Fr. Justin Briggle’s Ordination

A little over four and a half years ago one of Trinity’s parishioners walked into Fr. John’s office and told him that he felt a call to the priesthood. That was the beginning of a journey not just for Justin Briggle but Dawn and the children, Marcus and Oliver as well.

That journey included several months working with the parish discernment committee, then interviews with the Suffragan Bishop, members of the Commission on Ministry, and finally meeting with the entire Commission on Ministry who recommended him for postulant status. The next part of the journey led him to The School of Theology at the University of the South. Three years of study toward a Master’s of Divinity led him to sit for his Canonical Examination by the Diocese of Texas. Passing the canonicals allowed Justin to be ordained to the diaconate in June of last year.

Justin was assigned to serve St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Beaumont, Texas as a Curate. On Friday, January 27th The Rt. Rev. Jeff Fisher ordained Justin as a priest in Christ’s one holy catholic and apostolic church.

Prior to the ordination Fr. Briggle asked Fr. John to express his gratitude and appreciation for the prayers and support so many people at Trinity had given him over the last number of years. He related that words could not express how much it meant to both him and Dawn to know their sending parish supported them.

Well done Trinity you have given the church another priest to serve our Lord!

Bishop and clergy of the Diocese of Texas laying on hands at Fr. Justin’s ordination
**Grasping God’s Holy Vision**

In 2010 Trinity came together and developed a three year Strategic Plan. That planning effort was led by Jennifer Truelove who working with all the ministries of the parish put together and excellent plan to move forward. In 2014 the vestry updated that plan to carry us forward through 2017. As a parish we have accomplished a great deal that was set forth in both of these plans. Having them available has provided us with a road map to move towards our objectives.

This year we need to be discerning once more to ascertain who God is calling us as a community of faith to be. Articulating a vision is vital for a parish. Scripture reminds us in Proverbs 29:18 that, “Where there is no vision, the people perish”. A vision statement is a powerful tool because it describes a desired outcome. It has the power to harness activities, ministries, and resources to all pull in the same direction. But what sort of vision is important? For a church the vision MUST be grounded in the word of God. We call this Holy Visioning.

Holy Visioning is Biblically based. In Scripture vision or visioning is mentioned over 111 times. We can conclude from that that Holy Visioning is important to who we are as Christians, it is part of our DNA. So how do we know whether the vision we develop is cast by God? We apply Biblical principles by asking several questions:

1. Would this vision glorify God?
2. Is it constant with God’s will?
3. Does it edify others?
4. Does it reflect God’s plan for salvation?

If the answer is yes, then we can safely say that the vision is being cast by God for His people.

So what then is the make of a Holy Vision? First it is Biblically based, we can see it articulated through God’s word written. Second it is long term, it last literally from generation to generation. The vision God has for his people is the same yesterday, today and tomorrow. Third, it empowers the faith, that is to say it moves us to action. Finally it cannot be thwarted, God’s will, will be made manifest. Throughout Scripture if one generation cast of God’s vision they were cast off and the vision was picked up and lived out by the next generation.

The catechism in the Book of Common Prayer says the mission of the Church is “To restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.” While this is a great mission for the Church how might we state that as a vision—something to be aspired to, something to work toward? I’m not giving an answer for the answer is up to how the Holy Spirit guides us as a parish to develop that vision.

We will go about this in several ways. First, the vestry has already begun its work on how to guide the parish through the process. Second, we will have at least two parish meeting to help us discern God’s Holy Vision for us. One meeting will be in the spring and will provide the vestry with insight from the congregation. The second, will be in the fall and will focus on the vestry reporting back to the congregation with some recommendations that the congregation will be asked to accept or reject.

We live in a rapidly changing world, we as Christians are called to be salt and light in the world. Our Lord does have a plan for us. It is our responsibility to discern that plan.
Rector’s Reflection

Dear Beloved in Christ:
Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.

As we begin the Season of Lent many of us are asking themselves, “What should I give up for Lent. Having a Lenten discipline helps us to focus on the penitential nature of the season and prepares us for the celebration of Holy Week and Easter. I would encourage us to think of giving up something for Lent in a new way. In the Gospel of St. Mark Jesus says, “So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possession.” (Mk 14:33, RSV) The point Jesus makes here is very specific. We must give up all our possessions, everything, every last nickel. That is a hard saying, but let us look at it for a moment to see if it is really that hard.

