

Kidane-Mehret

Ge'ez Rite Ethiopian Catholic Church



November 2018

Rev. Abayneh Gebremichael, M.A., B.C.C., Pastor

Divine Liturgy 9:30 am at St. Vincent de Paul, 14M Street SE Washington, DC 20003.

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Important Parish Information

Newcomers to the parish: Please fill out your full names and addresses on the Registration Form. The Catholic Church requires that each member of a parish, to the extent allowed by his income, support the day-to-day running of the parish's pastoral activities.

Sacraments and Pastoral Care

Baptisms: Please telephone your pastor at the office to make an appointment to fill out the form and make the necessary arrangements. **Marriages:** It is the policy of the Archdiocese of Washington that couples proposing to marry must first contact, or see, a priest or deacon at least six months prior to the date on which they intend to marry for Marriage Preparation classes. All Catholics are bound to observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage. **Confessions:** are heard before the start of the Divine Liturgy, and any other times by appointment. **Funerals:** Contact your pastor at the parish office to make arrangements. **Hospital Visits:** Notify the pastor if a family member is hospitalized. **Mass Intentions (Stipend):** \$25.00. This is for Memorial Masses, thanksgivings, or petitions

Urgent Need for a Church

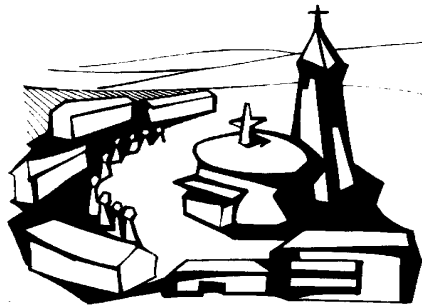
As St. Paul travelled Asia Minor preaching about Jesus and the Teachings of the Lord, he found people whose homes were big enough for God's new family to meet and celebrate Eucharist. Gradually, the size of the home groups got too big to be housed in private homes and churches were built. Now our modern Ethiopian Ge'ez Rite parish family has outgrown the parish home that the Archdiocese has provided. We need our own Church so we can grow together as a family, doing the work of God.

In the New Testament we read that the Apostle Philip was sent by God to meet the Ethiopian Eunuch who was in a chariot going back to Ethiopia from Jerusalem. After much discussion, St. Philip agreed to baptize him. The Ethiopian eunuch "gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him" (Acts 8:38). However, it wasn't until AD 325 that the seeds they planted began to grow with the coming of St. Frumentius as first bishop of Ethiopia. He was consecrated by St. Athanasius in Alexandria and sent back to Ethiopia, carrying with him the precious gift of the Divine Liturgy.

Christian faith grew and spread in the life and culture of Ethiopia. Eventually religious life formed and monks, priests, nuns started community life in the monasteries and convents in Ethiopia. The Church in Ethiopia recognized the need for a home and so, along with outlying church homes, the great Church of Mariam TSION was built at about the same time as St. Mary Major in Rome, and the great basilica in Ephesus.

Traditional Christian teaching and worship was passed down from generation to generation. Most of the Ethiopian monks learned the psalms by heart. Ethiopia developed a unique culture that flowered out of the Old Testament but was uniquely Christian and touched every aspect of life. The Divine liturgy that St. Athanasius had given them centuries earlier was enriched in the 6th century by prayerful chanting and songs of the great musician, Yared. His music is complex and very different from the Gregorian Chant of the Western Church both in style and in notation.

The Ethiopian catholic community in USA has grown much during the last four decades when a small parish was founded by the Congregation of Oriental Churches with the help of James Cardinal Hickey in Washington DC. We are very appreciative of the support the Archdiocese of Washington has given us over the years. Since its inception as a parish, Ethiopian catholic communities may be found in every state of America but our mother community in this country is in the Nation's Capital, Washington DC. We have a vibrant community. It is here many newcomers to America congregate to find their feet in their new land and culture before fanning out to other states. Our community is vibrant. It is Kidane-Mehret Ethiopian Ge'ez Rite Church. But, as our numbers grow, we don't have a parish home and church to accommodate the needs of our community. Come August 2019, we will not even have a place for Divine Worship.



With the August 2019 deadline in mind, our parishioners are convinced that we need our own small space in which to teach catechism to our the children, to offer our beloved Ethiopian Divine Liturgy with adequate time to worship God without having to shorten it. We also need space for different parish groups to pray the rosary together, study the bible, or to socialize and strengthen the unity of our community.

