



The Mike

The Newsletter of St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Studio City, CA
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Truly God, Truly Human

By the Reverend Canon Mark Shier

Sermon given at St. Michael's on March 13, 2011.

Sometimes people ask me why I'm Christian. I'm tempted to reply, "You mean besides the fact that the Christian view of God and humanity is true?" But I'm a polite sort of bloke and I don't do that. I think they're looking for some sort of answer that mentions the Baby in Bethlehem, the glories of Easter, and so on. All that is nice to have, of course, but wouldn't be worth much if it were not a reflection of reality. If pressed, I wouldn't point to Christmas or Easter but to the incident in today's gospel reading from the life of Christ.

I suppose it's a strange incident to cite as foundational to one's faith. But its basic message goes to the heart of the Christian understanding. As we read the story of Jesus tempted by some sort of supernatural person in the Judean desert, we should entertain three possibilities: He is lying after the fact, He is hallucinating, possibly insane, or He truly encountered evil in the wasteland and successfully resisted its siren call. The other stories we have of this Jesus indicate a man of towering integrity, so I don't think He is a liar. Those same stories show a man well in touch with the world around Him, aware of the danger and perfidy of rulers, aware of the brokenness of human nature, aware of the heroism of the poor widow, the blind beggar, the many-married woman at the well. We're left with an account of a mystical event that actually happened, told to us in the best manner that struggling language can manage.

Jesus Christ met the Devil, evil personified, and lived to tell the tale. Jesus not only lived but He outwitted the clever insinuations of One who would derail Him from His life task. He turned away from the easier paths of circuses for the crowds, spiritual wonder-making, and the seductions of political power. What He chose instead was suffering and death, not because He was a masochist, but because He saw that as

the most powerful way to win the hearts of men and women who must also suffer and die, whatever else their lives might hold. Two thousand years of winning the hearts of humanity have proved Him right. But He chose this path, laid out centuries before in the suffering servant songs of the ancient prophet Isaiah, not because His own wisdom



pointed that way (though I suspect that it did) but rather because the wisdom of God pointed that way. Here is where He trumped Adam and Eve; they succumbed to their own desires; He accepted the will of God.

We're not much into obedience, we modern American Christians. We make a cultural hero of the rebel, romanticizing the misfit who takes from the community rather than adding to it. We hum along approvingly with the most self-serving, anti-Christian popular song ever crooned by a lounge lizard, "I Did It My Way." We romanticize the cowboy, home on the range, and denigrate the settlers and townsmen who built homes and schools and communities, made a safe place for women and children, helped one another raise barns and children, supported one another through sickness and death. But we are culturally wrong in our adulation of the self-seekers. The real heroes are those who obey the call of their life situations, who sacrifice their own way because someone else needs help, who see God at work in the kitchen, the nursery, the school, the concert hall, the factory or shop or boardroom, who build up the community, not those who tear it down. Such a one was Jesus.

This is the obedience of Jesus Christ to the direction and will of One greater than Himself. And I find it infinitely attractive.

But the best part is yet to come. Even more

attractive than what He did is Who did it. And the "who" is what makes a Christian and what makes a Christian so devoted to the Person of Christ. From the beginning Christians saw something different in Jesus, something that intrigued them, something that pulled them. After decades and even centuries of thinking and arguing, they refined their understanding to this, that the One who walked the hills of Judea and the plains of Galilee and the waters of Lake Genneserath, who sat at supper tables and climbed upon a cross, who whispered healing tendernesses to a sick old woman and to a dead young girl, this Jesus, undeniably human, was also the special focus of the divine. God lives in Jesus in a fashion beyond the way God lives in the rest of us. That union is so intimate that the person who acts in Jesus is the Person of God. When I do something, the person that is Mark is the one acting, and we do not say God is acting, except perhaps by poetic metaphor. But when Jesus acts, the person is divine, not human. It is why Christians see Jesus as unique in human history. It is why Christians are so devoted to Christ, for in this undeniably human being, who can be tempted and scared and impatient and loving and tender and sorrowful and confused and tired, in this Jesus God knows temptation

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Sermon *from page 1*

and fear; in this Jesus God knows the cost of obedience; in this Jesus God tastes death. Our God is not a far, transcendent, regal, serene irrelevance. Our God is right here, sweaty and tired, in the midst of the dust and the mud, in the tears of our grief, and in the laughter of our children.