First let us look at what we give up. We cast off greed, we cast off gluttony, we cast off idolatry, and we cast off our pride perhaps our most treasured possession. Jesus is telling us that we have to give up the world to follow Him. We have to realize that life and glory are not in this world, but in the Kingdom of Heaven. The things of this world only impede our attaining that kingdom. The riches He offers far outweigh anything that we possess yet we cling to our “stuff”.

You see possessing is a mind set, a heart set if you will. Would any of us fail to sell all that we had to ensure the welfare of a loved one? How much are our children worth, how much is our spouse worth. If you have to ponder that for a moment, I would suggest that you re-look your commitment and your relationship to those you profess to love. If we would give up all to save those we love, why would we not be willing to give up all for Christ? Could it be that we don’t love as much as we think we do, or as much as we would like to? Or could it be that we simply put ourselves first in our lives? These questions must be answered to surrender all to Christ, to be His disciple.

I have to ask myself can I love till it hurts then keep loving, can I love sacrificially? That is the love Jesus calls us to. The answer I have to give, is not on my own I can’t, I can only love in that manner through Christ’s love for me, by first experiencing the love He has given to me, a poor sinner. Can I cease putting myself first in my life? Only if I am willing to wash the feet of my unknown brother or sister, to submit to them in humility and love, to place their welfare above my own. Once again, this can’t be done by my own will, but only through the surrendering of my heart to Jesus, who will fill it with His love. I find that when I let Christ have dominion over my heart, over my life, I am able to let go of my worldly possessions and take up a cross, the cross that he has set aside for me. One cannot carry his possessions and the cross he is called to carry at the same time, one must choose. I pray we each choose Christ.

I would encourage each of us during this Lenten Season to examine our view toward the thing we have and ask ourselves a very simple question. “Do I possess the things I have or do they possess me?” What answer did you come up with? What are you going to do about it?

Pax et Bonum,
Fr. John

Heavenly Father,
Your love fills my days,
let me never turn from it,
let me never focus on that which You have blest me with as mine,
but always to know that it is Yours and Yours alone for me to provide for others with.
I pray this in the name of Your Son and my Savior Jesus Christ.
Our Vision:
Our vision for Trinity Episcopal Church includes
Growing a dynamic youth program.
Reaching out to our community outside the walls with the love of Christ.
Increasing spiritual and congregational growth for our parish.

Women of Trinity

Usually one cringes at the phrase "The Ides of March" (with apologies to Julius Caesar and Mr. Shakespeare), but this year, the Ides of March will be something to look forward to, thanks to the Women of Trinity. On Wednesday, March 15, the Women of Trinity will be meeting at 11 a.m. in All Saints Hall with a very special program. You've heard of Trinity's Outreach Committee, I'm sure, but did you know that one of recipients of the church's donations is the Bridge of Compassion? The Committee has been very impressed with the performance of this organization and we've invited its Executive Director, Greg Taylor, to tell us the secret of his success in the growth of this endeavor in serving the needs of residents of East Texas...the story is amazing and you might learn how you can help. Please clear your calendar for Wednesday March 15th so that you can join us at 11 a.m. for a most interesting program, not to mention the fascinating repartee following the meeting, when we share sandwiches and camaraderie. A member supplies the dessert and the church supplies the drink and the members provide the fun. But we do a lot more, so come, listen,

Brotherhood of St. Andrew

The Brotherhood of Saint Andrew’s 2016 Coat Drive was a great success. Between the parish and the school we collected 120 plus coats, sweaters, and jackets for men, women and children of all ages.

The Brotherhood of Saint Andrew Schedule for February is as follows:

Bible Study at Jucy’s on Wednesdays March 8th and 22nd at 11:30
(Bible Study begins at 12:00)
Saturday, March 18th at 10:00 am monthly meeting at Golden Corral

Mission Support Opportunity

Edwina Thomas is leading a mission to Kenya at the end of March to teach and provide pastoral and spiritual support to the wives of the forty-eight bishop’s in the Anglican Province of Kenya. The facilitators include a team of nine women: lay women, two women clergy, five wives of clergy and includes four wives of Anglican Bishops. One of the facilitators will be Gloria Kwashi, wife of an Anglican Archbishop in Jos, Nigeria, who has visited and spoken at Trinity.

