Dear Ones,

A fragment of a song written by Joni Mitchell has been running through my mind lately. Here it is:

Don't it always seem to go
That you don't know what you've got
Til its gone

I had to look it up. It’s from Big Yellow Taxi that Mitchell released in 1970, and I remember it in her voice. Counting Crows recorded it in 2002, so it’s been around a good bit.

It’s not the theme of the song that brought it to mind. The theme itself could be the topic of another rector’s column; it is a pertinent today as it was when Joni Mitchell wrote it. The trigger for me was my recent hospitalization and not being able to read Morning Prayer in community, and hold a Prayer Book. Granted, our Morning Prayer community is usually only two people, but I was really surprised how much I missed sharing morning worship.

I did continue to read Morning Prayer by myself, but it didn’t feel the same. And, I was using my iPad instead of a prayer book.

That reminded me of a section of a book by Madeleine L’Engle. It is not one of her “children’s books”, but one that is more autobiographical. I haven’t remembered the title, but the context is quite vivid. It was in 1991. Madeleine had been quite seriously injured in an automobile accident in Los Angeles. She found herself in hospital, confined to bed and unable to use her arms. What she wanted most desperately was her Prayer Book (Yes, she was one of us). Even if she had had one, she wouldn’t have been able to hold it.

She tells her reader that the solace that she finally found was in reciting the “Jesus Prayer” over and over. It was the only thing she could find that she could remember in total. If you don’t remember it goes like this:

Lord Jesus Christ,
Son of God,
Have mercy on me,
A sinner.

Personally, I use the Jesus Prayer as the “first movement” in my private prayer time. It helps to center me; it helps me to remember who I am; it helps me to open up to God, to listen for God’s voice.

Our Prayer Book is something pretty marvelous. It has something to contribute to just about every facet of life and every life event. It is also a guide to living each day through the Daily Office.

We are “people of the book” and there is so much of it that is very familiar, but we can’t remember all of it all of the time. That’s one reason we hold the book. Another reason that we hold the book is that it is an action we have in common with Anglicans throughout the world.

As we enter the Season of Lent, I recommend your Prayer Book to you. Start at the beginning; explore it; try it out; read all the “Additional Directions”. I think you’ll be amazed at what it holds. Try reading Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer, Evening Prayer and Compline to mark your days. Go crazy and start reading the Psalms in the 30-day morning and evening cycle.; you’ll be surprised to see how human the psalmists are. But above all, open your Prayer Book and your Bible and look for God moving in your life and answer God’s call to righteousness. You won’t be alone; there will be folks all around the world doing the same: Seeking God and seeking righteousness.

— Thomas
**Highlights of the March Liturgical Calendar**

**Ash Wednesday**

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of the Season of Lent and is a fast day. It gets its name from the practice of the imposition of ashes, made from the palm branches from the previous year. We hold the ashes to be sacramental (not a Sacrament), which serve as reminders of our repentance or turning from old ways to the Lord. In ancient times, dusting with ashes was one way for a penitent to express sorrow and regret for sins and faults. We will hold the Ash Wednesday liturgy twice on 1 March. The first will be a Said service at 10:00AM and the second a Sung service at 6:00PM. Throughout the day, the church will be open for prayer.

**Saint Joseph**

Joseph was a pious Jew. He is counted as a descendent of King David and a carpenter by vocation. Joseph is considered to be the patron saint of working men and women. What we know of him is that he trusted in God, even when what God asked was to be a challenge to his daily life. Joseph is commemorated on 20 March at 12:10PM.

**James De Koven**

James De Koven was ordained priest by Bishop Kemper in 1855 and appointed professor of church history at Nashotah House. Nashotah House, from the time of its founding, was associated with the principles of the Oxford movement and its emphasis on the sacramental life of the Church and the Eucharist. Because of his ritualist leanings, sufficient consents were not received to concur his election as Bishop of Wisconsin in 1874, nor as Bishop of Illinois in 1875. De Koven died in 1879 in Racine, Wisconsin.

**Annunciation**

The Feast of the Annunciation of Our Lord Jesus Christ to the Blessed Virgin Mary will be celebrated on 25 March at 5:30PM. This celebration commemorates the visit of the angel Gabriel to Our Lady and her assent to God’s request to be Theotokos, or God-bearer. Her answer, like that of Abraham, was “Let it be to me according to your word.”

