

St Stephen's News

St Stephen's Anglican Church · Timonium, Maryland

Volume XXVIII, Number 14

A parish in the classical Anglican tradition

April 18th, 2017

FROM THE RECTOR

Easter is open season on the Christian faith

It is something of a tradition these days for anti-Christians in the media and their academic allies to attack and disparage Christianity during the run up to the most important festivals in the Church year. And this Easter is unlikely to be an exception.

Perhaps the most egregious came a few years back when a Maryland Public Television program about the great fire that destroyed most of Rome in AD 64 contended that the city was torched not by the sociopathic Emperor Nero, as recorded by the chronicler Tacitus, but by the Christians who lived in the city.

According to Tacitus, Nero burned down Rome's shabby wood and plaster tenements in order to rebuild his capital city in marble and gold leaf. When it became clear the fire had been deliberately set, Nero cast the blame on the city's Christian community.

Immediately, he launched a massive persecution that sent tens of thousands of men, women and children, including St. Peter, to horrible deaths. Many were torn asunder by wild animals in the Circus Maximus (today, fittingly perhaps, the site of the Vatican). Others were coated in pitch, crucified and burned as human torches to light banquets in Nero's gardens.

According to MPT, Tacitus, Nero's near contemporary, got things wrong. The emperor was right to blame the Christians, who were incited to burn down Rome by denunciations of the sort contained in the Book of the Revelation of St. John.

In other words, from MPT's perspective, the Christians of Rome got what was coming to them..

No less looney was the spate of media hysteria over the *National Geographic Magazine's* revelations – in Passion Week no less – about so-called *Gospel According Judas*.

One might ask why an organization with any pretension to sensitivity would choose Passion Week for a revelation on the subject. But then in recent years the *National Geographic* has strayed so far in to the weeds of political correctness it's hard to recognize it as the venerable America institution it once was.

Announcing the publication of the *Gospel According to Judas* was scarcely a matter of urgency. The gnostic pseudo-gospel had been dumped in a bank vault in the early 1970s and nobody was showing much interest in reading it. Thus it would hardly have hurt to hang on to the news for another couple of weeks.

The very notion that the "book" is the most important biblical-related document find since World War II is more than a stretch. In fact, by far the most

important and biggest cache of Gnostic documents was unearthed at Nag Hamadi in Egypt 70 years ago. But that was a whole Gnostic library, not mere 13 leaves. And while we didn't have a complete text of the Gospel of Judas, scholars were well aware of its contents because so many contemporary orthodox Christians commented on it.

The reason for the publicity is that archaeologists and academic publishers, just like any other authors and publishers, have a strong financial interest in maximizing books sales.

Certainly, the book is interesting from the archaeological point of view, but its publication neither advances our knowledge about the Gnostics nor does it in undermine the Gospel.

Semi-pagan Gnostics have exploited the Christian faith virtually from the time of the resurrection onwards. One of the first was Simon Magus, who is mentioned in Acts 8:9-24.

Parish Prayer List

Our Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List as well as the guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the prayer list, or to the visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, ring the parish office on 410 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: Timothy, Peter, June, Hilarie, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Alan, Terry, Helen, Jim, Linda, John, Judy, Neal, Aida, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Eunice, Tom, Robert✘, David, Jan, Susie, Sophia, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Courtney, Marie, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John, David, Adrian, Michell, Aida, Mai, Al, Kathy, Don, Linda & Leona

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Stephen, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Cindy, Jacob, Casey, Beth, Erin and Aubery

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt Alex Bursi, Capt. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; MSGT Michael Holter, USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army

After his encounter with St. Philip, he apparently went to Rome where he tried to pass himself off as the resurrected messiah. When challenged, he is said to have attempted to repeat the miracle of the resurrection. He was sealed in a tomb and buried for three days. When they dug him up, he was quite dead. So be warned! GPH✘

FROM THE PARISH LIFE COMMITTEE

Garden Party planners shift into higher gear

With just over four weeks to go before the Garden Party on Saturday, May 6th, we're shifting our efforts into high gear to make this the best Garden Party ever. So now is the time to drop off your jumble for the "Jumble Table" – in America we call it the White Elephant stall.

Please rummage the corners of your closets for bric-a-brac,

collectibles, books, DVDs, CDs and oddities for our Jumble sale. But please no TVs or electronics. We will set up in the Parish Hall for your donations. Sara Douglas who runs the Flower Booth is asking the parish's home gardeners to share their perennials to sell along with purchased nursery plants.

We're planning a festive day. We'll have pipers and singers and Maypole dancers. Races and frolics for the kids. Lot's to eat - from high tea to hot dogs. A load of jumble. Games of chance.

And, of course, King Henry VIII will be joining us along with his entourage. But beware, the King's goaler will looking for miscreants to put in the stocks.

Our traditional British pub, The Barley Mow, serving fine wines and ice cold, frothy beverages. There will be pub food aplenty, and much, much more.

We hope you will get involved by joining us on April 11th and lending your talents to making this the best Garden Party yet. If you can't make it to the meeting you can still help! Let us count the ways

There will also be a St Stephen's craft table. There are lots of talented people at St Stephen's creating all kinds of wonderful crafts. Here's a chance to show off yours by

offering your handmade items for sale. We need cakes for the cake table. -- whole cakes, half cakes, and quarter cakes -- delivered to church on May 5th.

Help us with our advertising. Information sheets for Garden Party Program ads are in the back of the church. Help us by selling ads to the local merchants and businesses you frequent.

Why not become a patron of the Garden Party? Your name will be listed in the Garden Party program acknowledging your generosity. There are several levels to choose from:

- Imperial Crown - \$100
- House of Windsor - \$75
- House of York
- House of Lancaster - \$30

Shortly we will have Garden Party posters to take to your grocery store, library, or any place else that has a bulletin board. We'll let you know as soon as they're available.

Finally, we need volunteers to work the day before and the day of the Garden Party. Sign-up sheets will be posted shortly in the vestibule. We hope you'll contribute your time to help us set up and run this great event. You'll be rewarded with lots of laughter and fellowship.

St Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093
Office: 410 560 6776 · **Rectory:** 410 665 1278
Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Rev. Canon Guy P Hawtin, *Rector*
The Venerable Michael Kerouac, *Vicar*
The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. John Novicki and
The Rev. Robert Ludwig, *Associate Rectors*
The Rev. M Wiley Hawks, *Pastoral Care Chaplain*
Mrs Happy Riley, *Director of Pastoral Care & Wedding Coordinator*

SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

9.15am: Choral Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)

11am: Choral Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)

6pm: Choral Evensong (as announced) –

evensong.ststeve.com

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer

Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist

Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Monday, 6.30pm: Bridge Club

Tuesday, 7am: Fellowship Breakfast (Nautilus Diner)

Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle

Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

Ladies Who Lunch

(at the Green Turtle in Hunt Valley)

Wednesday April 19th 12.00 pm - 2.00 pm

Vestry Meeting

Wednesday April 19th 7.00 pm

Parish Youth Play Group

Saturday April 29th, 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm

British Garden Party

Saturday, May 6th

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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