Edwina would like to build a “home team” of persons who will pray, send and encourage this effort. Would you like to be part of this team? Please be in touch with Edwina and she will supply more details. I am asking for parishioners to help financially support this effort of to serve our fellow Christians. If you are willing to help please make a check out to Trinity Episcopal Church and put in the memo block “Rector’s Discretionary Fund.”
Birthdays

1 Matthew Hatch  17 Paul Palmer
2 Angela Bray  18 Louis Slayter
3 Teresea Whaley  19 Jim Shelton
4 Gary Hathaway  19 Joel Truelove
5 Jim Weaver  21 Oliver Briggle
6 Susan Pool  24 Claudia Abney
7 Clarence Brown  24 Sutton Minatrea
8 Kristy Duncan  25 Jill Parr Brewer
9 Kennedy Minatrea  26 Cate Truelove
10 Leanna Westergaard  27 Clarissa Martin
11 James Craver  28 Marjorie Bray
12 Candie Craver  28 Chase Tondee
13 Lowell Runyan  29 Dianne Perkins
14 Phalby Porter  30 Juli Jameson
15 Hannah Slayter  31 Sara Cope
16 Glenda Knutson  31 Richard Toussaint

Church Financials and Attendance for January 2017

- Budget Income for 2017: $508,664
- Budget Expenses for 2017: $546,091
- Budget Difference for 2017: ($37,427)
- Income Received to Date: $38,060
- Expenses to Date: $54,549
- Income for the month: $38,060
- Expenses for the month: $54,549
- Difference for the month: ($16,489)
- Difference to Date: ($16,489)

Average Sunday Attendance to date:

- 2016: 140
- Present: 150

LENTEN STUDY GROUP

This Lent join Fr. Andrew and the young families as we explore giving and forgiving, and how that could look like as a Lenten practice in a society when both of these concepts are becoming less prevalent. During Lent we will read *Free of Charge: Giving and Forgiving in a Culture Stripped of Grace* by Miroslav Wolf. This is the same book the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams used for his Lenten book study in 2006. Join us every Sunday evening throughout Lent at 5:30 in Fry Hall. Childcare will be provided. Please let the office know if you are interested in joining this group so we will know how many books to order.

What’s a Tripod?

Fr. John needs a little help. For the last several years he has been trying to find out how our monthly newsletter got the name, “THE TRIPOD”. He has had little success. If you know how the name came about give him a call or drop him an email at fr_john_himes@hotmail.com. He would like to solve the mystery.

Anniversaries

8 Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Brown
12 Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Taylor
13 Mr. & Mrs. Gary Hathaway
16 Mr. & Mrs. Pat Furrh
25 Mr. & Mrs. Bill Abraham
28 Mr. & Mrs. John Bogue, Sr.
30 Mr. & Mrs. Bud Denney, Jr.

8 Mr. & Mrs. Clarence Brown
12 Mr. & Mrs. Hugh Taylor
13 Mr. & Mrs. Gary Hathaway
16 Mr. & Mrs. Pat Furrh
25 Mr. & Mrs. Bill Abraham
28 Mr. & Mrs. John Bogue, Sr.
30 Mr. & Mrs. Bud Denney, Jr.
February is a time where we think of Valentines Day. Every Dad who is blest to have a daughter knows who his special girl is, his daughter. Our Girl Scout Troop, Troop 7143 Hosted a belated Valentine’s Dinner Dance for Daddy’s and Daughter’s on February 25th.

The young ladies were dressed in their finest party dresses and the Dad’s were obviously proud of their Daughters. Dancing was a bit slow at first, but after dinner the Dad’s warmed up and began to fill the dance floor with their daughters. Generational differences in dance style were also on display. Style wasn’t important to these young ladies as they obviously enjoyed some “Dad Time” with the man in their life.

Thank you Troop 7243 for hosting this dinner dance that created precious memories for both the dads and their daughters.
Hello Friends,

Hello friends, greetings in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. I love a television show called Parks and Rec. This is a show that features a group of people who work for the Parks and Rec department in fictional Pawnee Indiana. One episode saw two characters, one the ultimate outdoorsman who is the head of the department named Ron and the other a technology addicted swaged up underachieving government worker named Tom. In this episode, Ron decides to break Tom’s cell phone addiction by taking him to a cabin in the woods. The two go into the wilderness where Tom is free from technology. He is free from cell phone service, from television, internet, etc. This proves difficult for Tom. His need for technology is too great that the desire leads him to leave the cabin in search of a smartphone. Being distracted with his new smartphone Tom crashed the car into the tree. It was then that Tom realized he might have a problem, Tom realized that he used Technology to hide from problems he faced, hide from the world, and hide from his life. Ron took Tom to the wilderness in an attempt to escape what was controlling him, technology. It was there in the wilderness that Tom realized the hold technology had over his life.