That is why Christians hold so tightly to the person of Christ. That is why, if pressed to say why I am a follower of that Christ, I would point to the temptation in the desert. My God knows, intimately and personally, what I must do and live, because He has done and lived it, too.

That is why I am a Christian.

The full text of Canon Shier's sermons at St. Michael's may be read at www.stmikessc.org/sermons_index.htm.

May 2011 MIKE Deadline

Please send copy and/or pictures via e-mail to administrator@stmikessc.org by Tuesday, April 19. If you don't have a computer, bring your articles to the Parish Office by that time.

April Birthdays

Day	Name
1	Meghan Matustik
4	Camille Lake
5	Jackie Desbrow
8	Judy Davis
14	John Schmutz II
15	Russell Desbrow
18	Reeve Carney Trevor Vincent
19	Elisabeth Aukee
22	Zane Carney
24	Betty DuVall
25	Michael Mitchell
28	David Piser
29	Liam Fields

April Anniversaries

Day	Name
9	Bill and Gail Wright

Should you be listed here? Or, if you wish to leave your birthday or anniversary unpublished, give the church office a call or e-mail (administrator@stmikessc.org) to let us know. *Please Note: Birthdays and Anniversaries will be celebrated on the last Sunday of each month.*

Holy Week and Easter

at St. Michael and All Angels

Palm Sunday

8:00 a.m.
10:30 a.m.

Maundy Thursday

6:30 p.m.

Good Friday

12:00 noon
7:00 p.m.

Easter Eve

7:30 p.m.

Easter Day

8:00 a.m.
10:30 a.m.

April 17

Holy Eucharist
Holy Eucharist with Palm Sunday procession

April 21

Agapé Supper, Holy Eucharist, washing of feet, and stripping of the altar

April 22

Good Friday Liturgy and Stations of the Cross
Good Friday Liturgy and Stations of the Cross

April 23

The Great Vigil of Easter

April 24

Holy Eucharist
Holy Eucharist

The Rev. Peter Ackerman Soon to Be a Rector!

Many of you remember our friend, fellow parishioner, and former Parish Administrator, Peter Ackerman whom we sponsored to ministry back in 2004. Peter is concluding his first assignment as an Associate Rector in Northern VA and in early May he will become the Rector of St. Christopher's Episcopal Church in Springfield, Virginia. This move in vocation allows Peter, Marie and their family to remain living in Alexandria City so that their daughter, Amy, can complete her final year of high school at the same institution. Peter thanks us for our continued prayers on behalf of him, and asks that you keep the Ackerman family and the St. Christopher's community in your prayers during this transition.



Thanksgiving for a Job Well Done

To: Ed Sugar and Preston Fray for their ongoing efforts to clean up around St. Michael's. Thanks to their efforts, we recently sent over 140 boxes of records that are no longer needed to be shredded and, in the process, discovered some important historical documents.

And to: Everyone who donated to pillowcases to Little Dresses for Africa. Zofie Basta's Girl Scout troop turned 30 pillowcases into 30 dresses. Thank you for your generosity!

