

Kidane-Mehret

Ge'ez Rite Ethiopian Catholic Church



June 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.

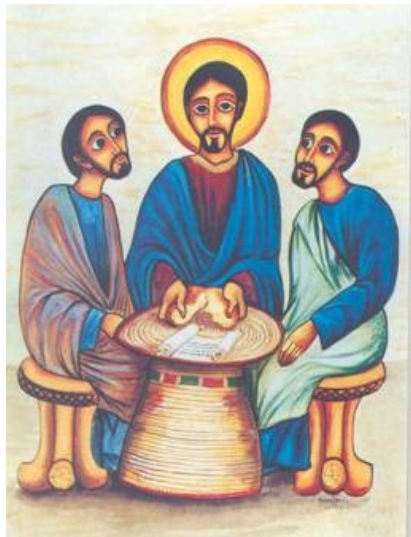
Sacraments and Pastoral Care

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.

The Most Holy Trinity

God is One God, but is Trinitarian, having three persons. The Divine life of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is marked by absolute love. How God become one and three is a mystery that we cannot really explain and will only fully understand when we are before the throne of God in Heaven. Jesus final words to “Go to the world and baptize them in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit” (Mt 28: 19) teaches us clearly that our God is one in three persons.

After the Fall of Man, God began to slowly reveal more about Himself to mankind. At first He was understood to be the one and only God. Then people strayed into the worship of other gods. Eventually, God revealed Himself to Abraham and entered into a covenant with Abraham. This icon of the



Holy Trinity is based on the arrival of God to visit with Abraham at his tent. God manifested Himself as three men. After They had feasted with him, They revealed to him that he and Sarah would have a son within the year. With the people of the first covenant He revealed Himself to be the one and only God. Finally, His teaching about Himself culminated

in the New Covenant which Jesus Christ inaugurated. In this New Covenant God revealed Himself as a Trinitarian God.

As the Church grew, more and more people tried to explain who God is. It is a great mystery but was of vital interest because most of the converts in the Early Church came from the pagan world of the Roman Empire. In the 325 Arius, a presbyter in Alexandria, Egypt, tried to explain the sonship of Jesus by asserting that Jesus had been created by the Father. This would mean that Jesus is a creature and therefore not fully God. In Arius’s view Christ would have been only half God. The Church fathers called the Council of Nicaea. They declared that Christ is equal to God.

Having just settled that, two more heresies popped up. One, **Macedonianism**, also called the **Pneumatomachian heresy**, a 4th-century Christian heresy that denied the full personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit. According to this heresy, the Holy Spirit was created by the Son and was thus subordinate to the Father and the Son, essentially claiming that the Holy Spirit is not God. The other heresy was about to Jesus. Apollinaris of Laodicea claimed that Christ is not human person, only a divine person.

The Church Fathers called the Council of Constantinople to deal with these. They declared that Christ is fully man and fully God. They also decided that the Holy Spirit is God and

the third person of God. Shortly after these defining councils, yet another was called to deal with the heresy that claimed Mary is only the mother of Jesus, the man and not be the mother of God. At the Council of Ephesus Mary was proclaimed to be the Mother of God.

The result of all these councils is that the Church started to organize and formulate her faith and defend her faith from other heresies and schism. These councils gave us the Apostles Creed and Nicene Creed which are the statements of faith that we still use today. Also, they are important because they identify the Church as One, Holy, and Catholic, and Apostolic.

As Christians we need to abide in the Divine (Trinitarian) love. Jesus commanded us to love your God with all your hearts, soul and strength and love your neighbor as yourselves. Without the example of perfect love in the Trinitarian God, we could never begin to understand what He meant. It is only their love one for the other, and for us, that makes it possible for us to love one another and grow in the virtues of faith, hope and charity to become like our Father in Heaven.

St. Francis’s Prayer

All highest, glorious God,
Cast Your light into the darkness of my heart. Give me right faith, firm hope and perfect charity, together with profound humility, with wisdom and perception so I may always do Your Holy Will.

