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The Steeple

May 31, 2023



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The Weekly Newsletter of St. Luke's Episcopal Church



Un sur trois. Trois en un.

This weekend is Trinity Sunday. On this day the church pauses to reflect on the nature of God who is three in one. I've always thought that it is quite interesting that in the middle of this country there is a church in Oklahoma who features a somewhat obscure French bishop next to Christ and the church's patron, St. Luke.

Thus, the figure to the right of Christ in our stained-glass windows is none other than that same bishop - St. Hilary of Poitiers, an articulate theologian (who wrote a treatise on the Trinity) and who was an ardent expositor and defender of Christian doctrine. Depicted with him are the images of the Ten Commandments, a pen, and his pastoral staff.

Hilary, was a prolific writer and a poet to whom some of the earliest Latin hymns have been attributed. Augustine called him "the illustrious doctor of the churches." Jerome considered him "the trumpet of the Latins against the Arians."

He was born in Poitiers, in Gaul, about 315, into a pagan family of wealth and power. In his writings, Hilary describes the stages of the spiritual journey that led him to the Christian faith. He was baptized when he was about thirty.

In 350, Hilary was made Bishop of Poitiers. Although he demurred, he was finally persuaded by popular acclamation. He proved to be a bishop of skill and courage. His orthodoxy was shown when, in 355, the Emperor Constantius ordered all bishops to sign a condemnation of Athanasius, under pain of exile. Hilary wrote to Constantius, pleading for peace and unity. His plea accomplished nothing, and, when he dissociated himself from three Arian bishops in the West, Constantius ordered Julian (later surnamed the Apostate) to exile him to Phrygia. There he remained for three years without complaining, writing biblical commentaries and his principal work, *On the Trinity*.

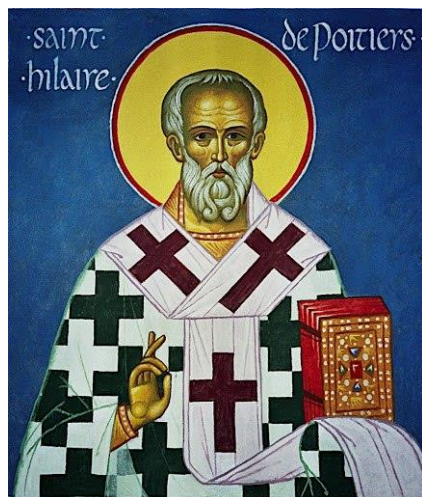
Hilary was then invited by a party of “semi-Arians,” who hoped for his support, to a Council at Seleucia in Asia, largely attended by Arians. With remarkable courage, in the midst of a hostile gathering, Hilary defended the Council of Nicaea and the Nicene doctrine of the Trinity. He wrote again to Constantius, offering to debate Saturninus, the Western bishop largely responsible for his exile. The Arians feared the results of such an encounter and persuaded Constantius to simply return Hilary to Poitiers.

In 360, Hilary was welcomed back to his see with great demonstrations of joy and affection. He continued his battle against Arianism, but he never neglected the needs of his people. While fierce in controversy with heretical bishops, he was always a loving and compassionate pastor to the people of his diocese. He died in Poitiers in 367. Among his disciples was Martin, later Bishop of Tours, whom Hilary encouraged in his endeavors to promote the monastic life. The hymn “Hail this day’s joyful return” (The Hymnal 1982, #223; #224) is attributed to Hilary.

St. Hilary certainly is a figure to be reckoned with in the theological world, and it would be worth pondering his contributions to the understanding of the Trinity, especially this Sunday. Nevertheless, Hilary appears next to Christ not as a co-patron but as a tribute to Mr. Hilary Mahin, in whose memory the windows were made and installed. The coincidence, however, is certainly interesting.

Let us pray the collect for this weekend: Almighty and everlasting God, you have given to us your servants grace, by the confession of a true faith, to acknowledge the glory of the eternal Trinity, and in the power of your divine Majesty to worship the Unity: Keep us steadfast in this faith and worship, and bring us at last to see you in your one and eternal glory, O Father; who with the Son and the Holy Spirit live and reign, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Peace,
Nick+



Theologians Corner:



Blandina and Her Companions The Martyrs of Lyons 177

In the second century, after a brief respite, Christians in many parts of the Roman empire were once again subjected to persecution. At Lyons and Vienne, in Gaul, there were missionary centers which had drawn many Christians from Asia and Greece. They were living a devout life under the guidance of Pothinus, the elderly Bishop of Lyons, when persecution began in 177.

