

# St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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FROM THE RECTOR

## Our traditional virtues preserve the nation

In the latter days of the Cold War, a group of friends, all professional followers of international affairs, formed an informal debating society we called "Carthage or Rome."

At that time, the world was dominated by two rival super powers: The United States and the Soviet Union. It was the sort of international rivalry that had existed only once before – 2,200 years before to be precise.

Those two rival superpowers were Rome and Carthage. And the struggle between them lasted for some 200 blood-stained years before Rome finally defeated Carthage in what historians call the Third Punic War.

The purpose of our debates was to determine which of our modern superpowers resembled Carthage and which was more like Rome. There was a serious point to the exercise – to try to figure out which of the two, based on historical precedent, would be the victor in the Cold War.

Carthage had become immensely wealthy by virtue of its domination of the seas and its trading skills. Rome could neither beat Carthage in trade nor, initially, at sea, so it sought to dominate international markets by conquest.

The general consensus of our group was that the U.S. more closely resembled Carthage while the Soviets looked more like Rome. Thus we all breathed a heartfelt sigh of relief when the Iron Curtain came crashing down in 1989.

A decade or so later my post Cold War complacency was shaken when my daughter Elizabeth made a me a gift of the HBO-Television series "Rome." It relates the fate of the Roman Republic a century or so after vanquishing Carthage – namely the republic's collapse, the dictatorship of Julius Caesar and the imposition of the imperial system.

Elizabeth hadn't seen the series herself and it caused her considerable surprise (and no little embarrassment) to discover it contained graphic violence and – as in many British-made TV productions these days – explicit sex.

But that, I told her, is exactly what Rome was like: The old Roman Republic was simply stumbling along the path to blood soaked oblivion. In the latter days of the republic, Rome was, indeed, an exceedingly violent and sinful city.

Time-hallowed Roman morality had broken down. Husbands betrayed wives, and wives husbands, parents betrayed children and children parents – and not only sexually but politically as well. The city's politicians no longer tolerated principled opposition, but rather recruited street gangs to slaughter their rivals.

Caesar didn't actually overthrow the republican government. He simply took advantage of the chaos to assume power. Two brutal civil wars later, his nephew and heir, Octavian (later deified as the emperor Augustus), laid the foundations of the imperial system, and the name "Caesar" became synonymous with the word "emperor."

The series' great virtue – admittedly an odd way of describing the graphic portrayal of sex and violence -- is that it presents an historically illiterate generation with a lesson on the fate of societies that shuck off the morality that underpins them.

A remarkable thing about the Romans is how much like us they were. Their governmental and legal systems were much like ours. They had a senate, an assembly, courts of law and, latterly, rigged elections. They maintained a highly trained, well-equipped professional army.

They had fire departments, health clinics, banks and insurance companies. They relaxed in bars, restaurants,

health spas and nightclubs. They lived in apartment blocks, town houses and luxurious suburban villas – all with running water. They vacationed by the sea, went to the theater, adored chariot racing (Nascar) and sports of all kind – the more strenuous and violent the better.

There is, however, one big difference between the U.S. and Rome – and that is that Rome had not been exposed to Christianity. Rome was a society in which pity, mercy and love towards one's fellow men were not regarded as virtues. They were merely options – and not widely admired options at that.

Like us, for example, they had an energy problem. They solved it not by drilling more oil, but by the sweat of the human brow. Slavery reached into every area of Roman life. Even the poorest of homes had at least one.

Slaves were Rome's household appliances, industrial machines and, in brothels and the arena, their sources of entertainment. At the same time, paradoxically, many of

## Parish Prayer List

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

**FOR RECOVERY:** Mavis, Pam, Eileen, Rebecca, Catherine, Bill, Richard✕, Janis, Daniel, Leona, Rachel, Elizabeth, Kim, Dorothy, Donna, Skip, Dan, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Heidi, Alan, Terry, Helen, Linda, John, Neal, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Jan, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Marie, Jim, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John Tom, Michell, Jack, Lewey, Stephen, Pamela, David, Wade, Sifa, Eileen, Ravi, Theresa, Larry Ricard, Judy & Scott

**FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE:** Sam, Cameron, Jim, Diana, Caroline, Karen, Ardis, Mavis, Michael, Ian, Melba, Vinnie, Doug, Chip, Elizabeth, Lisa, Carey, Jacob, Casey, Beth, Kath, Rebecca, Colin & Christian.

**IN MEMORIAM:**

**THOSE WHO MOURN:**

**ON ACTIVE SERVICE:** Lt. Col. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army.

the city's professionals – trusted political advisers, administrators and physicians and the like – were slaves.

