

March 2018 Messenger

FR. MIKE'S CORNER

The Lenten season in our liturgical calendar is not a season meant to inspire us to become better people. Many, if not most people see self-improvement as one of the noblest of human endeavors. The call of the Gospel is not an invitation for us to worship God by repairing ourselves. It is rather the good news of what God has done for us in Christ to remake us into what He originally had in mind when He created Adam and Eve.

Unregenerate man ultimately is continually drawn toward constructing gods into our own image. While humans make gods in their own image, God wants us to do the supreme favor by remaking us into His image through the Gospel. That is the grand narrative of Holy Scripture. Man's real condition is very much like Humpty Dumpty. *All the king's horses and all the king's men couldn't fix Humpty Dumpty.* Simply put, humans can't fix themselves.

Lent is a time in our yearly cycle to look at ourselves as we really are: people whose greatest malady is sin and whose greatest need is a Savior. As we look forward to Holy Week when we celebrate God's remedy for a world broken by sin consider this, Lent is meant to be a lifestyle for disciples of Jesus, not just one season each year.

God give us mercy and grace.

Mike+

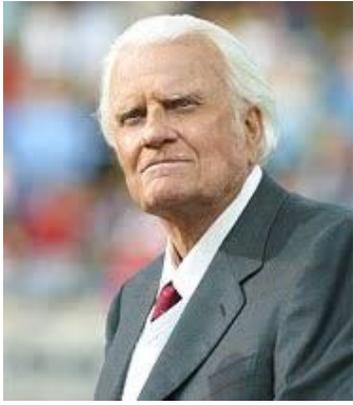


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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- March 8-Men's Club
- March 11-Vestry Meeting
- March 17-St. Patrick's Day Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner
- March 25-Palm Sunday
- March 29-Maundy Thursday
- March 30-Men's Bible Study
- March 30-Good Friday



THE EVANGELISTS

Little if anything more needs to be said today about Billy Graham, laid to rest today at his home in North Carolina, other than to repeat what he wanted the world to hear: *Jesus Christ is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him. In Him is the forgiveness of sin and eternal life.*

To the extent this was Graham's

message, indeed, to that extent he stands in glorious apostolic company, including many in the last century, who have, like Andrew the Apostle, told others to "Come and see." Graham was a fisher of men, and he caught many in the Lord's net. He had been captivated by Christ, the lover of mankind. His preaching transcended denominational labels.

Graham was a fisher of men, and he caught many in the Lord's net.

Family members have told me about one of his crusades in Detroit sometime in the 1950's, where my father "went forward—and where they also saw in the audience Catholic school children with their teachers, Catholic nuns, who had brought them to hear the good words of this Southern Baptist preacher.

A few weeks ago I read a post by Robert George, quoting the singer and songwriter Bob Dylan"

"When I was growing up, Billy Graham was very popular. He was the greatest preacher and evangelist of my time—that guy could save souls and did. I went to two or three of his rallies in the '50s or 60s. This guy was like rock 'n' roll personified—volatile, explosive. He had the hair, the tone, the elocution—when he spoke, he brought the storm down. Clouds parted. Souls got saved, sometimes 30– or 40,000 of them. If you ever went to a Billy Graham rally back then, you were changed forever. There's never been a preacher like him."

While on a mission in England, Graham met with the Anglican C.S. Lewis. Lewis, who later said:

"I had the pleasure of meeting Billy Graham once. We had



James Kushiner

THE EVANGELISTS (CONT)

dinner together during his visit to Cambridge University in 1955, while he was conducting a mission to students. I thought he was a very modest and a very sensible man, and I liked him very much indeed.”

Graham later admitted;

“I was afraid I would be intimidated by Lewis, but I was relieved to find that he immediately put me at ease. I found him to be not only intelligent and witty but also gentle and gracious. He seemed genuinely interested in our meetings.”

I am sure some of us wish we could have been there! Lewis himself had his own evangelical reach, in a different style and medium—*Narnia*, *Mere Christianity*—which brought many in the nets such as Chuck Colson.

Then there was Graham and John Paul II. When the Pope died in April 2005:

Dr. Graham told Larry King he had the privilege of seeing the Pope on several occasions at the Vatican.

ADDRESS CHANGES OR CORRECTIONS

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**HAPPY
MARCH
BIRTHDAY**

**13-BOYD
LEAVITT**

**22-CHERIE
MASSARO**

**26-SIERRA
CONTRERAS**

31-ED CLARK

THE EVANGELISTS (CONT)

“And tonight, I have a very strange feeling of loss. I almost feel as though one of my family members has gone. I loved him very much and had the opportunity of discussing so many things with him. And we wrote each other several times during the years,” Dr. Graham said.

Inspired by the evangelical witness of Graham, I close with words from a Catholic priest, Don Giovanni Calabria, whom I think Graham would have appreciated. This was written in 1949, just two years after Graham’s first crusade, to C.S. Lewis, his “dearest brother”—

“Then, let us work—with generous heart and with an intrepid faith for the spread of God’s kingdom—to clasp our brothers together in the unity of faith and love, striving as strenuously as possible to bring it about that Christ’s love may conquer, reign, and rule in the whole world. Without Him, we can do nothing: but ‘we can do all things in Him who strengthens’ us.”

Billy Graham the Evangelist, Memory Eternal!

Yours for Christ, Creed & Culture,

James M. Kushiner

Executive Director, The Fellowship of St. James

MARCH 17TH-CORNERED BEEF AND CABBAGE

On Saturday, March 17, St. John's will host its annual St. Patrick's Day Drive-thru Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner. Tickets for the dinner are just \$15 each and include delicious corned beef, cabbage, potatoes, carrots, roll and butter. Dinners will be available for pick-up at the kitchen door at the rear of St. John's between 5:00 and 7:00p.m. Tickets are available by phoning Carla at the church office, or from Senior Warden Fred Knutson.

Kitchen crew assistance is needed on Friday morning, March 16, beginning at 9:00a.m. Prep duties include peeling carrots, washing potatoes, cleaning cabbage, and making sure things are ready for the dinner the following day. Assistance is needed from 12:00 noon on Saturday for final preparations and help with packing and delivering dinners on the evening of the event. Please let Carla or Fred know if you are able to assist. Many hands make light work.

Also, should you wish to help underwrite the cost of food and supplies for this event, please earmark your check as "St. Patrick's Dinner" and send to Carla at the church office. Your support is greatly appreciated.



SYNERGY IN CONCERT

On, Sunday, February 25, St. John's Church hosted the Synergy String Quartet in concert at 3:00 p.m. Members of the quartet—Josh Estrada, Alex Navarro, Paul Young and Melissa McGlumphy—presented works by Johann Sebastian Bach and Felix Mendelssohn. All of the musicians are members of the Kern Philharmonic Orchestra. The concert was attended by 70 parishioners, community members and college students. A free-will offering was taken with over \$500.00 be-

ing raised to assist with scholarships for local students in the Porterville Summer Strings Camp program.

Members of ACS hosted a delightful meet and greet reception immediately following the concert. Thanks to those members who provided goodies for the event.

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend the concert on Sunday, April 29 at 3:00 p.m. by the Symphony Brass Quintet. Come and enjoy an afternoon of great music!

