

CROSSWAYS

"Making Christ Visible in His Community."

The Reverend Michael P. Flanagan, Rector of Holy Cross Episcopal Church, Simpsonville, SC 864-967-7470

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WE ARE THE ONES WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR

*"Where two or three are gathered together in my name,
there am I in the midst of them."*

This may be God's greatest promise for our time.

When we gather in His name, when anyone does, He is there. It is because of this that I believe one of Jesus' greatest and most enduring gifts to us was His command to "Build My Church." At the time, His Church was built by people gathering who were desperately seeking God - and a great community formed. Now, it is a place where people who are desperately seeking community can gather - and find God.

So, we have very important work to do!

According to a Hopi Elder's prophecy about this time, the good news and the bad news is: *"We are the ones we have been waiting for."* A Christian view of that truth is: *God has no hands, but thine ...*

In the words of Teresa Avila (1515-1582)

"Christ has no body now on earth but yours,
no hands but yours,
no feet but yours,
Yours are the eyes through which to look out
Christ's compassion to the world
Yours are the feet with which he is to go about
doing good;
Yours are the hands with which he is to bless men now."

Once gathered, there is great power in community ... especially God's community.

These days, building His Church, and ensuring it is here for another 2,000 years, takes resources. Money, yes. But, it has always been the combined time, talent and treasure of Christian communities, of every kind and amount, that have together built His church, and continue to keep it alive today.

Participation is actually the real treasure these days, for both for people and for the church. For the church's part, time has become officially, statistically, more valuable than money. It's easier to write a check than to volunteer, but we experience community through participation. As for talent, they are called God-given talents for a reason.

The Chinese have a saying I have observed to be true: *You can live in alignment with God's will, or be ill.*

My experience is that God always gives a congregation everything they need to get anything done that He calls them to do. But I have also seen that He never gives all the resources needed to a few usual suspects, nor does He provide the time, talent and treasure in equal proportion among them.

Rather, at these times when a congregation is called to extraordinary efforts, it is like embarking upon a Great Divine Scavenger Hunt to follow the hints and find the gifts He has hidden in some of the most unlikely and least-known places in your congregation and your community.

When you do these things well, and when a congregation comes to understand the true gifts among them and value of community itself, it is not only the money that will come. Indeed, you will see as I have many times, that in many ways money is the least and most rudimentary expression of all that God has provided for you to do His work, in your lives, in your community, and in the world.

~ Andi Tilmann, *Episcopal Church Foundation Senior Campaign Consultant*

REFLECTIONS ON FAITH AND LIFE

THE REVEREND LINDA GOSNELL,
ASSISTANT RECTOR FOR PASTORAL CARE

PRACTICING THE FAITH – A RULE OF LIFE CHECK-UP

"Where shall I look for Enlightenment?" the disciple asked.

"Here," the elder said.

"When will it happen?" the disciple wanted to know.

"It is happening right now," the elder said.

"Then why don't I experience it?" the disciple asked.

And the elder answered, "Because you do not look."

"But what should I look for?" the disciple wanted to know.

And the elder smiled and answered, "Nothing. Just look."

"But at what?" the disciple insisted.

"Anything your eyes alight upon," the elder continued.

"Well, then, must I look in a special kind of way?" the disciple said.

"No," the elder said.

"Why ever not?" the disciple persisted.

And the elder said quietly, "Because to look you must be here. The problem is that you are mostly somewhere else."

(from *Wisdom Distilled from the Daily* by Joan Chittister)



Comfort those in any
trouble with the comfort
we ourselves have
received from God.

2 Corinthians 1:4

Spiritual growth requires presence, attention, and intention. As this tradition story illustrates, our focus may be anywhere other than where we are, and when that is the case, we miss God's presence with us.

We have a Holy Cross Rule of Life – "Our pathway to a deeper relationship with Christ" to assist us in our efforts to be intentional and to be present to God.

Our Rule is:
Pray daily.
Worship weekly.
Read the Bible.
Serve others.
Share your story.
Give freely.

Our Rule is not a “rule” at all, if you think of a rule as a law. It is more of a guide, like a ruler that helps you draw a straight line. Someone once compared a Rule of Life to the bannister on a staircase – something to hold on to, something to assist with your balance, to help keep you from falling.

Did you take on the Holy Cross Rule as your own personal Rule and make a commitment to try to live it out regularly? All Rules of Life require some kind of accountability. How are you doing with it? Let me pose a series of questions for your consideration and reflection.

*Does your prayer time include some silence?
Have you tried walking our labyrinth?
When you are out of town, have you found another church in which to worship, or have you read the Daily Offices on your own?
Are you participating in our “read the New Testament in a year” program or do you have another daily Bible reading plan?
In what ways have you served ‘the least of these’ this year?
Did you join a Life Group? Will you join one this fall?
Are you contributing as you are able to the mission and ministry of Holy Cross? Is your pledge current? (It is easy to fall behind with summer’s vacations and interrupted schedules.)
Are you giving of yourself – time and talents, gifts and skills – as well as of your finances?*

For this next set of questions, I encourage you to share your responses. Share them with me or with Father Mike, share them in your small group, Reunion Group, Life Group, or with your spiritual director.