Our dream is a church of our own. We have our cornerstone, Jesus. Now we need to provide the bricks. Already we have a pledge drive. On October 20, 2018 we held our first fundraising event in a rented hall. Each community shared their special charism, talents, and brought many gifts. They brought different items for sale, auction, and raffles. Guests also came to support our church and our people unified, filled with enthusiasm, joy, and hope for our future.

We realize that to build a church requires a large Catholic family participation. We plead with all Catholic communities around the globe to donate for this sacred cause. Let us build a church for our Mother Mary under Her title of Kidane-Mehret. So we ask you to be a cheerful contributor or pledge to donate regularly to the building fund of the Ethiopian Rite mother church, Kidane Mehret Church in Washington DC. With the help of many we can achieve our goal!

Prayer

We turn to you for protection, Kidane-Mehret, Holy Mother of God. Listen to our prayers and help us in our urgent need for a Church. Save us from every danger, glorious and blessed Virgin. Amen

Readings for November

Nov 4 :	Col 1:1-11	James 1:1-5	Mt 6:25-34
Nov 11 :	Rom 11:13-24	Rev 12:13-18	Mt 21:33-46
Nov 18 :	Rom 5:10-21	1Jn 2:1-5	Mt 6:5-15
Nov 25 :	Col 1:12-20	1Pet 1:13-20	Jn 5:16-27

Psalm 100: 3-4

*Know that the LORD is God,
he made us, we belong to him,
we are his people, the flock he shepherds.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him, bless his name;*

Let us pray for:

All baptized Christians throughout the world that we will show the world that we are Christians by our love for Christ and one another.

The Parish of Kidane-Mehret: for Peace, Unity, Harmony and Charity in the Parish.

For the Church: That in this New Year the Church will shine with the glory of God.

For the World: That the King of Peace will reign in every nation and in every heart.

What is the Teaching of the Lord?

The Teaching of the Lord is the Gospel message. The word 'gospel' means Good News. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, God made radical changes in His relationship with them. Instead of living in a lush and fruitful garden, suddenly they are outside, unprotected by God. Suddenly Adam has to work long and arduous hours in the scorching heat of the Mediterranean summer. Eve had to endure the pain of labor when she gave birth. Worst of all, they were separated from God and like all creatures, except the angels, they would die and would return to the dust from which they were made. The reason for this expulsion is that God wanted to make sure that, in their sinful state, they would not be able to eat the fruit of the Tree of Life and in live forever. Having dealt with Adam and Eve, God then pronounces Satan's punishment, ending with these words:

*I will put enmity between you and the woman
And between your offspring and hers
They will strike at our head, while you strike at their heel. (Gen. 3:15)*

Eventually, "in the fulness of time", Jesus is born and God Himself offers mankind a way to reverse the curse of Adam. However, because of his punishment, there was no way out for Satan. He would always try to tempt mankind to rebel against God. For those who were serious about loving God and being with Him forever there was now hope. This is the Good News.

"Therefore, sin must not reign over your mortal bodies so that you obey their desires.... For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 6: 12, 23)

Before the birth of Jesus, there had been no prophet for about 400 years. God had been silent. His gospel message came over loud and clear. Choose God not evil. During the course of His teaching, He also proclaimed seven "I AM" statements. By using the words "I AM", Jesus is almost shouting from the rooftops that He is God and that God has not abandoned His people, that He is there with them. After the long silence it is just about impossible for the Jews to believe this. Can you imagine what the Jews thought? Suddenly, here is a man reinterpreting a well-known line from a psalm, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path".. (Ps 119: 105) and claiming "I am the light of the world," the guide to the promised City of God, the Pillar of Flame that lead them safely through the desert. This statement is closely linked with another statement of His, "I am the way, the truth and the life." This was so significant to the early Church that one of the first names they used for Christianity was The Way. Jesus also said, "I am the Good Shepherd" and that we are the sheep. The Twenty-third Psalm says that God is the shepherd of His people who leads them to safety.

Then they hear Him say, "I am the resurrection and the life." This was a very contentious statement. Yet here was Jesus saying that not only was He offering everlasting life to the world, and not just the Jews but also claiming: "I am the bread of life." They would have also recognized the reference to the fruit of the Tree of Life in Eden.

