

Conversion of St. Paul (1767) by Nicolas-Bernard Lepicie

THE EPISTLE

OF SAINT PAUL'S PARISH—K STREET

AN EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN THE DIOCESE OF WASHINGTON

JANUARY 2015 XXVIII NUMBER 1

From the Interim Rector

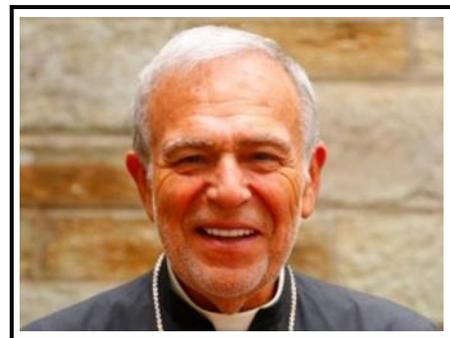
Understanding what the Spirit wants to make of us

Epiphany is almost here as you receive this, and yet we are a day after Advent III as I write. In other words, while we are waiting for Mary and Joseph to get to the stable where Jesus is to be born, the Magi are almost knocking on the door. It is difficult this time to get my head around the future when there is so much *present* to live through.

Epiphany is all about the lengths God will go in order to get our attention, to get us to see what God wishes us to see. The word itself means “manifestation” and is all about revelation—perhaps to help uncover something that has been forgotten or to deliver a word, a promise, a gift that is brand new.

The season begins with Jesus’ baptism, an occasion when “the heavens were opened” to allow eternal time to come into this time, this time of now. The manifestation was the blessing of Jesus, a gift to Him that gave Him—in a further way—to all of us.

The season ends with Jesus’ Transfiguration, when the heavens are again opened, again a gift to Jesus when God revealed the depth of His love, opened His very heart. That occasion, too, was shared with the rest of us by the eye-witnesses (Peter, James and John) who were caught up in that



THE RT. REV'D JIM JELINEK

manifestation of glory and grace, seeing the vision that Jesus Himself was a part of.

In between are stories of Jesus calling disciples (he is “revealed” to them), teaching (revealing the Word in the words), the Beatitudes (a revelation of states of blessedness), and miracles of various kinds [depending on the year in the liturgical cycle].

What strikes me about these various epiphanies is the “back-and-forthness” between a revelation of the new and the rediscovery of the old. Jesus dusts off old prophecies from Hebrew scripture and puts a “modern” (for His day) interpretation on them. One might even say that is where he puts new wine in old wineskins. On the other hand, at Cana for a wedding, if we think of good wine being well-aged, he puts old wine in new ves-

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Epiphany is all about the lengths God will go in order to get our attention, to get us to see what God wishes us to see.

sels—where the steward commends the bridegroom for saving the best for last.

We are in a time of transition and transformation, and along with that comes discernment, trying to see and name how the Spirit moves among us, trying to understand what the Spirit wants to make of us, trying to be of one heart when not always of one mind.

+James L. Jelinek
Interim Rector



Up on the Rooftop (click, click, click!) . . .



Photograph: Deacon Jeff Hual, Ministry Resident

On Saturday, December 6, Father Dominique celebrated a children's teaching Mass in honor of the feast day of St. Nicholas. Forty-two children and adults attended!

After the Mass, attendees gathered in the dining hall for dinner, during which the children crafted Jesse tree ornaments with Deacon Jeff for the Parish Christmas tree. There was even a visit from St. Nicholas himself!

Thank you to all who helped make this event a special evening for all.



Libraries Open for Business at the Bishop Walker School

Pattie Kindsvater

Last week at the Bishop Walker School (BWS) Upper Primary school library, located at the Washington View campus, a student excitedly told his classmates how much he had enjoyed the book he had checked out that week—I Feel Better with a Frog in My Throat: History's Strangest Cures. It was a delightful moment that rewarded months of work by volunteers, including St. Paul's parishioner Sylvia Rortvedt, that have gone into the creation of the libraries at both BWS campuses. The libraries officially opened on November 3rd and have been doing a brisk business ever since!

