

Saturday of Holy Week: March 26, Great Vigil of Easter at 7:00PM

Easter Sunday: March 27, Holy Eucharist at 7:30 and 10:00AM. Easter Egg Hunt immediately following the 10:00AM Service.

We have Daily Morning Prayer now on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays at 8:00AM, Thursdays at 9:15, and Fridays at 7:00AM

Grace Church
of West Feliciana Parish
P.O. Box 28
St. Francisville LA 70775

Address Service Requested

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St. Francisville LA 70775

Sunday Ministry Assistants & Calendar

Sunday, March 13, 2016

Acolytes: Fiona Tully, Hayden Howle, Ella Corinne Howle, Lilli Higgins
Chalice bearers: 7:30am: Lucie Butler
10:00am: David Bunch Maria Gerry
Ushers: Joseph Horn, Zed Howell
Lectors: Bill McClendon, George Newton
Vestry Rep: Christian DeJean
Altar Guild Team 2
Altar Greenery: Ronnie and Pat Martin
Sanctuary Candle: Ronnie and Pat Martin
Coffee Hour: Mark and Sharmila Mulkey
Babysitters: Lorna Klein, Claudia Tully

Sunday, March 20, 2016

Acolytes: Mary Elizabeth Barrow, R. E. Barrow, Charles Fox-Smith, Wyatt Olsen
Chalice bearer: 7:30am: . Bryan McClendon
10am: Rucker Leake, George Newton
Ushers: Tony Horn, Robbie Howle
Lectors: David Opperman, Justin Peno
Vestry Rep: Dare Didier
Altar Guild Team 3
Altar Greenery: Tommy Klein
Sanctuary Candle: Bp. and Louise Jenkins
Coffee Hour: Charles and Louise Jenkins
Babysitters: Maggie Higgins, Landry Higgins

Lent 5

March 13, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
4-6 pm -Youth Group

Palm Sunday

March 20, 2016

7:30am - Eucharist
(Grace & St. John's)
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist
Coffee Hour
4-6 pm -Youth Group
Trip to St. Stephen's
Church for Way of the
Cross

Wednesday, March 16

9:00am - Women's Bible Study
5:15pm - Holy Eucharist
6:00pm - Supper and Prayer Book Study

Thursday, March 17

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor

Friday, March 18

7:00am - Eucharist
8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study

Sunday, March 20 (Palm Sunday)

7:30am - Eucharist (Grace & St. John's)
8:45-9:45 - Bible Study
10:00am - Eucharist

Coffee Hour

4-6:00pm - EYC meetings and supper

Wednesday, March 23

9:00am - Women's Bible Study
5:15pm - Holy Eucharist
6:00pm - Supper and Prayer Book Survey

Thursday, March 24. (Maundy Thursday)

9:15am - Morning Prayer
10:00am - Worship at SF Country Manor
7:00pm - Maundy Thursday service

Friday, March 11, (Good Friday)

8:30am - Lectionary Bible Study
12 Noon - Eucharist from Reserved Sacrament
3:00pm - Stations of the Cross in Cemetery