**John Keble**

John Keble was born in 1792, son of a vicar. He won a scholarship to Oxford at 14 and graduated with honors in 1811. He was ordained in 1816 and served several rural curacies, settling in Hursley in 1836. Keble was one of the Oxford Tractarians. His Assize sermon in 1833 was the spark that ignited the Oxford Movement, calling the church back to its sacramental heritage. Keble was the pastoral inspiration for the movement. A college at Oxford bears his name, devoted to giving “an education strict fidelity to the Church of England.”
**Vestry Summary**

The regular meeting of the Vestry and Wardens of Saint John’s Church was called to order on 12 February 2017 at 11:35AM by Senior Warden Cindy Gass. Father Heard is at home recovering from surgery; Ron Brown and Geri Moulton were absent.

The agenda was adopted and the minutes approved as submitted.

Treasurer Connie McLean reviewed the financials, noting that income exceeded expenses for January, partially due to prepayment of pledges. A preliminary budget will be available by the Annual Meeting on 26 February.

Cindy Gass reported that 15 Place is closing, leaving the women with no place to go during the day. They will also need lunches. Bailey Norman (Trinity) is trying to work out a way to address this.

Junior Warden James Christiansen reported that the electrical repairs to 1702 Church Street are complete. He noted that Andrew Lee has been working on the 1700 Church Street lot, clearing brush and some trees.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:25PM.

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**In Memoriam**

**Loraine Murray**

11 October 1924—8 February 2017

Our sister, Loraine, entered into new life on 8 February. Her death was a surprise to me. I’d seen her only a couple of weeks before and given her communion. I was also surprised to learn that she was 92! Loraine always seemed to be so spry and with it. I regret not being physically able to preside at her burial office. I’m indebted to Fr. Bailey Norman for filling in at the last minute.

Saint John’s wishes to extend a sincere thank you to those who made donations in memory of Loraine Murray:

- Budd & Connie McLean
- James Christiansen
- Bob & Connie Anderson

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**Lenten Series**

For Lent this year, we’ll continue our tradition of Stations of the Cross at 5:30, followed by a vegetarian supper in the Great Hall at 6:00 with program following. This year, we’re going to take a deeper look at our Baptismal Covenant and Baptism. This will start on March 8th and run through April 5th. There will be a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in the parish house to get our meal planning organized. Supper cost will be $5.00 per week.
It's time to start spring cleaning and making a pile of things to donate to the Saint John’s ECW Rummage Sale which will be held on Friday March 24th and Saturday, March 25th, 8 AM to 1 PM each day.

We will not be storing items at the church until the week of the sale. You can bring your “trash and treasure” items to the Great Hall from Sunday, March 19th until the sale starts. Items will not be accepted before that time.

If you have large items or heavy boxes you can’t transport yourself, we will arrange to pick them up; ask Irene Yeager or Janet Buckley for more information.

A few reminders:
⇒ Please make sure items are clean
⇒ If it is electric, make sure all the parts are included and it works
⇒ No computer stuff this year (it didn’t sell in the past)
⇒ No clothes this year

Volunteer to spend a few hours helping to sort and price the items during the week of the sale; we’ll be in the Great Hall every day from 10 until 2 (or maybe later). You don’t have to be an ECW member: all are welcome, gentlemen too!!

Tell your friends and neighbors about the sale (and all the other good things we do at Saint John’s) and invite them to come.

Volunteer to work at the sale, we need people to help keep the room organized and the tables looking neat, answer questions from our “customers,” and to clean up afterwards.

Call Irene Yeager or Paula Ross if you have questions.
Thank you to everyone who has participated in the program so far! All proceeds benefit St. John’s ministries.