Readings for June

June 3: Eph 4: 1-10 ; 1Jn 2: 1-10 ; Jn 14: 1-4
June 10: 1Cor 12:1-11; 1Jn 2: 20-29 ; Jn 14: 22-31
June 17: 1Cor 14: 1-10; 1Jn 4:1-8 ; Jn 15: 17-27
June 24: 2Cor 9: 1-10 ; 1Pet 2: 1-12 ; Mark 2: 14-28

Psalm 91: 9-11

Because you have the LORD for your refuge
and have made the Most High your stronghold,
No evil shall befall you,
no affliction come near your tent.^f
For he commands his angels with regard to you,
to guard you wherever you go.

Let us pray for:

For our first communicants, and those who were recently confirmed that they will persevere in honoring Jesus throughout their lives.

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.

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

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

The Face of God—What are icons?



If you know me, then you will also know my Father.* From now on you do know him and have seen him.” Philip said to him, “Master, show us the Father,* and that will be enough for us.” Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you for so long a time and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father?’” (Jn 14:7-9)

Above the altar in the Orthodox Cathedral in Aksum, there is an icon of the Holy Trinity that is similar to this one. It is a typical Ethiopian-style icon. Like all icons, the more one looks at it, the more one notices details, and the more one is drawn to ponder the mystery of the Holy Trinity. This is how icons are supposed to affect one. It takes much prayer and fasting for an iconographer to produce an icon, which acts as a window into Heaven.

In the Old Testament, God absolutely forbade the making of ‘graven images’ whereas the pagans were known to make idols of creatures, things that could be seen and touched. Also, in Old Testament times, God had only shown Himself as One, a spiritual being that had no impact on our senses. However, with the Incarnation of Jesus all

that changed. Suddenly God had a body, a face, a voice, all of which impacted the senses of those who could see, hear, or touch Him. Also, Jesus had a Mother, a real, live woman. From the earliest times the Church used the painting of images to teach the profound truth that ‘God became Man and dwelt among us.’ St. Luke is said to have painted the first images of St. Mary. The Catholic Catechism, quoting St John Damascene, tells us that “Previously God, who has neither a body nor a face, absolutely could not be represented by an image. But now that he has made himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God . . . and contemplate the glory of the Lord, his face unveiled.” (De imag. 1,16:PG 96:1245-1248.) However, after a few centuries had passed, iconoclasts, people who were against the use of icons, became more and more vocal and a significant fight took place in the Church, during which time interest in religious art faded. The Second Council of Nicaea was called to solve once and for all if religious portraits were sinful or not. The Council okayed the painting of religious images. “Christian iconography expresses in images the same Gospel message that Scripture communicates by words. Image and word illuminate each other” (CCC 1160). After this last great general council in 787 AD, religious art slowly began to flourish again greatly helped by the monks on Mount Athos in Greece who devoted themselves to iconography. Just as the Eastern and Western Churches drifted away from each other in schism so did the artists. In the West religious and secular painting progressed along similar lines, while sculpture took pride of place in religious art. In the East iconography remained almost always two-dimensional and followed simple techniques, concentrating more on the spiritual content than the human. Russia eventually became the leader in iconography although other schools of iconography flourished, including the Coptic and Ethiopian. Everything became more stylized including the colors that were used. For example, one of the differences between the Russian school and the Ethiopian school was that in the Russian icons St. Mary wore red, but in Ethiopian icons blue is the predominant color of Her robes.

Christianity is a religion that is based in both faith and reason, yet much of what we believe is based on faith. That is, much of what we believe, we cannot see but ‘take on faith’. Prayer is what connects us to the mysteries of faith. The Catechism tells us: “Meditation is above all a quest. The mind seeks to understand the why and how of the Christian life, in order to adhere and respond to what the Lord is asking. The required attentiveness is difficult to sustain. We are usually helped by books, and Christians do not want for them: Sacred Scripture, particularly the Gospels, holy icons, liturgical texts of the day or season, writings of the spiritual fathers, works of spirituality, the great book of creation, and that of history, the page on which the “today” of God is written.” -CCC 2705.

And so we look at the uniquely Ethiopian icon above of the Holy Trinity to see what we can learn about our God. In the icon the three persons are indeed joined together, but they are distinct from one another. As our Divine Liturgy reminds us “One is the Father, one is the Son, and one is the Holy Spirit.” They are depicted as three human forms, reminding us that after the Ascension of our Lord into Heaven, our humanity is forever part of that Godhead. They are surrounded by the symbols of the four Gospel writers, reminding us that all we know about the Almighty God is what He reveals to us through the Church established by the Son and the Holy Spirit. Each month, in the Kidane-Mehret bulletin, we present an icon. They are there as help in understanding more fully the great truths of our Church. They are there to be used as talking points with your family and friends. They are there to remind us, in this turbulent world of ours, that Truth is indeed beauty.

