

Crossings

Church of the Holy Cross ✠ Episcopal
875 Cotton Street, Shreveport, Louisiana
August 18, 2021

Services

(until further notice)

Please see calendar below.

The Vestry

David Richard, Senior Warden
Ginger Paul, Junior Warden
Mike Wilkerson, Secretary
Donna Neal, Co-Secretary
Georgiana Gleason
Rick Hadwin
Marshall Middleton
Reid Raymond
Jackie Songy
Monty Walford, Treasurer
(non-vestry)

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Church of the Holy Cross
Shreveport

Contact the Editor

Please send material for articles,
along with ideas, suggestions,
or complaints to
lynn.walford@lsus.edu

Confession and Anointing

The following is taken from my Confirmation class. Here I discuss two sacramental rites, known colloquially as Confession and Anointing, but also called Reconciliation of a Penitent and Holy Unction.

Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray for one another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:14-16, Authorized Version).



For much of history, these two sacraments were joined together, as those who were near death would seek to unburden their conscience and receive anointing. These days they are treated as separate, but do still often go together, especially when visiting the hospital. Unction is the laying on of hands and anointing with holy oil for the relief of necessity and healing of body, mind, and spirit. As Christians, we believe that the prayer of the righteous availeth much and that we have a responsibility to pray for the sick and dying.

Of course, we also acknowledge that our prayers may not lead to a restoration of health, but that God's answer to our prayers might be "no" does not excuse us from our duty to our neighbor. Leonel Mitchell, priest and scholar of the Book of Common Prayer, writes:

The 1979 prayer book has also tried to avoid the opposite error of not taking seriously the possibility that the sick person may die, especially since our society often is unwilling to face the fact of death. Ministration at the Time of Death is thus in a separate section, recognizing that we all shall die and that some sick people will not recover, but avoiding the suggestion that only those who are dying should receive the ministrations of the Church or that the priest should only be called when the doctors have given up hope.

As James' epistle says,

Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

While we do have faith that God has the power to heal our bodies, we do not, like the faith healers of the Word of Faith movement, teach that a lack of healing is the result of a lack of faith.

All this leads us to Confession. Never do I witness Episcopalians bristle more than when I suggest they confess their sins. It is deeply personal, terrifying, to name the things that we have done to another human being. To add to that, when you confess your sins to a priest, you're saying out loud the things that are most afflicting your conscience to someone whom you admire and respect, and would hate for them to think less of you because of some shameful thing you've done. These anxieties and others like them are nothing short of the devil trying to scare you away from the freedom that confession offers. It is a lie, a deceit, that you alone have been so bad a person that you must bury your shame deep within you. Sin has as a side effect that isolation, that there is no one worse than I. But I will tell you, as a priest who regularly hears and gives confessions, that sin is anything but original. I cannot overstate how boring sin is, how common sin is.

We do not require private confession. But I strongly recommend that everyone make a habit of it. We do offer the general confession of sin on most Sundays, and I remind everyone that the long pause after the invitation to confession and before the confession begins is meant for you to examine your conscience and to name before God those sins which burden you.

But there are often burdens of sin that the General Confession cannot address for some. Mother Julia Gatta, professor of pastoral theology at the University of the South, writes:

When we are not specifically taught how to examine our consciences, we are left with some pretty rudimentary understandings of sin. Hence our capacity for sincere repentance never gets developed, and the absolution offered in the liturgy is reduced to another comforting noise. However, because the disabling guilt from which we actually suffer is still there, all the well-meaning affirmation begins to feel hollow.

Mother Julia Gatta



Alcuin of York



In the eighth century, the clergyman and scholar Alcuin of York wrote, "The ministry of the physician will come to an end if the sick do not lay bare their wounds."

The most common misunderstanding in a confession is when the penitent never actually confesses a sin. One might hear vague notions of "feelings" more than anything else. And I cannot stress enough that feelings are not sinful. You often cannot control how you feel about something. Sins are located in thoughts, words, and deeds. Likewise, making a vague confession of "I think sinful thoughts," or "I'm lustful," does not actually name any sins. A sin unnamed is a sin unforgiven. Instead, say "I thought my neighbor was a cheap hack when he showed me his wine collection," or "I had a sexual affair with a person who isn't my wife/husband." Naming the sin that *you have committed* is absolutely vital to the rite having any meaning or efficacy. If you don't confess the sin that burdens your conscience, I cannot pronounce absolution, and even if I did, it wouldn't do you any good.

