



St. Thomas of Canterbury Tales

October 2011

From the Rector:

The past few weeks with all of the natural disasters has presented for us as Christians an opportunity to face an interesting crossroad in our lives. For some of us the problems have struck close to home with damage and destruction. For others the major portion of the damage passed us by. I have found it interesting how in these times of major problems all people in the community band together to help one another. Recently we had the Gospel lesson about the Good Samaritan. Truly in these troubled times most people have acted the part of the Good Samaritan, however the issue for each of us as Disciples of Christ is how we act in our everyday lives. The Gospel passage gives each of us examples of people in every day lives. The question then falls to us, is we in times of great need a good Samaritan, not the priest or Levite. Even more importantly, how do we in our every day lives behave when we see someone in need? Let the light of Christ grow in your hearts and shine forth in all of your actions.

Amen

Fr. Bill

+++++

PICNIC/DINNER

Our fall Parish dinner will take place after service Sunday, November 13. All are urged to attend. A list will be posted for you to sign up with what you will bring, so we have variety in our food. Try to bring someone with you so we can show off.

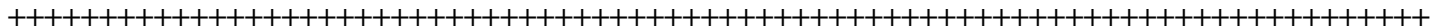
+++++

CLERGY MEETING

Father Rich Dibble, who led our Lenten devotions this year and who was ordained to the priesthood in our sanctuary last May has offered to assist us with weekday events, calling on parishioners active and lapsed and visiting ill and infirm members. Recently Father Bill met with him to discuss ways to cooperate with each other to effect good results. Their get-together was congenial and productive. Father Dibble has received permission from his bishop to help us. Bishop Strauss welcomes this new ministry.

+++++

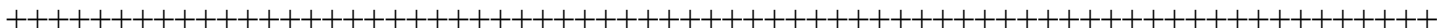
The pursuit of perfection often impedes improvement.



CONGRATULATIONS

Happy Birthday

September 12	Sylma LaBlanc
October 2	Cheryl Andrist
October 3	David Bullard
October 11	Herb Higham
October 31	David Stanley
November 2	Hilary Tann
December 25	Jim Myers



SAINT'S DAYS

St. Matthew September 21st

One day Jesus was walking and saw a tax collector named Matthew sitting at a tax collection post, and said to him, "Follow me." And Matthew stood up and followed Him, and became one of His twelve apostles; Tax collectors in those days were social outcasts. Devout Jews avoided them because they were usually dishonest, the job carried no salary, and they were expected to make their profits by cheating the people from whom they collected taxes. Patriotic and nationalistic Jews hated them because they were agents of the Roman government, the conquerors, and hated them with a double hatred if (like Matthew) they were Jews, because they had gone over to the enemy, and had betrayed their own people for money. Thus, throughout the Gospels, we find tax collectors (publicans) mentioned as a standard type of sinful and despised outcast. Matthew brought many of his former associates to meet Jesus, and social outcasts in general were shown that the love of Jesus extended even to them.

Jesus numbered among his disciples persons of widely different backgrounds. They included not only Matthew, a former agent of the Roman government, but Simon the Zealot (not to be confused with Simon Peter). We are told that the Zealots were fanatical nationalists, determined to drive out the Romans by guerrilla tactics, ambushes, assassinations, terrorist methods, or whatever worked. Their motto was, "No king but the Messiah, no tax but the Temple, no friend but the Zealot." The name "Matthew" means "gift of the LORD." Mark and Luke, in the story of his calling, name him "Levi." Perhaps this was his original name, and he received a new name from Jesus when he became a disciple. (It has also been suggested that he was simply a member of the tribe of Levi.)

Of Matthew's life after Pentecost the Scriptures tell us nothing. Later accounts of his life vary, some reporting that he was martyred, others that he died a natural death. The Christian community since early times has commemorated him as a martyr.

St. Matthew, one of the twelve Apostles, is the author of the first Gospel. This has been the constant tradition of the Church and is confirmed by the Gospel itself. He was the son of Alpheus and was called to be an Apostle while sitting in the tax collectors place at Capernaum. Before his conversion he was a publican, i.e., a tax collector by profession. He is to be identified with the "Levi" of Mark and Luke. His apostolic activity was at first restricted to the communities of Palestine. Nothing definite is known about his later life. There is a tradition that points to Ethiopia as his field of labor; other traditions mention Parthia and Persia. It is uncertain whether he died a natural death or received the crown of martyrdom.

St. Matthew's Gospel was written to fill a sorely-felt want for his fellow countrymen, both believers and unbelievers. His Gospel, then, answered the question put by the disciples of St. John the Baptist, "Are You He Who is to come, or shall we look for another?" Writing for his countrymen of Palestine, St. Matthew composed his Gospel in his native Aramaic, the "Hebrew tongue" mentioned in the Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. Soon afterward, about the time of the persecution of Herod Agrippa I in 42 AD, he took his departure for other lands. Another tradition places the composition of his Gospel either between the time of this departure and the Council of Jerusalem, i.e., between 42 AD and 50 AD or even later. Definitely, however, the Gospel, depicting the Holy City with its altar and temple as still existing, and without any reference to the fulfillment of our Lord's prophecy, shows that it was written before the destruction of the city by the Romans in 70 AD, and this internal evidence confirms the early traditions

ST. MICHAEL, the Archangel September 29th

The name Michael signifies "Who is like to God?" and was the war cry of the good angels in the battle fought in heaven against Satan and his followers. Holy Scripture describes St. Michael as "one of the chief princes," and leader of the forces of heaven in their triumph over the powers of hell. He has been especially honored and invoked as patron and protector by the Church from the time of the Apostles. Although he is always called "the Archangel," the Greek Fathers and many others place him over all the angels - as Prince of the Seraphim. St. Michael is the patron of grocers, mariners, paratroopers, police and sickness.