Since the beginning of 2014, volunteers sorted through an ocean of book donations from across the Diocese, in the end selecting, cataloging and placing 5000-6000 additional books on BWS library shelves. The collection includes fiction and non-fiction titles and is set up as a lending library. Student and staff accounts are part of the library database so books can be checked out and taken home or to the classroom. Volunteers from the Diocese and also from St. John's, McLean, Virginia, made sure the library space was light-filled and appealing--colorful rugs, wall art and maps, bold colors--a place where the boys would want to spend time and expand horizons.

Organizing the collections was only the first step to bringing the big wide world of libraries to BWS students. Sylvia, who is a librarian by profession, and fellow volunteer Catherine, who is a former elementary school teacher, are meeting weekly with each class (BWS currently comprises grades Junior Kindergarten



Sylvia Rortvedt helping boys at BWS check out books



through 5th grade, with plans to grow through the 8th grade) to help them explore the library riches that are now theirs. There is story time for the younger students and time for the older boys to share with classmates

their thoughts on books they have read. Sylvia and Catherine work with the teachers to match up students with books that will engage their interest and enhance their reading skills. They are also highlighting to the teachers

books in the library collection that might support them in the classroom. Sylvia says, "It was a big job to sort through many dozens of boxes of miscellaneous books and create two organized, grade-appropriate collections. But it has been tremendously rewarding to develop this new resource for BWS students and to see their excitement about library time and enthusiasm for reading."

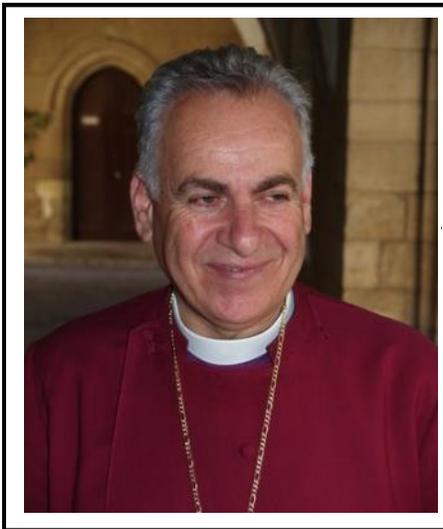
Sylvia reports that the BWS fiction collection is good, but that non-fiction books are still needed, especially new, current works in the science, technology and social studies fields. New books with African-American and multicultural themes and images are also needed. BWS students come from some of the least well-off areas of the city, and rely on supporters to cover the costs of the tuition-free education and Christian formation they receive at BWS. As a result of Sylvia's observation, St. Paul's Commission on Mission (CoM) has during Advent been soliciting contributions to purchase library and classroom reading materials for BWS from the Scholastic Science Trio series. The CoM will gladly receive contributions into the new year, at which point it will purchase as many installments in the series as possible for use in BWS classrooms. Please note "**BWS Science Materials Project**" on the memo line of checks made out to St. Paul's.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Bishop Walker School—in the library or some other capacity—please contact Jana Gowan at (202) 501-3073 or

jgowan@bishopwalkerschool.org.



Thanks from the Diocese of Jerusalem



Most Rev'd Suheil S. Dawani

My Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace and goodwill among all." Luke 2:14

I am writing you with a grateful heart for the tremendous solidarity and support you have so generously provided to the Diocese of Jerusalem, especially during recent months.

Throughout the diocese, in the five countries we are called to serve, and in other parts of the region, there is enormous turmoil and suffering. Syria and Iraq are confronted with existential challenges, Jordan and Lebanon heavily burdened with caring for tens of thousands of refugees, and Palestine and Israel locked in a decades old conflict, which continues to lead to loss of life on both sides.