Please consider trying out the program for your everyday shopping needs. Some of the most popular gift cards sold through the scrip program include (with denomination in parentheses):

- Amazon.com (25, 100)
- CVS (25, 100)
- Home Depot (25, 100, 500)
- iTunes (15, 25)
- Lowe’s (25, 100, 500)
- Office Depot/OfficeMax (25, 100)
- Panera Bread (10, 25)
- PetSmart (25)
- Shell (25, 50, 100)
- Starbucks (10, 25)
- Subway (10, 50)
- Target (25, 100, 250)
- Walgreens (25, 100)
- Walmart (25, 100, 250)
- Winn Dixie (25, 100)
- Whole Foods (25, 100)

Check out the complete, extensive list of retailer gift cards available to order at the scrip website: https://www.shopwithscrip.com/

March scrip orders are due Sunday, March 12. See Eugene Johnston for an order form.

Kathe and I are so very thankful for all the prayers, notes, calls, and good wishes you have sent to us! Our church family is a wonderful group!

Mary Gieseler

Donna Waites is currently at Lynwood Healthcare and Rehab Center for rehabilitation. She would appreciate hearing from her St. John’s family. Cards and notes may be sent to her at Lynwood, 4164 Halls Mill Road, Mobile, AL 36693.

Easter Lilies

_Easter Lily sign up cards will be in the Narthex and the Great Hall by mid-March. Cards are due by Palm Sunday, April 9._
Elsewhere in the Diocese

The University of Virginia Glee Club will be making its first-ever formal appearance in Mobile as part of its 2017 Spring Tour of Southern States. The performance will be on Monday, March 6, 2017, at 7:00 pm at Trinity Episcopal Church at 1900 Dauphin Street in Midtown Mobile. Parking is available adjacent to the church. The concert is free and open to the public. The UVA Mobile Alumni Club is delighted to sponsor this event with the help of Trinity Church, whose historic building has recently been totally restored and renovated after the Christmas Day tornado of 2012.

Founded in 1871, the Virginia Glee Club is the oldest musical organization at the University of Virginia. The Club’s members, primarily undergraduate students, come from every school and college within the University. Members consider the group a “fraternity of talent,” committed to performing at a professional level, promoting fellowship, and preserving longstanding tradition. Throughout its history, the Virginia Glee Club has been consistently recognized as a leader among American men's choruses, performing a variety of sacred and secular music in the classical tradition.

FRIEDAY FISH FRIES IN LENT

Episcopal Church of the Redeemer is hosting a fish fry every Friday in March for Lent. Join them in the Parish House for an $8 plate of fried fish, grits, coleslaw and hush puppies.

They will be serving every Friday, from 5:00–7:00 p.m., March 3 through March 31. Redeemer is located at 7125 Hitt Road (corner of Cody and Hitt).
Contact Us

Staff:
The Reverend Thomas Heard, rector
rector@stjohnsmobile.org

Louis Daniel
Organist & Choir Director
music@stjohnsmobile.org

Lella Lowe
Financial Secretary
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Jack Ruppe
Sexton

Vestry:
Darren Anderson
Ron Brown
James Christiansen, junior warden
Cindy Gass, senior warden
Kathe Gieseler
Connie McLean, treasurer
Geri Moulton
Nikki Shaw, clerk
Butch Yeager

For healing grace and continued strength, we pray for our members:
Marian Boykin, Ron Brown, Mary Jones, Jayson Chestang, Budd McLean, Joyce Lee, Donna Waites.

For our Homebound:
Mae Dunn, Joan-Marie Elam, LaVerne Foster, Catherine Warren, Chick Wohlert, Becky & Art Youngblood.

For victims of war and their families, and members of our Armed Forces and their families:
Ellis Garner, Eric Mattoon.

For our Friends and Family:

DON’T FORGET

Daylight Savings Time begins at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 12. Set your clocks forward one hour before you go to bed Saturday night.
Saint John’s Episcopal Church  
1707 Government Street  
Mobile, Alabama 36604

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Come Worship With Us!  
Monday—Friday:  
8:30AM  Morning Prayer

Sunday:  
9:00AM  Adult and Youth Christian  
Formation  
10:00AM  Holy Eucharist

Wednesday:  
10:00AM  Holy Eucharist;  
Healing on the 1st  
Wednesday of the month.

Other Feasts and Holy Days are  
oberved throughout the year; please  
see our website for the latest schedule.

Parish Office  
Monday—Thursday  
9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

Telephone: 251-479-5474  
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www.stjohnsmobile.org

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to be the hands of Our Lord.