At first, the Christians were socially excluded from Roman homes, the public baths, and the market place; insults, stones, and blows were rained on them by pagan mobs, and Christian homes were vandalized. Soon after, the imperial officials forced Christians to come to the marketplace for harsh questioning, followed by imprisonment.

Some slaves from Christian households were tortured to extract public accusations that Christians practiced cannibalism, incest, and other perversions. These false accusations roused the mob to such a pitch of wrath that any leniency toward the imprisoned Christians was impossible. Even friendly pagans now turned against them.

The fury of the mob fell most heavily on Sanctus, a deacon; Attalus; Maturus, a recent convert; and Blandina, a slave. According to Eusebius, Blandina was so filled with power to withstand torments that her torturers gave up. “I am a Christian,” she said, “and nothing vile is done among us.” Sanctus was tormented with red-hot irons. The aged Pothinus, badly beaten, died soon after. Finally, the governor decided to set aside several days for a public spectacle in the amphitheater.

Eusebius depicts Blandina in particular as standing in the person of Christ: “Blandina was suspended on a stake, and exposed to be devoured by the wild beasts who should attack her. And because she appeared as if hanging on a cross, and because of her earnest prayers, she inspired the combatants with great zeal. For they looked on her in her conflict, and beheld with their outward eyes, in the form of their sister, him who was crucified for them, that he might persuade those who believe in him that every one who suffers for the glory of Christ has fellowship always with the living God.”

On the final day of the spectacle, writes Eusebius, “Blandina, last of all, like a noble mother who had encouraged her children and sent them ahead victorious to the King, hastened to join

them.” Beaten, torn, burned with irons, she was wrapped in a net and tossed about by a wild bull. The spectators were amazed at her endurance.

Eusebius concludes: “They offered up to the Father a single wreath, but it was woven of diverse colors and flowers of all kinds. It was fitting that the noble athletes should endure a varied conflict, and win a great victory, that they might be entitled in the end to receive the crown supreme of life everlasting.”

Together we pray: Almighty God, who didst give such courage and endurance to Blandina and her companions, that by their deaths many hearts were turned to thee; Grant that we, in accordance with their example, may also gladly endure all that is required of us as we witness to thee in our own day; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Please pray for: Linda & Terry Piper, Liz Green, Michelle Sheffield, Catherine Sheffield, David King, Pris Snow, Ben Baker, Sanawbar, Diana Farris, Cindy Moffitt, Joel Hahn, Stacey & Butch Webster, Steve McCraw, Josh Harris, Katie Rolielard, Debbie French, Jody & George Bracken, David Swindell, Norma Perrier, Connie Finch, Dorothy Buchanan, Diana Schremmer, Peggy Kauffman, Colleen, Shawn, Ryan Kiesel, Tony Clapper, Bruce Neiswander, Jack & Karla Stoecker, Joseph, Tim, Shania Smith, Terry Grogan, Tyler Roberson, Estelle Sams, Jerry Nezam, Jim Brooks, Tom Martin, Audrey Foote, Skip Birkner, Don Doty, Maria Dawson Luke Karel, Janice Lonski, Radomir & Miriam Petrovich, Jennifer Hamilton, Lynette Beebe, and Nancy and Joe Norton.

Luke's Place June 1st– June 7th, 2023

June 1st Men's Breakfast, 7am, Metcalf

Rector's Bible Study, 9:15am, Metcalf

Green Country Eucharist, Rite I, 1pm, GCV

June 4th Holy Eucharist, Rite I, 8:00am, chapel

Faith Forum, 9:15am, Metcalf

Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10:30am

June 6th Spiritual Discovery Group, 10am, Library

Birthdays and Anniversaries, June 4th – June 10th, 2023



Birthdays

Tom Chamberlain (6/5)
Shelly Jackson (6/6)
Audrey Foote (6/7)
Danny Clem (6/8)



Anniversaries

Jeff & Laura Birk (6/4)

If your or a loved one's name doesn't appear on the list, please email or call the office, and we will add your birthday or anniversary!