As indigenous Christians we are strengthened by our faith, as well as by the kindness of fellow Christians and partners of the Diocese of Jerusalem, such as yourself. It is with God's grace and your prayers, caring, and practical support that we are able to hold firm and, through our parishes, and institutions of healthcare and

learning, make a positive contribution throughout the Middle East.

Jerusalem is the City of the Resurrection, and therefore the City of Hope. Our first Advent candle is dedicated to this essential aspect of our Christian life and joined by peace, love, and joy. With these and in communion with one another, we are enabled by God to bring light to darkness, help the weak to become strong, and broken places to become whole.

Christmas renews our confidence and trust in Immanuel, God with us. Despite all the many challenges we may face, we are steadfast in our calling and mission and by working together we help our world to know the love of God and that peace which surpasses all understanding.

Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, I give thanks to God for your standing with us and supporting the ministries of the Diocese of Jerusalem, especially in Gaza. I pray that this Christmas season will fill you once again with all hope, love, peace, and joy.

Peace and Salaam,
+Suheil

Most Revd Suheil S. Dawani
Anglican Archbishop in Jerusalem
Bishop of The Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem



Grate Patrol Christmas Gift Bags



Gwyneth Zakaib

On Saturday, December 13, parishioners gathered to assemble this year's Grate Patrol Christmas gift bags. These festive pouches will accompany breakfasts served to more than 150 of our homeless neighbors later this month. It was truly a church-wide effort.

Over several weeks, members of the parish amassed a mountain of goodies in the atrium, including soap, shampoo, lotion, hand-warmers, lip balm, tooth-cleaning kits, gloves, socks, hats, and even water bottles.

The night before the bags were put together, the boys and girls of the children's choir munched on butter cookies as they adorned stacks of plain white bags with pictures of snowflakes, Christmas trees, candy canes, and more.

The next afternoon, the Volunteer Youth Corps and friends from the parish organized the donations and filled the bags. They carefully (but efficiently) chose which gifts to include for each person before stacking the bags neatly in a long row of boxes.

Early on December 27, Grate Patrol volunteers will distribute these presents, along with coffee and breakfast, to people in need along their usual route.

Thank you to everyone who contributed! Your efforts will bring joy to many this holiday season

Rector Search Update

Jeanne Smith and Chris Mixter,
Search Committee Co-Chairs

As Advent is a season of hopeful expectation, it was therefore a truly apt moment for the Search Committee to begin the next phase of our work. In December we traveled to the home parishes of most of the candidates still under consideration, and we expect our final visits to occur on the weekend of January 2-4.

We have been going in teams of two to meet with the candidates, experience their celebration of the Eucharist, hear them preach, and visit with some of the people they named as references. Once these visits are complete, the Committee will meet together to share their impressions and discern the candidates whom we will invite to visit St. Paul's to meet the entire Search Committee. In the meantime, The Diocesan Transition Office has arranged for background checks for those we are visiting.

As we mentioned in our recent Eblast, we hope you will share our sense of excitement as we move closer to the moment in early 2015 when we will present our final recommendations to the Vestry. Please continue to keep the Committee in your prayers, and now the candidates as well. We have come to appreciate that this truly is a process of mutual discernment. Just as we are weighing whom among these individuals God is calling to St. Paul's, they too are considering whether He is calling them here. Your prayers will help both them and us as we seek God's guidance in the weeks ahead.



2015 Stewardship Campaign

Our Stewardship Campaign for 2015 is still very much underway, but we are running out of time. So we are making a final push for 100% participation. As of December 16 we have received 154 pledges totaling \$613,046. Thank you to all who made their 2015 pledge commitment! As of this date, we are about 50 pledges shy of last year's pledges; and we are down \$78,254 from 2014.

If you have not pledged yet, please join your fellow parishioners and make your pledge today. Pledge forms are available in the atrium, as well as on line at <http://www.stpauls-kst.com/stewardship-giving/make-pledge-commitment-2015><http://stpauls-kst.com/>.