Treasurer's Corner

February 2011—Revenue and Expense Summary

	February Actual	February Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenue	\$ 23,710	\$ 26,295	\$ 50,225	\$ 50,833
Total Expense	28,879	40,234	56,549	80,223
Net	(\$ 5,169)	(\$ 13,939)	(\$ 6,324)	(\$ 29,390)



FROM THE VESTRY

Anne Kelly, Senior Warden
David Connors, Junior Warden

Easter Blessings

We would like to wish you all a very peaceful and reflective season of Lent. During this time we prepare our hearts, minds and spirit for the glorious resurrection of Jesus.

spent the next few months conducting phone interviews and inviting the candidates to Studio City for further discussion, discernment and prayer.

One of these candidates seemed to be a wonderful choice for St. Michael's and was invited back for a second visit. The Search Committee felt very strongly about this candidate. The Vestry was then invited to spend time with the candidate and also was very positive about the candidate. The candidate and the candidate's spouse were invited to spend additional time getting to know us and the Studio City area. It is very likely that we will know who God has called to be our next Rector by Easter. What a wonderful Easter blessing for all of us!

Our parish has also been preparing for over a year for the arrival of a new Rector. The first step was the Parish Profile which was developed over the first several months of 2010. In late summer/early fall the search/discernment committee was given a list of potential candidates from the Bishop's Office. The committee spent the next few months conducting phone interview with each candidate. This was followed by personal interviews where the committee met each candidate in person for further discussion, discernment, and prayer. It was mutually discerned that none of these original candidates were the right choice for St. Michael's.

We will continue to keep you informed as we move forward in this process. We ask you to continue to keep our parish and this candidate in your prayers as we together complete the process of discerning our next Rector. Meanwhile, as we prepare for Easter we still have many joyous celebrations here at St. Michael's. May the solemnity of Lent and the joy of Easter be with you throughout this season as we celebrate the blessings of God's love for us that are ever present in our lives.

The committee then spoke with Bishop Bruno who provided positive feedback to the committee. He assured us that we were doing exactly what we should be doing and that we needed to be patient as we discerned where the Spirit was leading us. Bishop Bruno also provided us with the names of additional candidates. The committee

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice

By Betsy Hailey

CLUE-LA came into being in 1996 when religious leaders joined the campaign to pass a Los Angeles Living Wage law requiring companies doing business with the city to provide adequate wages and health benefits to their employees. After the ordinance passed, CLUE-LA was formed to continue the work of educating, organizing and mobilizing the faith community to walk with workers and their families in their struggle for good jobs and dignity in the workplace.

Representatives from CLUE have spoken at several adult education forums at St. Michael's over the past years, putting a human face to the struggles of hotel workers, car wash workers and other low-wage workers in our community and describing the organization's ongoing efforts to eradicate poverty in our community through concrete organizing projects, direct action, and shared vision. During his tenure our now-retired priest-in-charge Henry Atkins worked closely with CLUE in organizing a march of



Clergy & Laity United
for Economic Justice

Disney hotel workers being denied health benefits outside the national convention in Anaheim in 2009, enlisting bishops and other clergy to walk alongside the workers.

Each year CLUE-LA holds a "Giants of Justice" breakfast to honor community leaders who have made significant contributions to the cause of economic justice. This year's event will be held on Thursday, May 26, from 8 to 10 a.m. at Casa Italiana, 1051 North Broadway. Honorees will be the Rev. Jim Conn of the United Methodist Church, Assemblymember Emeritus Jackie Goldberg, Bishop Gabino Zavala, Roman Catholic Auxiliary Bishop, San Gabriel Pastoral Region; and Betsy Estudillo will receive the "Emerging Giant of Justice" award.

To rsvp or for more information contact giantsofjustice@cluella.org. And if you'd like to carpool, call or e-mail me at 818.763.7827 or efhailey@aol.com.

Morning Prayer at Studio City Rehabilitation Center

By Tom Heuer

"They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' He will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least among you, you did not do for me.'"

"Good morning; I'm Tom, and I am from St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church." And so begins the first Sunday of every month at 9:00 a.m. at Studio City Rehabilitation Center when a short Morning Prayer service is conducted.