Concern Pantry Needs:

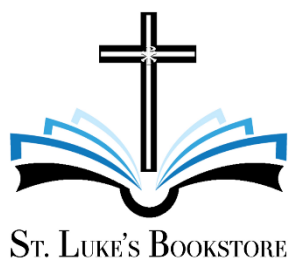
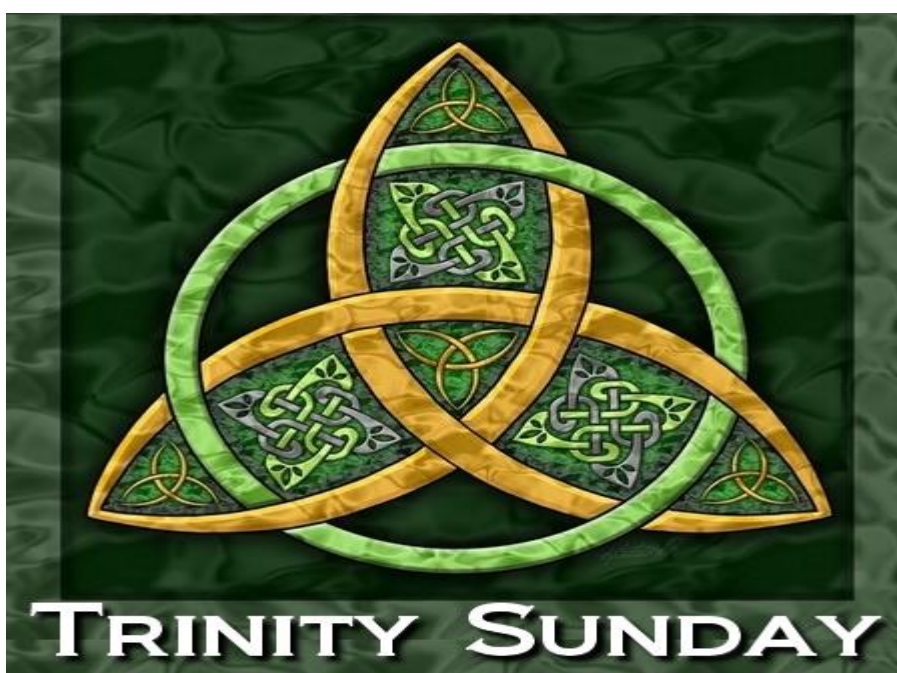
Canned fruit, Spam, canned pinto beans, pudding cups, fruit cups, ramen noodles, canned corn, tomato sauce, and brown paper sacks with handles

Trinity Sunday

Feast that celebrates “the one and equal glory” of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, “in Trinity of Persons and in Unity of Being” (BCP, p. 380). It is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost. Trinity Sunday is one of the seven principal feasts of the church year (BCP, p. 15). The proper readings and collect for Trinity Sunday are used only on the feast, not on the weekdays following. The numbered proper which corresponds most closely to the date of Trinity Sunday is used (BCP, p. 228). The BCP also provides the proper “Of the Holy Trinity” for optional use at other times, subject to the rules of the calendar of the church year (see BCP, pp. 251, 927). The Hymnal 1982 presents ten hymns in a section on The Holy Trinity

(Hymns 362-371), including “Holy, holy, holy! Lord God Almighty!” (Hymn 362), “Come, thou almighty King” (Hymn 365), and “Holy Father, great Creator” (Hymn 368).

Celebration of Trinity Sunday was approved for the western church by Pope John XXII in 1334. This feast is associated with Thomas Becket (c. 1118-1170), who was consecrated bishop on Trinity Sunday, 1162. His martyrdom may have influenced the popularity of the feast in England and the custom of naming the remaining Sundays of the church year “Sundays after Trinity.” The Sarum Missal and editions of the Prayer Book through the 1928 BCP named these Sundays the Sundays after Trinity. The 1979 BCP identifies this portion of the church year as the season after Pentecost, and names these Sundays the Sundays after Pentecost (see BCP, p. 32).



Please support your local bookstore! If there is something you would like the Bookstore to carry, tell Cathy! If there is a book you would like, tell Cathy! If you have a suggestion for marketing our wonderful Bookstore, tell Cathy! The St Luke's Bookstore is a real treasure St Luke's is blessed to have and we, as members, need to support it. Every profit dollar goes to the Outreach budget so we are also helping our neighbors in need when we buy from the Bookstore. Shop at the St Luke's Bookstore and tell others as well!



Knights of Columbus Council #1302

Pancake Breakfast benefitting
Pack the Backpacks!

Sunday, June 11 2023 at
Fr. Lynch Hall (7th and Dewey)
8:30-11:00am
\$10

Come join us for biscuits and gravy,
sausage, breakfast casserole, and all you
can eat pancakes!



St. Luke's Vestry Members

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Bereavement Team 2

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Sandy Whitson, Margo Proctor