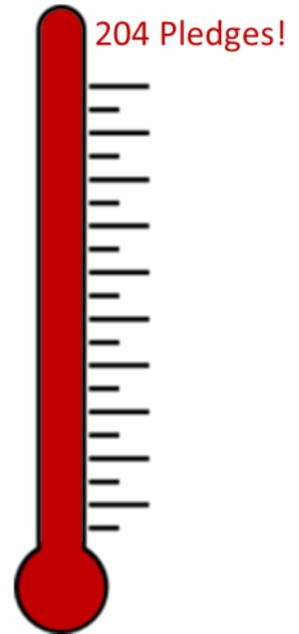
The Parish depends on pledges to make its annual operating budget, which ensures that the clergy and staff are paid; the building, organ and physical plant are maintained; and the Parish ministries and mission are supported. Through your continued support and generosity, St. Paul's will continue to grow in mission and ministry.

In the love of Christ,

Ms. Marci Stanford
Mr. Michael Robinson
Stewardship Co-Chairs



2014



2015



(Re)learning Wonder



Fr. Dominique Peridans

We live in a world of busyness, and in a world where, in terms of our experience of reality—in particular, of relationships—so much is mediated by devices, and no longer simple and direct, that we forget what it is to wonder, what it is to be in wonder. How odd this is given how incredibly refreshing wonder is. Wonder raises us above repetition and predictability. Wonder, therefore, keeps us youthful and interiorly free.

Mid-fourth century BCE, the brilliant Greek philosopher Aristotle, who clearly wondered, made the following observations:

ALL persons by nature desire to know. An indication of this is the delight we take in our senses; for even apart from their usefulness they are loved for themselves; and above all others the sense of sight. For not only with a view to action, but even when we are not going to do anything, we prefer seeing (one might say) to everything else. The reason is that this, most of all the senses, makes us know and brings to light many differences between things.

From this, we can perhaps say that *to wonder is to behold the splendor of something or someone that is*

not me. When you think about it, strictly speaking, we do not wonder at ourselves. On a good day, we *love* ourselves. Well, we may (or may not!) wonder at ourselves *in the mirror*. But, when we do so, we are, in a sense, actually looking at ourselves as “other”. A mirror allows us to do this. Wonder presupposes *otherness* and *transcendence*. We wonder at a reality that is *other* than us, and that, in its otherness, *transcends* us. And in the “space” between knowing and unknowing, we wonder. Or more precisely, prompted by both what we experience of a reality *and* what escapes us of a reality we stand in awe, we wonder. We need to be both experientially connected to the reality *and* transcended by the reality for wonder to be aroused in us. “Been there, done that” does not arouse wonder. Equally, something completely outside the realm of our experience and thus completely unknown does not arouse wonder.

Wonder, therefore, is really so very simple. It is all within gaze. It begins with looking with gazing. If it is so simple and so liberating, why do we not find ourselves more often in wonder? Could it be because we are creatures of habit and comfort? Could it be that sometimes cynicism knocks at our door? Life is hard, and we all have, in different ways, backaches and headaches and heartaches. And, instinctively, we shelter ourselves. And, instinctively, presuming that the rest of the journey will likely have a lot more aches, we spend a lot of time and energy developing strategies to assuage and distract ourselves from the pain, accumulating reserves for a rainy day. We, consequently, get somewhat entangled *in ourselves*; call it self-absorption. We are all guilty of

this. We evaluate everything around us by how it affects us. This is very understandable, but it means that we remain in our safety zone, which is very often very small, and we deprive ourselves of *wonder*-ful experiences. When I am in my safety zone, I feel, well, *safe* (or so I think...), but there is not a whole lot of newness and thus not a whole lot of aliveness.

The aforementioned foundation in experience, the connection to reality is key to understanding the simple journey to wonder. Wonder is truly within reach, or within gaze. How do we rediscover a sense of wonder in our lives? What do we do if we find ourselves blasé or tired or fearful or cynical, i.e. largely “over it”? We can answer the questions from two viewpoints, or at two levels. We are *human beings* and we are *children of God*. We do not have two separate identities, but we can consider our humanness, who we are in our humanity, and we can consider the child of God in us, ourselves in relation to God, as touched and transformed by God (gradually, of course, the child of God in us ought to take deeper and deeper hold).

