

# **-A GRAIN OF MUSTARDSEED-**

Dear Friends in Christ,

November 2018

The Church commemorates individual saints on specific days throughout the year but she gives us one day in the calendar on which to meditate upon the witness of the saintly body as a whole. Though each saint bears an especial witness to some aspect of beatitude (as described by our Lord in *St. Matthew 5*, part of which is the gospel of the day), as a whole the saints represent the sanctified witness of the Church to Christ's living, dying and rising for us. As Christ lived according to the Father's will, so the saints conform their lives to the image of Christ. As Christ humbled himself to death on the Cross for us sinners, so the saints follow the way of Jesus and his Cross. They deny themselves, forsake love of this world and their own lives, even unto death, and serve God and their fellow man. As Jesus rose again in victory over death and sin, so the saints, either alive in this world or at rest in the Lord, await the day of the general resurrection when they will comprise that great multitude described by St. John in *Revelation 7* and will sing the praise of God and the Lamb for all eternity. These are the abiding marks of the saints, whether formally canonized by the Church or not, whether at rest with the Lord or alive in this present world. Simply put, to be a saint is to be a Christian, a proper Christian, all that a Christian should be. It is to the saints that we look for an example of beatitude, of blessedness, of sanctified living and they, in turn, point us to Jesus, the only perfect paradigm of beatitude.

Yours in Christ, Edward L. Rix

## **FEAST OF TITLE SERVICE & LUNCHEON**

I encourage you all to attend our 10:00 a.m. Festal Communion service on November 4<sup>th</sup>, the Sunday in the Octave of All Saints' Day (our patronal festival). Following the 10:00 service is our annual potluck luncheon to which all are invited: bring a dish or a bottle of wine, bring a friend (or two or three!).

## **VESTRY NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The Vestry will shortly appoint a Nominating Committee to oversee the election of new Vestry members for the 2019-2022 Vestry term (once again, we are a little late getting to this task). Until that time, names of potential vestrymen ought to be given to either of the Wardens (Mr. Michael Yoh and Mr. Jonathan Wistar) or Fr. Rix. Qualifications for membership on the vestry are posted around the parish on bulletin boards. Names should be submitted by the end of November so that the Committee can interview eligible nominees in December/early January in advance of our Annual General Meeting.

## **SHORTFALL CAMPAIGN**

By now most everyone in the parish ought to have received a letter outlining the reasons for and goals of our current short-fall campaign. Such campaigns are always regrettable and we are thankful that they are rare in this parish. Nevertheless we appreciate your generosity: Members of the Vestry have pledged almost half of the anticipated amount – let's follow their good example and finish the year on a strong note.

## **STEWARDSHIP 2019**

One of the regrettable things about shortfall campaigns is that they are inevitably followed by the next year's pledge drive. That's not entirely regrettable however: The need for extra resources at the end of the year helps us to think about the necessity of prayerful, sacrificial and timely support of the parish in the coming year. One of the reasons we budgeted such a large deficit for 2018 was that many members of the parish were tardy in making pledges (we cannot budget giving that has not been pledged!). Our Prayer Book encourages us to offer "ourselves, our souls and bodies" to God, so when we think about stewardship for 2019 we ought not to think not just about cash and how we'll do without it if we give it to the Church (though this is the way we have to think about that). We need also to consider God's total claim on us; the fact that we have been "bought with a price" to quote the Apostle. Will we not acknowledge this by returning, in thanks, some respectable portion of our lives to Him, His Church, His service? Our pledge represents our commitment to give totally of ourselves: Your priest is happy to help you set a discipline of prayer, fasting and alms-giving, but in the end each of us has to make that decision for ourselves with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.



“The kingdom of God...is like a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and cast into his garden; and it grew, and waxed a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it.” *St. Luke 13:18-19*