

Kidane-Mehret

Ge'ez Rite Ethiopian Catholic Church



September 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

St John the Baptist Enkutatash



On September 11, when we greet the Ethiopian New Year many religious and cultural connections come together. Our Ethiopian history is so entwined with the Church that it comes as no surprise that our Liturgical New Year falls on the feast of John the Baptist (Kedus Yohannes), the day when we also celebrate the cultural New Year festivities we call Enkutatash (Abebayehye).

At this time, we leave the rainy season and move into the Season of Flowers. This is time of the year when our meadows are covered in beautiful flowers that remind us how beautiful God's creation is. Once the rains and the storms pass, the vegetation starts to grow. Then, all the little girls of the village, singing songs, bring flowers to their neighbors to wish them Happy New Year!

During this celebration we focus on the feast of John the Baptist who is the last prophet and the new evangelist who tells the truth boldly even at the cost of his life. His message is

clear and strong. The true Lamb of God is here. God is at work to bring us into His kingdom. His message is as strong today as it was when he was preaching throughout Israel. Be prepared, be baptized, repent, turn away from your sins. Receive the Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.

So this month when we begin the Ethiopian New Year on September 11, John the Baptist is still with us, pointing out to us the best way to again encounter Christ - Christ who is the center of the universe and our life and the one who give us life in abundance and everlasting life.

Later this month, as the yellow daisies cover the land, we celebrate Meskal, the finding of the True Cross by St. Helen, and we are reminded once again that through the Cross of Christ, the Lamb of God, we find new life.

Prayer

Remember us, O God;
from age to age be our comforter.
You have given us the wonder of time,
blessings in days and nights, seasons and years.
Bless your children at the turning of the year
and fill the months ahead with the bright hope
that is ours in the coming of Christ.
You are our God, living and reigning, forever and ever.
Amen.

Readings for September

Sept 2: Heb 7:5-10 ; James 2:14-20 ; Luke 12:16-26
Sept 9: (Ethiopian New Year) 2 Cor 6 1-10 ; James 5:8-12 ;
Matt. 11:1-19
Sept 16 : 1 Cor 11:17-34 ; James 2:1-10 ; John 1:15-37
Sept 23: 2Cor 9:1-10 ; 2 James 5:1-9 ; Mark 4:24-38
Sept 30 ; 1Cor 1:10-21 ; 1Pet 4:1-11 ; Mark 8:27-38

New Year

“The LORD said to Moses: Tell the Israelites: On the first day of the seventh month you will have a sabbath rest, with trumpet blasts as a reminder, a declared holy day; you shall do no heavy work, and you shall offer an oblation to the LORD. (Lev. 23:25)

Let us pray for:

Kanna Ashagrie son of Ashagrie Abedi and Meseret Taffa who was born on August 5.

All baptized Christians throughout the world that we will show the world that we are Christians by our love for Christ and one another. Especially for the protection of those in war-torn lands.

Victims of Sex Abuse in the Catholic Church throughout the world and especially in the United States, and for the abusers that God will heal them.

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.

A New Year - A New Beginning

On September 11, we celebrate the New Year. It corresponds with the Feast Day of St. John the Baptist. John was the son of a priest, and was also a cousin of Jesus because his mother Elizabeth and St. Mary, Mother of Jesus, were cousins. He would have been brought up to know and understand the Jewish Scriptures or what we call the Old Testament. He would have known all the prophecies in the Old Testament that point to Jesus and His role in our salvation. So, when talking about himself and Jesus he said, "He must increase. I must decrease." (John 3:30)

Although John the Baptist was an Old Testament prophet who stands on the line between the Old and New Testaments, these words of his explain very clearly what is called the spiritual life. Since the very beginning, those who are serious about their relationship with God, strive to "be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt 5:48) The only way for this to happen is to allow God Who is Love to train us in the right way.

"I will be a Father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to Me, says the Lord Almighty." (2 Cor.6:18). These are words that echo across the ages, from the first book of the Bible to the last.

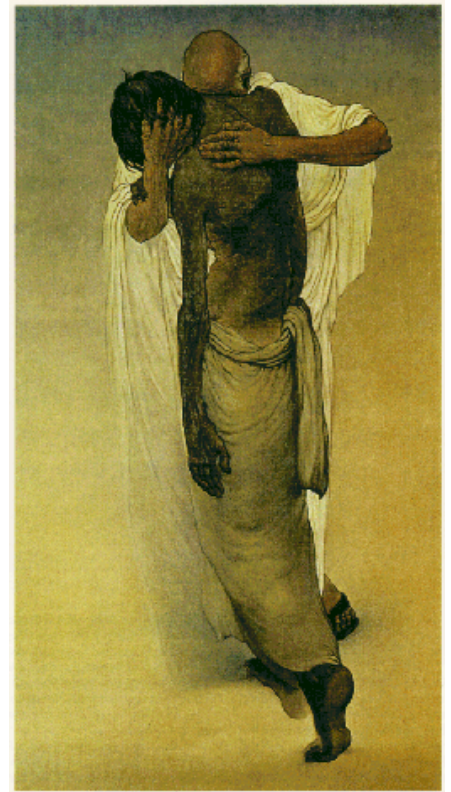
Throughout the Old Testament we read that God would offer the Israelites a chance for a new beginning. He would say to them, "If you will be My people and obey me, I will be your God and live with you." We encounter graphic stories about different people's attempts to be perfect. We also read harrowing accounts of what happens when people turn from God and follow their own dreams and desires without giving thought to their relationship to God. The Old Testament is the history of God's relationship with His creation seen from His perspective. He sees the people giving in to their own wishes, hurting others, and forgetting God. This is what the parable of the Prodigal Son is all about.