And so the questions are, 1.) “How do we, *humanly* speaking, relearn wonder?” and 2.) “How do we, *divinely* speaking, relearn wonder?” From the human viewpoint, one of the biggest favors we can do ourselves is to be deliberate and conscious about the task of awakening ourselves to reality. With our minds we are meant to know reality as it is: nature, people, human experiences. With our hearts we are meant to love other persons, to engage in deep, interpersonal relationships. And, quite basically, day-to-day, one of the biggest favors we can do for ourselves is to awaken to

the world around us in its freshness. We are made for this world: to see, to hear, to smell, to touch, to taste, and in that direct contact, to wonder and to come to understand.

Re-awakening ourselves entails, therefore, a primacy of *quality* over *quantity*. Quality leads to inquiry, for quality, because there is transcendence, leads to awe, and awe leads me to inquire. When Jesus says that we ought to be like children, amongst other things, he is saying that we ought to wonder and to be *inquisitive*. Inquisitiveness begins with wonder.

As suggested, wonder begins with quality—as simplistic and as naïve as that may sound. For example, the blueness of the sky, quality that transcends me. The fresh qualities of the world around us escape us. We cannot put our paws on them. With the *quantitative* aspect of the world around us, the case is different. We can grasp it by measuring. In fact, in order to more fully grasp it, we must measure it. That is why the questions, “How fast?” or “How big?,” we can answer: “60 MPH” or “6 feet tall.” But we cannot really answer the questions, “How blue?” or “How sweet?”. “Well, *blue! sweet!*”

Our world is now so mediated by devices (cell phones, iPads, GPS systems, etc.) that quality is increasingly veiled, and something of our minds is closing. The sign of this is the boredom that we experience. It is reality, in its native, natural state that most deeply awakens the mind. We are so easily bored nowadays because we are less in touch with purer reality. Think about it, how much wonder does the computer or our iPhone really awaken in us? And yet, oddly, instead of gazing and appreciating a sunset, we opt to text. To the degree what we primarily experience is pre-digested, packaged information, and to the degree we choose the world of images over the real world, wonder goes to

sleep, and we, consequently, no longer inquire.

The choice is ours to make. Why not experience the delight of sensation, and experience being safely but *really* drawn out of ourselves, engaged by something that transcends us. Wonder keeps us young (and there is no surgery involved!). Practice wonder, and watch boredom and fatigue and cynicism fade away.

From a *divine* perspective, i.e. from the perspective of our relationship with Christ, wonder is necessarily a question of faith. In other words, it is in faith—which enables us to engage Christ whom we do not see—that we experience *another* wonder. We relearn wonder in choosing to engage reality, the world around us in its freshness *and* in leaning upon what we know in faith, upon the *One* we know in faith and leaning upon the hope that is ours which enables us to cling to Him. We can wonder at the world and people around us in relation to God, as touched by God, as loved by God, as made use of by God to touch me. And this divine sense of wonder is transformative. It is not just a safety net for me so that I not fall into cynicism! It regenerates my gaze. When Mother Teresa says that the poor, that persons with disfigured bodies and psyches—those from whom we spontaneously turn away our gaze—are Jesus in disguise, she is either delusional and ridiculously naïve, or she is seeing something more than meets the eye; her gaze has been transformed and regenerated.

Such a perspective, such a gaze can be ours. It is ours for the asking—quite simply. We relearn wonder by our choosing. We can choose our focus for the day, each day. We can choose—more than to look at the positive—to look at the *real*—humanly and divinely.