From around the world

Pope Francis promotes the reading of the Gospels

By Devin Watkins

“How many of you read the Gospel for two minutes every day?” That was the question and invitation Pope Francis posed to the young people of Argentina who are participating in the II National Youth Meeting that took place May 25th to 27th.

He invited them to carry a small book of the Gospels with them and to read it when they’re on the bus or sitting at home. It will change their lives, he said. “Why? Because you will encounter Jesus. You are encountering the Word.” Pope Francis also reflected on the importance of Presence, communion, and mission in the life of a young person.

Reflecting on Presence, he said Jesus is always with us. “Jesus made himself our brother, and he invites us to make ourselves incarnate, building together that beautiful ideal of a civilization of love, as his disciples and missionaries in the here-and-now.”

He said this can be done in the situations that daily life presents us. But, he said, we must be with Jesus “in prayer, in the Word, and the Sacraments. Dedicate time to him. Be silent so that you may hear his voice.”

Turning to the second word – communion – Pope Francis said history is made by a people, not ideologues. “We are a community; we are Church. The people of God is the Church, which includes all people of goodwill, young people, the elderly, infirm, healthy, and sinners, which all of us are!... Walk as a people.”

The Holy Father also mentioned the upcoming Synod of Bishops on Young People, saying the Church is living through “a special time”. He invited Argentina’s young people to participate wholeheartedly. “The Pope wants to listen to you. The Pope wants to dialogue and seek out together new paths of encounter to renew our faith and revitalize our evangelizing mission.” (Vatican News)

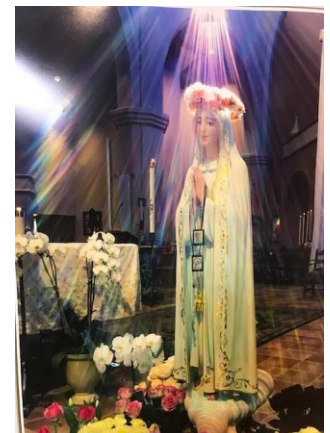
Pope Francis went on to speak about the universal call to mission. “We are called to be a Church reaching out in mission: A missionary Church; not shuttered up in our comfortable lifestyle and outlooks, but one which goes out to meet the other.” Jesus, the Pope said, “convokes, sends, and accompanies us as we draw near to all the men and women of our age.”

Finally, Pope Francis told young people that they are the future and that they must be “a solid, fertile future, one which has deep roots. “Return to your roots,” he told them, “and build your future out of the roots from which you draw your lifeblood: Do not deny the history of your homeland, your family, or your grandparents. Seek out your roots; find your past. And from there, build your future.”

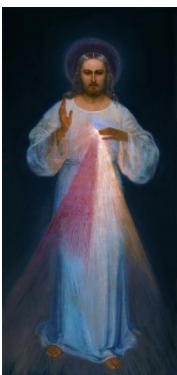


Mary, Full of Grace

"This picture was taken at St. Clare's church in Roseville California after 8 a.m. Mass several weeks ago," writes Alex Ireton. "It was the day we crowned Mary for the month of May. [The pastor] Father George told the parish last Sunday that a remarkable event happened on the altar that day. After the little girl who crowned Mary told father as she was placing the crown on Mary she moved and smiled. "Father thought it was the child's imagination and told her she probably needed to eat some breakfast. As he went to change out of his vestments people came running to tell him something was happening at the altar and to come quickly. When he returned, this is what he saw, and of course all the people that were present there. It lasted long enough for pictures to be taken."



The Graces received at Holy Communion



“Oh, how painful it is to Me that souls so seldom unite themselves to Me in Holy Communion. I wait for souls, and they are indifferent toward Me. I love them tenderly and sincerely, and they distrust Me. I want to lavish My graces on them, and they do not want to accept them. They treat Me as a dead object, whereas My Heart is full of love and mercy (St. Faustina’s Diary, 1447).