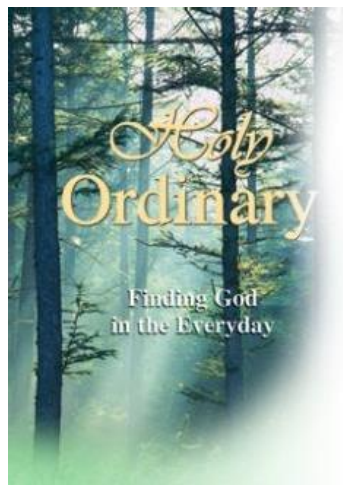
It is not that one must have a priest pronounce absolution, but that one can often feel so burdened by conscience that our silent prayers often cannot break through to the root cause of our guilt. It is in these moments that it is important to call your rector and make a confession.

Because when proper preparation has occurred, and sins are named and absolved, there is rejoicing in heaven. As Luke's Gospel says, "Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10). When we confess our sins, we unburden ourselves to live into true freedom and liberty as God's children. People think that their sins are something to hide, but St. Paul tells us to boast in our weaknesses. Sunlight is the best disinfectant for a burdened conscience, and what's more, you'll feel better.

As a reminder, the seal of the confessional is morally absolute. All conversations that take place within the context of confession can never be disclosed, ever. I am not even allowed to say when someone has come to confession, or whether they have never done it. And if, in the future, a priest does ever disclose the content of your confession, you should call the bishop immediately.

The Rev. Garrett Boyte

Holy Ordinary *Finding God in the Everyday*



Control

(2 Samuel 15:19-37) Then the king said to Zaduk, “Carry the ark of God back into the city. If I find favor in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me back and let me see both it and the place where it stays. But if he says, ‘I take no pleasure in you, ‘here I am, let him do to me what seems good to him.’”

I remember in parochial school, one of the nuns taught us to reject superstition. She told us that relying on superstition attempted to ascribe power to a force other than God.

But as an adult I still find myself with tiny superstitions: “If I do *this*, then *that* will happen.” I don’t see it as evil, but as a small, desperate way of pretending that I have control.

David’s conversation with the priest Zadok masquerades as piety, but sounds to me more like superstition and an attempt to be in control. He sets up an elaborate scheme to determine if he remains in favor with God. But it is the king—not God—who establishes the rules for the revelation. The arrangement saves the king from having to discern God’s will or to do further repentance for his sins.

All of us have our quirky ways—perhaps superstitions—which allow us to quiet the mind and think we have some say in what befalls us. But whether a human being comes before God as a king or priest or supplicant or sinner, we have to remember that it is God who is in control. I believe that our God remains gracious, forgiving, loving.

I’m crossing my fingers and hoping it is so.

**Carol Mead is priest-in-charge at St. Peter’s-by-the-Lake Episcopal Church in Brandon, Mississippi. You can learn more about Carol and her journey to Holy Ordinary on her website: www.holyordinary.com.*

Calendar for August

Saturdays	Holy Eucharist, Rite I	5:00 pm	Chapel
	Evening Prayer, Rite II	6:00 pm	Online
Sundays	Holy Eucharist, Rite II	9:00 am	Chapel
	Confirmation Class	10:00 am	Library
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II	11:00 am	Nave
Mondays, Tuesdays	Evening Prayer, Rite II	6:00 pm	Online
Wednesdays	Book Club	10:30 am	Library
	Holy Eucharist, Rite II	Noon	Chapel
	Evening Prayer, Rite II	6:00 pm	Nave and online
Thursdays, Fridays	Evening Prayer, Rite II	6:00 pm	Online

Prayer List

Wanda Allen	Floyd "Buzzy" Farrar	Justin	Paul Spaht
Ellen Dunlop Belote	Robin Foster	Maureen Locke	Robert Todd
Mary Berth	Maggie Fowle	Mim McCoy	Cynthia Walker
Margaret Boudreaux	John August Gianforte	Della McCranie	Louis Wallace
Gabriella Braden	James Edward Griffith	Elyane Mergey	David Walsh
Martha Brotherton	Richard Hadwin	Theresa Mormino	Connie Wiggins
Corinne Campbell	Sandra Hadwin	Patsy	Curtis Williams
Robert Cangelose	Charles Hall	Juanita Peterson	Bill Wright
Julie Coyle	Josh Harrell	Brady Sessions	Mary Wright
Sarah Lou Coyle	Barbara Hughes	Mary Ann Shemwell	Sheryl Wright
Drew Dodson Family	Elizabeth Ingram	Linda Sirman and family	
Jean Dooley	Robson Jenkins	Angela Smith	
Ann Falter	Linda Jordan	Catherine Spaht	

We pray for those who serve and are served by Hope House.