ST. LUKE October 10th

Luke, a native of Antioch, was by profession a physician. He had become a disciple of the apostle Paul and later followed Paul until Paul's martyrdom. Having served the Lord continuously, unmarried and without children, filled with the Holy Spirit, he died at the age of 84 years. If one accepts that Luke was in fact the author of the Gospel bearing his name and also the Acts of the Apostles, certain details of his personal life can be reasonably assumed. While he does exclude himself from those who were eyewitnesses to Jesus' ministry, he repeatedly uses the word "we" in describing the missions in Acts of the Apostles, indicating that he was personally there at those times. There is similar evidence that Luke resided in Troas, the province which included the ruins of ancient Troy, in that he writes in Acts in the third person about Paul and his travels until they get to Troas, where he switches to the first person plural. The "we" section of Acts continues until the group leaves Philippi, when his writing goes back to the third person. This change happens again when the group returns to Philippi. There are three "we sections" in Acts, all following this rule. Luke never stated, however, that he lived in Troas, and this is the only evidence that he did. The composition of the writings, as well as the range of vocabulary used, indicate that the author was an educated man.

ST JAMES October 23rd

James, son of Zebedee (died 44 AD) was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He was a son of Zebedee and Salome, and brother of John the Apostle. He is also called James the Greater to distinguish him from James, son of Alphaeus, who is also known as James the Lesser. James is described as one of the first disciples to join Jesus. The Synoptic Gospels state that James and John were with their father by the seashore when Jesus called them to follow him. James was one of only three apostles whom Jesus selected to bear witness to his Transfiguration. The Acts of the Apostles 12:1 records that Herod had James executed by sword. He is the only apostle whose martyrdom is recorded in the New Testament. He is, thus, traditionally believed to be the first of the 12 apostles martyred for his faith. Saint James is the Patron Saint of Spain and according to legend, his remains are held in Santiago de Compostela in Galicia (Spain). The traditional pilgrimage to the grave of the saint, known as the "Way of St. James", has been the most popular pilgrimage since the early Middle Ages.

ST. SIMON and ST. JUDE October 28th

Simon was a simple Galilean, a brother of Jesus, as the ancients called one's close relatives — aunts, uncles, first cousins; he was one of Our Lord's four first cousins, with James the Less, Jude and Joseph, all sons of Mary, the wife of Alpheus, or Cleophas, either name being a derivative of the Aramaic Chalphai. The latter was the brother of Saint Joseph, according to tradition. All the sons of this family were raised at Nazareth near the Holy Family. Simon, Jude and James were called by Our Lord to be Apostles, pillars of His Church, and Joseph the Just was His loyal disciple. Saint Simon the Zealot or the Zealous, was the name this Apostle bore among the twelve. He preached in Egypt, Mauritania (Spain), and Libya, leaving behind him the fertile hills of Galilee, where he had been engaged in farming. He later rejoined his brother, Saint Jude, in Persia, where they labored and died together.

ST. ANDREW November 30th

The name "Andrew" (in Greek, manhood, or valour), like other Greek names, appears to have been common among the Jews from the second or third century B.C. St. Andrew, the Apostle, son of Jonah, or John, was born in Bethsaida. He was brother of Simon (Peter). Both were fishermen, and at the beginning of Our Lord's public life occupied the same house at Capharnaum. We learn that Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist, whose testimony first led him and John the Evangelist to follow Jesus. Andrew at once recognized Jesus as the Messiah, and hastened to introduce Him to his brother, Peter. Thenceforth the two brothers were disciples of Christ. On a subsequent occasion, prior to the final call to the apostolate, they were called to a closer companionship, and then they left all things to follow Jesus. Andrew was chosen to be one of the Twelve; and in the various lists of Apostles given in the New Testament he is always numbered among the first four. As one of the Twelve, Andrew was admitted to the closest familiarity with Our Lord during His public life; he was present at the Last Supper; beheld the risen Lord; witnessed the Ascension; shared in the graces and gifts of the first Pentecost, and helped, amid threats and persecution, to establish the Faith in Palestine.

ST. THOMAS December 21st

Thomas the Apostle, also called Doubting Thomas or Didymus (meaning "Twin") was one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus. He is best known for disbelieving Jesus' resurrection when first told of it, then proclaiming "My Lord and my God" on seeing Jesus. He was perhaps the only Apostle who went outside the Roman Empire to preach the Gospel. He is also believed to have crossed the largest area, which includes the Parthian Empire

and India. In Thomas' best known appearance in the New Testament he doubts the resurrection of Jesus and demands to touch Jesus' wounds before being convinced.

ST. STEPHEN December 26th

According to The Acts of the Apostles Stephen was tried by the Sanhedrin for blasphemy against Moses and God and speaking against the Temple and the Law. While on trial, he experienced a theophany in which he saw both God the Father and God the Son: "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." Acts 6-7 describe his trial. He was stoned to death by an infuriated mob encouraged by Saul of Tarsus who later became the repentant St. Paul. St. Stephen's final speech was presented as accusing the Jews of persecuting prophets who spoke out against their sins. He was one of the first deacons and the first Christian martyr. In the Acts of the Apostles the name of St. Stephen occurs for the first time on the occasion of the appointment of the first deacons. Dissatisfaction concerning the distribution of alms from the community's fund having arisen in the Church, seven men were selected and specially ordained by the Apostles to take care of the temporal relief of the poorer members. Of these seven, Stephen, is the first one mentioned and the best known. The only first hand source of information on the life and death of St. Stephen is the Acts of the Apostles.

+++++