But, honestly, there are days when such a choice of focus just does

not seem to cut it, because there are days when life is a little too much. Every day, but on those days in particular, we must know that there is a Presence. There is the Presence of Someone who is not determined by what weighs upon me. There is the Presence of Someone whose love for me is not determined (and thus diminished) by what I have done or not done. There is the Presence of Someone who wishes to transform and regenerate my gaze. We call him *the Christ*. We are invited to a simple, liberating, deeply personal relationship with Him. We have been given three gifts that enable us to do so: faith, hope, and love. All we must do is express a desire for relationship, and He will do the rest. Our primary part, our primary task is that of saying “yes”—which can be challenging at times because we fall back into the boredom or the fatigue or the cynicism, basing our evaluation on how things affect us. Such is often our spontaneous *modus operandi*. All we need to do when this occurs is to bring it before the Christ, and lay it before him, saying, “I have done it again. I got entangled. But you know my heart, this heart which I open to you, even though I am scared or hurt or tired or indifferent.” He will do the rest. He will carry the weight. He will awaken the wonder...



Cyprian—Reredos Saint, Defender of the Faith

Cathy Downes

Each time I start to research the life and works of another of the Saints on our Reredos, I am once more astounded at the lives they led, the examples of selflessness they set, the choices they made that led to the ultimate sacrifice of their life for the faith they confessed. St. Cyprian of Carthage is no different.

Thascius Cyprianus was born about the year 200 A.D in Carthage. It would seem that he was born into a rich non-Christian family. He received an education that allowed him to become a recognized and well-off orator, teacher of rhetoric and philosophy and lawyer. By all accounts, he lived richly but came, over time, to be less and less fulfilled by his secular existence. When he was 40 years old, he came into contact with a presbyter named Caecilianus, and at age 46 was received into the Christian community of Carthage as a catechumen. Before he was baptized, most accounts highlight Cyprian's decision to sell all his possessions and make donations to the poor.

For St. Cyprian, his baptism truly was transformational. He wrote in a Treatise To Donatus: *“when the water of regeneration cleansed the impurity of my former life, a light from on high shone into my heart... and the Spirit transformed me into a new man by a second birth. Then at once, in a miraculous manner, certainty replaced doubt, mysteries were revealed, and darkness became light... Then it was possible to acknowledge that what was born of the flesh and lived for sin was earthly, but what the Holy Spirit had vivified began to be of God.... In God and from God is all our strength.... Through Him we, while*

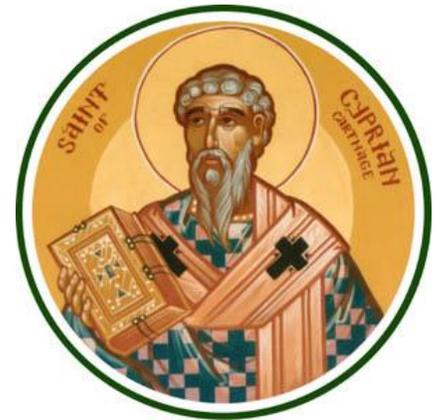
living upon the earth, have a hint of future bliss.” (“Hieromartyr Cyprian the Bishop of Carthage” (<http://oca.org/saints/lives/2013/08/31/102443-hieromartyr-cyprian-the-bishop-of-carthage>)

St. Cyprian very quickly moved from being a catechumen to being ordained two years later to the priesthood. Very soon afterwards, when the then Bishop of Carthage died, St. Cyprian was elected by public acclaim to be his unwilling replacement. In his first years as Bishop of Carthage he focused on improving the welfare of Carthage Christians who had grown in numbers of a period of acquiescence from the Roman Empire.

However within a year of Cyprian becoming bishop, the Emperor Decius launched a persecution against Christians requiring all to forswear Christianity and return to the Roman Gods. As a highly prominent Christian, Cyprian was a natural target. To maintain himself as a source of resistance, he quickly distributed funds to church members and fled Carthage. He then continued to support his flock with resources and a series of Epistles and letters.