We are now in the season of lent, a 40 day season where we grow closer to God. On the first Sunday of Lent we read about the temptation of Christ. In that event Christ goes into the wilderness for 40 days to be tempted by Satan. This event followed his baptism. It is important to see the wilderness as a place free from outside control, or Roman control. The wilderness was a place where Jesus could be by himself where nobody could observe him. Jesus’ time in the wilderness, praying and fasting, helped grow closer with God the Father. Being in the wilderness; free from outside distractions, free from those powers that clouded God from the world, probably made the temptations easier to deny.

I wonder where our own wilderness places are. Our places where we can go that do not allow outside factors to block us from our desire to grow closer to God. This lent when we are taking on our Lenten disciplines we may at times find a desire to break these. We may find a push to forgo praying, to skip reading scripture, or to eat that chocolate. That is why discovering our wilderness places now is important, so we can go and refocus on God without distractions. These wilderness places could be in a closet, or in a car for a drive in the country or simply sitting in our driveway, or they could be actually camping in the wilderness. Where ever they are I encourage us all to find our wilderness places. That way when we feel the temptation to break our disciplines we can go to our places that block these tests. We can go to these wildernesses where we can see and feel God’s love for us. This lent, go to your wilderness places.

Blessings,

Fr. Andrew
Understanding the Thirty-nine Article of Religion 4

IV. Of the Resurrection of Christ. Christ did truly rise again from death, and took his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man’s nature; wherewith he ascended

It is Lent, the time were we prepare ourselves for the passion of Jesus Christ. We do this by spending time fasting, praying, confessing sins, doing penance, and self-denial. We do this so we can focus on our relationships with God, and our need for his redeeming love. On Easter our fasting is over, for Jesus rose from the dead. In that act he conquered sin and death, so that we do not have to. In the service of the Easter Vigil we hear about God’s work in Israel through the reading of Holy Scripture. After we hear that we say the paschal proclamation, “Alleluia Christ is risen” and all join together in a loud and excited voice, “The Lord is risen indeed.” This is where we recognize that ultimate act of Love.

The resurrection of Jesus Christ has been a topic of discussion in theological circles. The discussion about whether the resurrection was a bodily resurrection or a mystical one. More specifically, by this the proponents of this idea mean a resurrection of Jesus’ soul and not his body. There have also been other ideas brought up regarding Christ’s resurrection, bringing into question whether or not he ever actually died or not. Further discussions have been had on why Christ had to be resurrected. Believe it or not these discussions are ongoing. Theologians and historians are still discussing Christ’s resurrection and how it occurred. When the 39 articles were written this question was addressed in the fourth article of religion. That article is titled “Of the Resurrection of Christ.”

The fourth article makes clear the church’s views of the resurrection. That article articulates a complete bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. It also articulates why Christ was resurrected, and what happened after the resurrection. In this article I will explore the fourth article of religion, looking at what it is saying. I will also explore the resurrection as seen in scripture. I will explore what it means for us Christians in our lives. In this we can get a sense of the Anglican teaching of the Resurrection of our Lord, and why we believe in the bodily resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Fourth article states that “Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man’s nature; wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until he return to judge all Men at the last day.” There are a few theological points being made here. The first point made is that Jesus did rise from the dead, and that was in bodily form. The second point is that he ascended into heaven where he sits next to the Father. The final point is that he will return and judge everybody on the last day. This should sound familiar to us. We state these basic theological beliefs in our recital of the Nicene Creed.

Beginning with the first point; as stated above the article does lay out the belief of a bodily resurrection. Before I begin exploring the article, it might be necessary to state what exactly we mean by resurrection. According to the Catholic Encyclopedia “resurrection is the rising again from the dead, the resumption of life.” With that we will be exploring the resumption of life, the rising again from the dead of Jesus Christ.