Another way of looking at The Old Testament is to see it as a history of covenants. Once Adam and Eve were disobedient to God's very explicit command not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of Good and evil, God has used solemn covenants to extend His family through Judaism until, in Jesus, the invitation to become part of the family of God is finally opened to all people, everywhere. In His work of family-building God our Father reveals Himself to us. We meet Him as Creator, all powerful. We meet Him performing miracles. We meet Him as a God of wrath when He brings death to those who flaunt His mercy and turn to other Gods. Throughout Scripture we are confronted by His immutability. He makes covenants with His people and He keeps them. He rewards those who keep the covenant. However, He curses those who break it. This is not done through a sense of harshness, but always through love, because He wants us to stop and think about what we are doing and return to Him, as the prodigal son returned to his father.

It is not only individuals that are part of God's covenantal plan, it is also nations. We see this by the way God extends His Passover covenant to the entire people of Israel. If the nation as a whole becomes corrupt, the Lord deals with it. We see this in the way God, through war, punished the Israelites and had them taken into exile in Babylon for 70 years. Towns and cities will be accountable for the way they perceive and act on the commandments laid out by God. Jesus Himself talks about Sodom and Gomorrah and Bethsaida and Chorazin and the judgment other towns will face.

The New Testament takes up the covenantal aspect of our relationship with God, emphasizing the family aspect. The Divine Liturgy can be seen as a Wedding Feast. God is clearly shown by Jesus to be our Father in the prayer He taught us. Jesus clearly teaches that we can become His brothers and sisters. While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers appeared outside, wishing to speak with him. "[Someone told him, 'Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, asking to speak with you.'] But he said in reply to the one who told him, 'Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?' And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, 'Here are my mother and my brothers. For whoever does the will of my heavenly Father is my brother, and sister, and mother.'" (Matt 12: 46-50)

With the Feast of John the Baptist, the Church is offering us a chance at yet another new beginning. God is doing what He has done throughout the ages. He is giving us another year to come to know Him better and to humbly allow Him to guide us and train us as any good father would do.



Forgiving Father

News from around the World...

Once again Apparition Sites make the News

Knock, in Ireland... While the Pope visited Ireland for two days for the World Meeting of Families, he visited Knock. Knock in Celtic means The Hill of Mary and it was there in 1879 that a unique apparition was witnessed by 15 people who stood out in the pouring rain as they recited the Rosary and watched the supernatural figures on the Church gable. The witnesses stated they saw an apparition of Our Lady, Saint Joseph, and Saint John the Evangelist at the south gable end of the local small parish church, the Church of Saint John the Baptist. Behind them and a little to the left of Saint John was a plain altar. On the altar was a cross and a lamb (a traditional image of Jesus), with adoring angels. It was a silent apparition. Since 1947 all the popes have acknowledged Knock either by visits or by sending gifts to the Apparition site. The apparition took place at a time in Irish history when there was much turmoil and it had a calming effect on the people.



Medjugorje... The Papal Visitor, Archbishop Henryk Hoser, has now taken up residence in Medjugorje at the direction of the Holy Father, and the Papal flag flies at St. James Church.

At the end of July, the 29th Youth Festival attracted 80,000 young people and 1000 priests to this small town in Bosnia-Herzegovina. At Mass, Archbishop Hoser, told parishioners and pilgrims on July 25th, the Feast of St. James: “We have a great responsibility towards the whole world, because truly Medjugorje has become a place of prayer and conversion for the whole world. Accordingly, the Holy Father is concerned and sends me here to help the Franciscan priests to organize and to acknowledge this place as a source of grace for the whole world.” He went on to say, “Jesus is the one safe Teacher. Do not be late to enroll in His school. In the same school, you will find one other safe Teacher – Mary, the Mother of God, Mary, the Educator and the Queen of Peace! One such school is worth more than the finest world universities!”

For our Younger Parishioners...

Getting to know God through the Bible

Reading the Bible is one of the most amazing and exciting things anyone can do. When you read the stories in the Bible you are reading what God is telling you about Himself.

You can read about God being omnipotent (all powerful), omnipresent (totally present everywhere at all times), or omniscient (all-knowing), or eternal (having no beginning or end). However, it is through the Bible that you come to know Him as an active, and exciting being Who does things no one else can do. The first words of the Bible stretch our imagination:

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth -- and the earth was without form or shape, with darkness over the abyss and a mighty wind sweeping over the waters— Then God said: Let there be light, and there was light. God saw that the light was good. God then separated the light from the darkness.

This person, God, finally creates man and woman and offers them friendship. He offers that friendship to each tiny baby that is born and stays with that person all through their lives whether they accept that friendship or not. He never stops offering His love while the person lives.

The entire Bible tells us the sort of friend God wants to be. It tells of battles and miracles. It tells of quiet times and joyful family get-togethers. It tells of exciting adventures and travels to foreign places. An example of this is St. Paul's escape from Damascus in Syria. He had converted to Christianity and was hated by the Jews who plotted to kill him. “*but their plot became known to Saul [Paul] ...but his disciples took him one night and let him down through an opening in the wall, lowering him in a basket.*” (Acts 9:25) and he set off for Jerusalem.

The Bible gives a picture of how God wants mankind to live in mutual love, helping each other through the example of the love that exists between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Finally, it tells how God wants us to be family. This He does by becoming a human being with a Mother, St Mary, and a surrogate father, St. Joseph. Then He extends that family to be the Church and we become part of that extended family through our baptism. Jesus specifically asks His followers to baptize people in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. To read the Bible is to read our family history.