Judaism was a very exclusive religion. It had its origins in a small land which by the time of Jesus was a poor province of the

great Roman Empire. It was surrounded by pagan religions and had succumbed to their blandishments many times but had still survived with its teachings intact. They were longing for a Messiah who would lead them out of bondage and restore the glory of the Davidic kingdom. What they did not expect was a poor carpenter who would claim "I am the true vine."

Jesus also declares, "I am the Gate. Whoever enters through me will be saved and will come in and go out and find pasture. (John 10:9). God did not want Adam and Eve who had sinned to eat of the fruit of the Tree of Life, so He expelled them from Eden and stationed "the cherubim and the fiery revolving sword east of the garden of Eden, to guard the way to



the tree of life" (Gen 3:24). By claiming to be the Gate, Jesus is saying He has the authority to grant people access to the fruit of the Tree of Life and to have everlasting life. As only the sinless can eat of the Tree of life, He is claiming to be the judge who can forgive sin. With this last I AM statement we see that Jesus has reversed the worst punishment incurred by Adam and Eve, separation from God. Through the ministry of the Church Jesus has made it possible for us to be washed clean, absolved from all sin, and through Holy Communion partake of the Fruit of the Tree of Life.

For our Younger Parishioners. . . .

God, Us, and Covenants

The Bible tells the story of salvation history. Salvation history is the story of God's marvelous work, since the creation of the world, to make all men and women His children, to form from the family of mankind a family of God. He does this through a series of covenants that He makes with key figures at key points in the Bible. (Genesis to Jesus, St. Paul Center)

Between now and Christmas, the Church gives us a special season to learn what God wants us to know about our relationship with Him through Jesus Christ—and it is all set out on the Bible. All that we need to know and do to resume the close bond with God that Adam and Eve broke through their disobedience is to be found in the Bible. From the very beginning of Creation we can see a covenant relationship unfolding in which God says Who He is and what our role must be. The following is a good summary of our role in a covenant with God.

"This rather is what I commanded them: Listen to my voice; then I will be your God and you shall be my people. Walk exactly in the way I command you, so that you may prosper." (Jeremiah 7:23)

The Bible gives us stories about individuals who have a covenantal relationship with God such as Noah. The rainbow is the sign of the covenant God imposed on Himself after the great flood when He promised Noah that He would never again use a world-wide flood to wipe out sin. Then there is story of Abraham and Sarah and their family. Their descendants ended up in Egypt for hundreds of years. God got them out and saved them from Pharaoh's army by parting the Red Sea. This culminated in the covenant God made with the Israelites through Moses including the command to celebrate the Passover each year. This covenant lasted until Jesus came and proposed a New Covenant in His Blood, a covenant that is a rich fulfillment of the covenant made with Moses and the Israelites thousands of years before.

The names given to the two main divisions of the Bible the Old and the New Testament reflect the covenantal relationship we have with God. The Old Testament was exclusively with the Israelites. With the Advent of Jesus, God extends His covenant to everyone:

"For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendant, heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:27-29)



News from around the World. . .



Good News from Pakistan

Asia Bibi, a Christian woman in Pakistan on death row for nearly ten years after she allegedly contaminated a water jug -- an offense viewed as blasphemy in the Muslim country -- was finally acquitted by the country's top court on Wednesday. Bibi was not in court to hear the ruling, and AFP news agency quoted her as saying by phone: "I can't believe what I am hearing, will I go out now? Will they let me out, really?"

She was found guilty of blasphemy, but appealed her conviction to the Lahore High Court, which upheld the decision in October 2014, sending the case to Pakistan's Supreme Court. Chief Justice Main Saqib Nisar announced the verdict to a packed courtroom Wednesday, saying Bibi's "conviction is set aside and she is to be relieved forthwith if not required in other charges." The three-judge panel upheld the blasphemy law itself, saying it was consistent with verses from Islam's holy book, the Quran. But they said prosecutors had failed to prove that Bibi violated the law. In addition to citing the Quran, the judges also referenced William Shakespeare's King Lear, saying Bibi was "more sinned against than sinning."

Bibi's husband hailed Wednesday's verdict. "I am very happy. My children are very happy. We are grateful to God," said Ashiq Masih, who met with Pope Francis earlier this year. "We are grateful to the judges for giving us justice. We knew that she is innocent."