All four of the Gospels give an account of Jesus’ resurrection. Each Gospel account has some minor differences, but all tell the point the same. The point being that Jesus was resurrected. Each Gospel features women going to the tomb to prepare his body. All the Gospels feature the women going to the tomb and finding it empty. Now this is where the differences show up. In two of the Gospels an angel appears. In Matthew there is one angel who tells them what had happened, in John there were two angels. The other two Gospels simply states that men were there. In Mark there is a young man who appeared to tell the women what had happened. In Luke it is two young men. In the three synoptic Gospels the women are told that Jesus has been raised and told to
tell the disciples that Jesus was going to Galilee and will meet them there.

While there are minor differences the main point is clear; that being Jesus Christ was resurrected. All four Gospels contain an empty tomb. On top of that we even have post resurrection accounts in some of the Gospels. Let us take a look at the Gospel according to St. John. One post resurrection narrative focuses on a disciple named Thomas. Thomas has the unfair reputation of being called doubting Thomas. He got this because he did not believe the other disciples when they saw Jesus without him. When Jesus appeared to Thomas he told Thomas to touch his wounds on his hand and to put his finger in his side. This indicates a bodily resurrection.

As I mentioned there are other explanations for the resurrection. Some say that he was raised, but as a new being. Some say that the young man appearing unrecognizable was a new resurrected Jesus. However, this does not take into accounts of Jesus who appeared with his wounds later in the Gospels. There are also ideas that Jesus did not truly die, that his resurrection was more of a wake up. However, these ideas do not match with Scripture and centuries of church teachings.

We have established our understanding of a bodily resurrection in the fourth article; now I would like to explore the idea of why Jesus was resurrected. Before I get into what the article has to say about this, I wish to explore the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. In his *Summa Thologiae* He answered the question of the necessity of Christ’s resurrection. St. Thomas Aquinas gave five reasons for the resurrection. The first was to praise divine justice, and to exalt those who humble themselves for God. For Christ humbled himself to the point of death. That humbling moment led to the resurrection, then we too when we humble ourselves will rise again. The second reason was to build up our faith, since our belief in the divinity of Christ is confirmed by his rising. The third reason is to lift our hopes, that if we see Christ rise again, through him we too will rise. The fourth is to shape the lives of the faithful; in that we can be dead to sin, but alive in God. The fifth reason is to complete our salvation. He died to conquer sin so we do not have to; in rising again he was glorified to advance us toward good things.

These answers to the necessity of Christ’s resurrection are based on church teachings before St. Thomas Aquinas. Likewise, it is still our belief today. In the second and third points of the fourth article the answer is also answered as to why Christ needed to be resurrected. In the second point of the article Christ ascended into heaven. It was his body that was resurrected, and his body ascended into heaven. Without the bodily resurrection there could be no bodily ascension where he sits next to the Father in heaven. The third point states that he will return to judge all. Again without the resurrection there would be no coming again.

We have explored the reasons we believe in the bodily resurrection. Not only because it is what is in the fourth article of religion, but it is what we see in scripture. We also see why we believe that Christ was resurrected. Through his own resurrection we too will see our own resurrection, and at the last day be with him.
Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament

Each Sunday During Lent at 5:00 PM
Beginning March 5th
It won't be this bad!

Times Change
We are spring forward on Sunday, March 12th
Be sure to set your clocks forward 1 hour before going to bed.
Parish Staff
Fr. John M. Himes, OSF
Rector
Fr. Andrew Ellison
Curate
Rae Minchew
Youth Director
Magdalena Altnau
Children’s Christian Formation Director
Angela Bray
Nursery Director
Jim Johnson
Music Director and Organist
Melissa Hammers
Choir Director
Stacey Shaw
Parish Administrator
Suzie Ward
Administrative Assistant
Melvin Williams
Sexton

Vestry
Ken Kerr
Senior Warden
Joel Truelove
Junior Warden
Angela Bray
Clerk of the Vestry
Julie Trexler
Treasurer
Doug Jager
Cindy Cain
Leana Westergaard
Tony Pierce
Carol Meyer
Bonnie Strauss
Micheal DeSa
Cassie Rhoades

Weekly Schedule

Sunday
Holy Communion - 8:00 AM
Parish Breakfast - 9:00 AM
Christian Formation for all ages - 9:30 AM
Holy Communion - 10:30 AM
After 10:30 Service
Coffee & Cookies In All Saints Hall

Wednesday
Holy Communion - 10:00 AM
Dinner in All Saint’s Hall - 5:30 PM
Contemporary Worship - 6:15 PM

Thursday
Choir practice 5:00 PM
Martha’s Kitchen - 6:00 PM