For over 50 years a prayer service has been conducted at the Center. The Men's Group were the initiators of this pastoral care. When I arrived at St Michael's in 1997, Col. Bob Fowler conducted the service with a few of the men attending. After Col. Bob passed away in 1999 the duties were handed over to me. (My fellow Men's Group participants volunteered me.) Today the service falls within the purview of the Pastoral Care Committee.

I have found the Morning Prayer service one of the most rewarding experiences in my life. It



brings a great joy to me to just be there. After the 10-minute service I go around the room and greet the people who are there—the cognizant and those who are not. Sometimes it is just a touch on the shoulder of the person with "God bless you." Perhaps I have found a joy in this service because both my mother and father passed away in nursing facilities back East.

As Christians, we are called to spread the love that God has poured onto us.

"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

If you want more information about this pastoral care or wish to participate, please feel free to contact me. My phone number is 213.479.8156; my email is WstrnPAboy@yahoo.com.

As you do your weekly grocery shopping, remember these items that are always needed by the North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry

*Canned fruit and vegetables.
Baby food in plastic jars.
Tuna.
Peanut butter in plastic jars.
Powdered milk in individual packets.
Individual size snacks.
Bags of dry beans and rice.
Plastic and paper shopping bags.
Diapers and feminine hygiene items.
Travel-size soap, toothpaste & disposable razors.
And money!*

Update from St. Michael's Community Outreach Projects

By Jane Wilson

Lit.Up!, Saturday, April 9, 8:00 p.m. The theme for this show will be "Spring is Here" and will star Karen Kilgariff, Jennifer MacLean, Paul Reese, Eddie Pepitone and Michael X. Ferraro. The \$10 suggested donation supports AIDS/LifeCycle 10. AIDS/LifeCycle 10 is co-produced by the L.A. Gay & Lesbian Center and the San Francisco AIDS Foundation and is designed to advance their shared interest to end the pandemic and human suffering caused by AIDS. It is a fully supported, 7-day bike ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles, June 5-11, 2011. St. Michael's parishioner Jenifer Schmutz will be participating for the fourth time as a cyclist and is raising money for this worthy organization. As usual—free childcare, yummy desserts, and a great time to be had for all!

Do You Want to Take Over a Month of Lit.Up!? If you have a cause please present it to SMCOP and we'd love to work with anyone that knows of a worthy recipient. As a rule, it needs to be a cause that serves people in LA living in extreme need or a cause that serves the peace and justice community.

SMCOP Now Meeting on the First Sunday of the Month! That's right—a new day to accommodate all those who could not get to the church on a Tuesday evening. Next meeting will be Sunday, April 3, at 12:15 p.m. in the Junior High/Projects room. We really need you help as we are about to embark upon planning Big Sunday (an event for soldiers) in May and the Angel Awards in September.

Call or email for more info on SMCOP: Jane Wilson 818-267-4058, superqueerjane@yahoo.com

Big Sunday Needs You!

By David Rosenberg

On Sunday, May 15, Saint Michael's will once again be honored to serve as a hub for this citywide day of volunteering. We will host a Family Festival from noon to 3:00 p.m., with all proceeds going to its humanitarian wounded soldier outreach The SoldierCare Project. The project identifies young veterans, hosts them in Los Angeles for various activities as a break from rehab, and then becomes part of their lifelong support system.

The day will include games, a bake and craft sale, letter writing station, dropoff for front line soldiers and a VIP lunch for wounded veterans and their families. Featured will be a performance by the New Directions Choir (made up of formerly homeless vets) and the Harvard Westlake Jazz Band.

We are in urgent need of committee chairs to help coordinate elements of the day. Please attend a Big Sunday organizational meeting on Sunday, April 10, at 12:00 noon right after coffee hour. Lunch will be provided.

Any questions or interest, please contact Big Sunday captain David Rosenberg at Inkdrone@gmail.com.