Slaves had no rights. They could be beaten, even killed, at will. But, then, in Roman law, the *pater familias* – the male head of a household – exercised the power of life and death over his children into adulthood.

The ancient Roman virtues were those of self-discipline: frugality, loyalty, civic pride, courage in battle, and stoicism in adversity. They were instilled in every citizen from childhood. But when good times came, prosperity edged aside frugality, loyalty and civic pride as people selfishly opted for self-gratification and self-advancement.

Over the past two thousand years the Christian virtues have proved to be immeasurably more powerful than those of ancient Rome. Over the past two millennia they have transformed the West – enshrining love for humanity as the over-arching virtue and ushering in an era of freedom and democracy.

The violence in the streets of our great cities today grimly echoes the political violence that brought down the Roman republic. HBO's "Rome" series is a graphic warning that America abandons its Christian virtues at its peril. GPH✕

FROM THE PARISH CLERGY

## New County rules on Covid19

Dr. Gregory Wm. Branch, Health Officer for Baltimore County, has promulgated the following order: “Beginning Thursday, July 23 at 9 a.m., Baltimore County individuals ages 2 and up are required to wear face coverings in any indoor business, service, organization or establishment that serves the general public. This includes, but is not limited to, retail establishments, recreational establishments, houses of worship and other locations open to the public.

Residents are strongly encouraged to wear masks in outdoor public areas where social distancing of at least six-feet is not possible. Exemptions to the decree are:

- Individuals who cannot wear a face covering (as defined in Governor's Executive Order No. 20-04-15-01) due to a medical condition, mental health condition, or disability;
- Individuals who are communicating or seeking to communicate with someone where the ability to see the mouth is essential for communication;
- Individuals at food service establishments while eating or drinking, which shall all be subject to the same existing regulations and exceptions previously in place under the Governor's Executive Orders and the Health Officer Orders

of the Maryland Department of Health . . . . In addition, all non-seated parties, must wear a face covering when moving in or about a restaurant or bar premises.

- Individuals are not required to show documentation that an exception applies.”

*The full text of th Health Department Directive and Order and the Interpretive Guidance can be found at the County web site.*

## Our Sunday service schedule

Services will resume at 8.00 AM, 9.15 AM and 11.00 AM and we shall be celebrating the Eucharist at all services. Sunday School will be informal.

For shut-ins and folks st in quarantine we will be continuing our videos of Feast Day and Sunday Eucharists. These are posted on the **parish website (www.ststeve.com)**, **Youtube** and **Isaac the Eagle's Facebook** page.

You'll find them from 9.00 AM onwards every Sunday and Day of Obligation at **ststeve.com** at the bottom of the Home Page, under “Recent Blog Posts. A new midweek “broadcast” talk by the rector can also be found on the website every Wednesday or Thursday.

Meanwhile, we have opened a Post Office Box for the exclusive use of the treasurer. Please mail your offerings to: **St Stephen's Anglican Church, P.O. Box 6161, Timonium, MD 21094**. All other mail should be sent to our street address. GPH✘ & JPN✘

### St Stephen's Anglican Church

11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21093  
Office: 410 560 6776 · Rector: 443 425-2420  
Vicar: 410 878-5275 · Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

[www.ststeve.com](http://www.ststeve.com)

The Very Rev. Guy P Hawtin, Dean & Rector  
The Rev. John Novicki, Vicar ·

Associate Rectors:

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. C. Daniel Bursi,  
The Rev. Dr. Norman Flowers,  
The Rev. M. Wiley Hawks & The Rev. Mark Newsome,  
Mrs Happy Riley, Director of Pastoral Care  
& Wedding Coordinator

#### SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

9.15am: Sung Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)  
11 am: Sung Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)  
Choral Services (as announced) – [evensong.ststeve.com](http://evensong.ststeve.com)

#### WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer  
Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist  
Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

### For Our Country.

*ALMIGHTY God, who hast given us this good land for our heritage; We humbly beseech thee that we may always prove ourselves a people mindful of thy favour and glad to do thy will. Bless our land with honourable industry, sound learning, and pure manners. Save us from violence, discord, and confusion; from pride and arrogancy, and from every evil way. Defend our liberties, and fashion into one united people the multitudes brought hither out of many kindreds and tongues. Endue with the spirit of wisdom those to whom in thy Name we entrust the authority of government, that there may be justice and peace at home, and that, through obedience to thy law, we may show forth thy praise among the nations of the earth.*

*In the time of prosperity, fill our hearts with thankfulness, and in the day of trouble, suffer not our trust in thee to fail; all which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St Stephens's Anglican Church  
11856 Mays Chapel Road  
Timonium, MD 21093

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