Following the governor's orders, Holy Cross will require the wearing of masks indoors for all events and visits on all Holy Cross campuses. We thank you in advance for doing your part. Until further notice, events involving eating and drinking will be postponed.

The **Carrefour Chamber Music Project** will present the program *New Romances* at Holy Cross on August 20 at 7:00 pm. The program features the *String Sextet in G Major, Op. 36* of Johannes Brahms, a cryptic love letter to a youthful infatuation, and the unfinished *String Quartet* of Sergei Rachmaninoff, an early work that foreshadows the full-throated lyricism of his mature style. Local musicians Michelle Gunn, Daniel Santelices, Boris Smolaga, Charles Regauer, Eliot Haas, and Brett Andrews will perform. Admission is free, with a suggested donation of \$8.00. The donation may be paid at the door, or in advance by going to www.carrefourcmp.org.



NEW ROMANCES

Music for strings by
Brahms and Rachmaninoff

August 20th at 7:00 pm
Church of the Holy Cross
\$8 suggested donation

Performances by
Michele Gunn, Dan Santelices, Boris Smolaga,
Charles Regauer, Eliot Haas & Brett Andrews



Lay Ministries

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost: August 22

Lectors: Melissa Fowle, David Richard
Prayers of the People: Melissa Fowle
Eucharistic Minister: Sr. Cecilia Horton
Acolyte: Herschel Richard
Usher: Carolyn Mahlen
Altar Guild: Laura Wilkerson, Mike Wilkerson

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost: August 29

Lector: Ginger Paul
Prayers of the People: David Richard
Eucharistic Minister: Sr. Cecilia Horton
Acolyte: Herschel Richard
Usher: Bill Richard
Altar Guild: Sr. Cecilia Horton

Service Music

The Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost: August 22

Mass: Matthias and Hurd
Psalm 84: Metrical setting, Winchester Old
Anthem: O bread of life—D. A. White
Hymns: 427 Laudes Domini; 323 Jesu, Jesu, du mein Hirt; 304 Land of Rest (1-3);
408 Mit Freuden zart
Organ: Prelude in B—Saint-Saens; Adoro te devote—Boëly;
Mass of the Holy Sacrament: Communion and Postlude--Grunenwald

The Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost: August 29

Mass: Matthias and Hurd
Psalm 45:1-2, 7-10: Plainsong
Anthem: Draw us in the spirit's tether—H. Friedell
Hymns: 618 Lasst uns efreuen; 632 Munich; 500 Surrey; 556 Marion
Organ: A Meditation on Draw us in the spirit's tether—G. Hancock;
Suite 8th Tone (excerpts)—G. Corrette; Exultemus—Whitlock

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Return service requested

Mission Statement: *The Church of the Holy Cross, Shreveport, Louisiana, strives to be the presence of Jesus Christ in our community and beyond, through worship of Almighty God, open inquiry, sharing fellowship, valued diversity, genuine inclusiveness, and servant leadership—encouraging all to exercise God's gifts and calling as we share the Gospel of Hope in programs, to serve without regard for religious affiliation, race, or economic status.*



Hope House: There is an ongoing need for coffee, sugar, creamer, laundry detergent **pods**, disposable razors, and personal-size hygiene products (soap, shampoo, deodorant, etc.) Please take your donations to 762 Austen Place or to the church office. Thank you for your continued support.

Forward Day by Day for August and September, in both standard and large-print editions, is available in the Narthex and the Undercroft.

The Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, Ph.D., D. D.
The Rt. Rev. Jacob Owensby, Ph.D., D. D.
The Rev. J. Garrett Boyte, M.Div.
The Rev. Mary Richard
The Rev. Kenneth W. Paul
The Rev. Donald D. Heacock
Mr. Bruce Power
Mrs. Laurie Connell
Mr. Charles Alford
Mr. Brian Jackson

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IV Bishop of Western Louisiana
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Rector Emeritus
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Organist-Choirmaster
Office Administrator
Sexton
Assistant Sexton