The Calendar

April 2011

Sunday Schedule • *Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.*
 • *Sunday School (Godly Play, Middle School, Sr. High, and Adult Forums) and Adult Choir begin at 9:30 am.*
 • *Children's Church begins at 10:30 in the Blue Room and the children are brought into Eucharist for the Peace.*
 • *Coffee Hour immediately follows the 10:30 am service unless otherwise noted.*

Locations:
 CO: Church Office
 CR: Choir Room
 MR: Music Room
 FR: Fireside Room
 PH: Parish Hall
 UR: Upper Room
 YL: Youth Lounge
 S: Sanctuary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 12:00 noon Fourth Quarter Luncheon (CO)	2
3 Lent 4 12:00 noon Healing Prayer Gathering (FR) 12:15 PM SMCOP (YL)	4	5	6	7 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR)	8	9 8:00 PM Lit.Up! (PH)
10 Lent 5	11	12 7:00 PM Finance Committee (CO)	13	14	15	16 10:00 AM Parish Cleanup Day
17 Palm Sunday 12:00 noon Healing Prayer Gathering (FR)	18 Holy Week Monday	19 Holy Week Tuesday 7:00 PM Vestry (UR)	20 Holy Week Wednesday	21 Maundy Thursday 6:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR) 6:30 PM Agapé Eucharist (PH)	22 Good Friday 12:00 noon Good Friday Liturgy (S) 7:00 PM Good Friday Liturgy (S)	23 Holy Saturday 6:00 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR) 7:30 PM The Great Vigil of Easter (S)
24 Easter Day No Adult Forum or Sunday School 9:30 AM Easter Egg Hunt (Lawn)	25 Easter Week Monday 10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Group (YL) 7:00 PM Prayer Shawl Group (YL)	26 Easter Week Tuesday	27 Easter Week Wednesday	28 Easter Week Thursday	29 Easter Week Friday	30 Easter Week Saturday

St. Michael's Community Outreach Projects presents



Saturday
April 9
8:00 pm

A benefit for
AIDS/LifeCycle 10



Featuring performances by

Paul Reese
Frank Conniff
Karen Kilgariff
Eddie Pepitone
Jennifer MacLean
Michael X. Ferraro

Curator: **Jane Edith Wilson**

Host: **Gary Lucy**

AIDS/LifeCycle 10 is a 7-day bike ride from SF to LA, June 5-11, 2011. St. Mike's parishioner Jenifer Schmutz will be riding for the 4th time! Come enjoy a great show, yummy snacks, free parking & child care AND support a worthy cause!



St. Michael's & All Angels Church
3646 Coldwater Canyon Blvd
Studio City, CA 91406
Just south of Ventura Blvd.

\$10
Donation

BIG SUNDAY



**WHAT ARE YOU DOING
BIG SUNDAY, MAY 15?**

*Saint Michael & All Angels Church
& St. Michael's Community Outreach
Projects Committee Invite You to a*

FAMILY FESTIVAL

*Benefiting wounded soldiers
& soldiers on the front line.*

**SUNDAY
MAY 15
12-3 pm**

Entertainment by
New Directions Choir
(whose members are
formerly homeless vets)
**BBQ, BAKE SALE,
CRAFT SALE & GAMES**

ALSO

- ★ Letter writing station for frontline troops ★
- ★ Donation drop-off for frontline/wounded troops ★
- ★ Sponsor a wounded soldier visit to California ★
- ★ Luncheon with special veteran guests of honor ★

ALL PROCEEDS GO TO SoldierCare

A non-political wounded soldier mentoring project providing year-round support for wounded veterans from the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

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Vision Statement

We are a welcoming and evolving community of conscience engaged in the renewal of our faith by embracing diversity and encouraging growth through prayer, scholarship, social action, and artistic endeavor.

Our Mission Priority

Our mission priority is to focus on the United Nations' First Millennium Goal: To eradicate extreme hunger and poverty.