*How has praying daily, worshipping weekly, reading the scriptures, serving others, sharing your walk with Christ with others, and/or giving freely helped you to be more attentive to God’s presence in your life?
Which of the Rules do you find easy? Which is more difficult?
What kind of support do you need to continue and to grow ever more deeply in your walk with Christ and more faithful in service?
If you were to amend the Rule to make it more beneficial to you in your walk with God what would you add? Silence? Rest? Creativity? Play? Something else?*

Our spirituality is the totality of our lives lived in Christ, not something we put on or take off. Our Rule of Life is an expression of the way we do this, an expression of the way we become more Christ-like individually and in community. Living our Rule of Life becomes a way of life that helps us be more attentive to God in each moment and so strengthens us on the journey as we seek to be a community of faith who lives God’s imperative to “love God and love one another.” Together we seek to grow deeper in faith and more constant in service as we make Christ known in God’s community.

Blessings on the journey,
Linda+



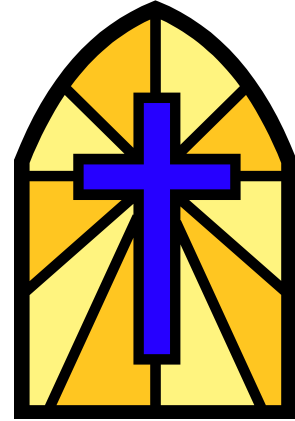
CHRISTIAN FORMATION

CHRISTIAN FORMATION, ADULT, CHILDREN, AND YOUTH
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PROGRAM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE
ADULT – DRAYTON GAILLARD WHDGAILLARD@CHARTER.NET



AUGUST YOUTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

YOUTH ROPES COURSE WEEKEND

Mark your calendars! There will be a Holy Cross Youth Ropes Course Weekend at Camp Gravatt August 22-24. This will include Middle School and High School Students. We will do a service project for Camp Gravatt in addition to the Ropes Course activities. Cost \$120 per person. A \$50.00 deposit was due to Mother Susan by July 13 with \$70.00 balance due to Mother Susan by August 10. Make checks payable to "Holy Cross Episcopal Church" with "Youth Ropes Course" on the memo line. We will leave after school on Friday, August 22 and return the afternoon of Sunday, August 24.

SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR CHILDREN IN NEED

Holy Cross is collecting school supplies for children in need. A Back-to-School "Share the Blessings" board is located in the Narthex. Feel free to take a reminder card for specific items, or bring what you like. Please bring donations by August 17. Monetary donations may be given to Leslie Donahue as some children we serve have very specific needs.

BACKPACK BLESSING

There will be a special blessing of all school aged children and staff as part of our regular worship service on August 17 (9 and 11:15 a.m.). Children should bring their school backpack for a special Backpack Blessing.

CHRISTIAN FORMATION

Christian Formation (Sunday School) will begin on August 24 for all ages.

- August 24 will be an intergenerational program on *The Gospel According to Pixar*.
Father Mike will present *Monsters, Inc.*
- August 31 will also be an intergenerational program about the Seasons of the Church.



LORD'S RESOURCES

ADMINISTRATION, STEWARDSHIP, BUILDING & GROUNDS

SENIOR WARDEN – GREG FARLEY

SRWARDEN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

JUNIOR WARDEN – JUDY WORTKOETTER

JRWARDEN@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

STEWARDSHIP – DAVE GEISLER

STEWARDSHIP@HOLYCROSSEP.ORG

BUILDING AND GROUNDS – TOM JONES

JONE63194@GMAIL.COM



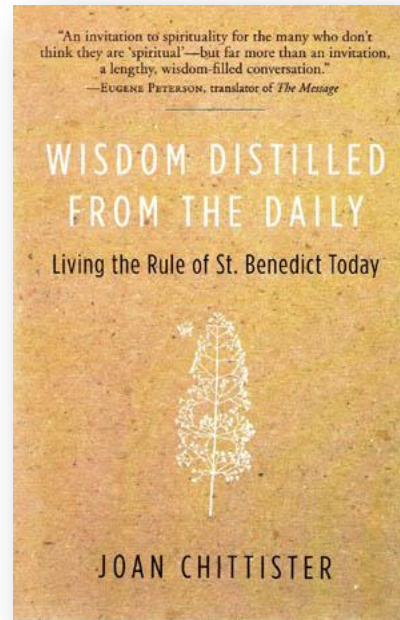
FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

*Wisdom Distilled from the Daily:
Living the Rule of St. Benedict Today*

by Joan Chittister

“The Rule of Benedict has been a guide to the spiritual life for common people since the sixth century. Anything that has lasted that long and had that kind of impact in a throwaway society is certainly worthy of consideration. This book looks at these questions. “How do we account for a way of life that has lasted over fifteen hundred years, and what, if anything, does it have to say to the spiritual life in our world today?”

Send an email to kclconnor@gmail.com if you have a book, music, or movie that has been a special part of your spiritual journey.



HOLY CROSS CONTACT INFORMATION

Items for newsletter:	newsletter@holycrossep.org
Bulletin announcements:	secretary@holycrossep.org
Parish office	(864) 967-7470
Fax	(864) 967-0393
Mailing address	PO Box 187, Simpsonville, 29681
Holy Cross Academy	(864) 963-5986
Pastoral counseling	(888) 293-7585
Church website	www.holycrossep.org
Diocesan website	www.edusc.org
Office	secretary@holycrossep.org
Rector	rector@holycrossep.org
Assistant rector	assistantrector@holycrossep.org
Youth ministry	youth@holycrossep.org
Children's ministry	children@holycrossep.org
Senior warden	srwarden@holycrossep.org