When he came back to Carthage as the Persecution was waning, he was then besieged with the challenge of how to deal with those who had denied the faith (many under torture) or who had easily returned to worshipping idols. Cyprian's stern but middle of the road solution became a critical component in the evolution of the Church's definition of the Sacrament of Penance.

The approach didn't meet with acceptance by a number of prominent churchmen of the time who sought to have Cyprian removed as bishop. Fortunately, he prevailed and his writings



of this time have become important in defining the concept of the unity of the Christian church which stressed the importance of visible, practical unity among Christians.

As this period of discord was declining, a plague of the disease kind visited Carthage and in responding to this, Cyprian showed another side of his person that won more converts to Christianity. By many accounts, he pitched in personally, helping the ill, burying the dead, and inspiring his Christians to help any and everyone regardless of their religion, race, caste, sect, whatever.

After a four year period in which the Church was left in peace, a new Emperor—Valerian—resumed attacks on the Christian Church with aim of destroying its leaders first. Perhaps fearing the criticism that had followed his leaving of Carthage during the Decius persecution, Cyprian stayed in Carthage. In 257 he was exiled for refusing to offer sacrifice to idols. He also refused to give up the names and locations of other churchmen. While in exile, he had a vision that he would die a martyr's death.

During his exile, he continued to teach and lead the evolution of the early Christian church through his writings about baptism, the Lord's

JANUARY ON K STREET

UPCOMING BIRTHDAYS AT ST. PAUL'S

1 Linda DeBerry	21 John Crane Mark Freeland
6 Douglas Freeman Liz Ryon	24 Ann Martin William O'Brien
8 William Buzby Frank Parlier Eric Petersen Emerson Sieverts	26 Grace Koontz
9 Penelope Wilhelm	27 Andrew Darmstadter
10 Clarissa Dean Laurita Liles Jeanne Smith	28 David Parker
11 Peter Agnew Catherine Ballinger Linna Barnes	31 Meredith Thorberg
14 Grace Buzby Edward Loucks	
17 Richard Best	
19 Glen Koontz	
20 William Heron	



Prayer, the role and ministry of bishops, alms-giving, on patience and rivalry, amongst other matters.

The campaign against the leading clergy of the church was renewed the following year 258, including the beheading of Pope Sixtus, and Cyprian was returned to Carthage where he was put on trial. He was called to deny or confess his faith and worship idols. He refused to deny the faith and was convicted and sentenced to death. He was martyred shortly afterwards.

St. Cyprian provided the early Christian Church with critical thinking on key foundations of Christian theology. He showed by his courage and personal example the teachings of Christ in loving for all. He found and exemplified a life of spiritual and faithful meaning and willingness to

sacrifice all for that faith, in the short decade from his conversion to his martyrdom.



SPECIAL SERVICES/ MAJOR FEAST DAYS

Thursday, January 1, 2015: The Feast of the Holy Name

9:45 a.m.: Morning Prayer
10:30 a.m.: Sung Mass

Tuesday, January 6, 2015: The Feast of the Epiphany

5:45 p.m.: Evening Prayer
6:45 p.m.: Procession and Solemn Mass

Sunday, January 11, 2015: The Baptism of our Lord

7:30 a.m.: Morning Prayer
7:45 a.m.: Low Mass
9:00 a.m.: Sung Mass
11:15 a.m.: Solemn Mass
6:00 p.m.: Epiphany Lessons and Carols

Sunday, January 25, 2015: Patronal Feast (Conversion of St. Paul)

7:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
7:45 a.m. Low Mass
9:00 a.m. Sung Mass
11:15 a.m. Procession and Solemn Mass
6:00 p.m. Evensong and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament





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Remember to mark your Calendar:

January 1, Feast of the Holy Name: 10:30 am — Sung Mass
January 6, Epiphany: 6:45 pm — Procession and Solemn Mass
January 11: 6 pm — Epiphany Lessons and Carols
January 25, Patronal Feast (Conversion of St. Paul)

