



St Matthias' Musings

Lent, Easter 2013

Across the Rector's Desk

Have you ever thought of Lent as a time to meditate on and celebrate God's love? We are so used to thinking of the negative aspects of Lent: the giving up of an activity we enjoy, the fasting, the gloomy music in a minor key.

The following hymn, #177 in Common Praise, offers us words for this kind of meditation.

A spendthrift lover is the Lord who
never counts the cost
or asks if heaven can afford to woo a
world that's lost.
Our lover tosses coins of gold across
the mid-night skies
and stokes the sun against the cold to
warm us when we rise.

Still more is spent in blood and tears
to win the human heart,
to overcome the violent fears that
blow the world apart.
Behold the bruised and thorn-
crowned face of one who bears our scars
and empties out the wealth of grace
that's hinted by the stars.

How shall we love this heart-strong
God who gives us everything,
whose ways to us are strange and
odd; what can we give or bring?
Acceptance of the matchless gift is
gift enough to give.
the very act will shake and shift the
way we love and live.

If you have seen the movie Chocolat you will know it is the story of a French village at the beginning of Lent, and this town is used to a rigorous discipline of abstinence during this season of the Church year. Into this town comes Vianne, something of a free spirit, and her daughter. Vianne is a maker of fine chocolates; not exactly the kind of activity one takes up in Lent. Her presence disrupts the status quo: the power of the mayor, the relationships among the townsfolk, within families. And yet...it is Vianne who liberates the abused wife, who befriends an elderly woman whose daughter is rejecting her because she won't behave as the daughter wishes, whose shop is the meeting place between grandmother and grandson, who accepts the gypsies. Vianne is the one who most exemplifies Jesus in his love for humanity. All of their sacrificing does nothing to bring the townsfolk closer to God.

And that is the purpose of Lenten discipline: to deepen our faith, to increase our awareness of 'God-with-us'. The Passion of Jesus can have no meaning apart from the love of God. God becomes vulnerable to the hatred and violence of this world and overcomes it not by responding in kind but in love and forgiveness.

Our Lenten discipline of "penitence, fasting, prayer and almsgiving" should have as its goal, not self-denial for its own sake, but the lifting up of our spirit to God so that we are enveloped in God's love and that our lives may become an image of the Christ.

Temptation

Toad baked some cookies. "These cookies smell very good," said Toad. He ate one. "And they taste even better," he said.

Toad ran to Frog's house. "Frog, Frog," cried Toad, "taste these cookies that I have made."

Frog ate one of the cookies, "These are the best cookies I have ever eaten!" said Frog.

Frog and Toad ate many cookies, one after another. "You know, Toad," said Frog, with his mouth full, "I think we should stop eating. We will soon be sick."

"You are right," said Toad. "Let us eat one last cookie, and then we will stop." Frog and Toad ate one last cookie. There were many cookies left in the bowl.

"Frog," said Toad, "let us eat one very last cookie, and then we will stop." Frog and Toad ate one very last cookie.

"We must stop eating!" cried Toad as he ate another.

"Yes," said Frog, reaching for a cookie, "we need willpower."

"What is willpower?" asked Toad.

"Willpower is trying hard not to do something you really want to do," said Frog.

"You mean like trying hard not to eat all these cookies?" asked Toad.

"Right," said Frog.

Frog put the cookies in a box. "There," he said. "Now we will not eat any more cookies."

"But we can open the box," said Toad. "That is true," said Frog.

Frog tied some string around the box. "There," he said. "Now we will not eat any more cookies."

"But we can cut the string and open the box," said Toad.

"That is true," said Frog. Frog got a ladder. He put the box up on a high shelf.

"There," said Frog. "Now we will not eat any more cookies."

"But we can climb the ladder and take the box down from the shelf and cut the string and open the box," said Toad.

"That is true," said Frog.

Frog climbed the ladder and took the box down from the shelf. He cut the string and opened the box. Frog took the box outside. He shouted in a loud voice. "Hey, birds, here are cookies!" Birds came from everywhere. They picked up all the cookies in their beaks and flew away.

"Now we have no more cookies to eat," said Toad sadly.

"Not even one."

"Yes," said Frog, "but we have lots and lots of willpower."

"You may keep it all, Frog," said Toad. "I am going home now to bake a cake."

(From "The Wind in The Willows")

"The temptation of Jesus" in art is depicted as an ugly or scary creature trying to get Jesus to betray God. The problem, as for Toad, is that temptation is very attractive. How can it be wrong to feed the world, to rule so that there is peace, to have security? But that's not Jesus' ministry: he

must remain faithful to God's call of servanthood.

Events in Holy Week and the Easter Season

**March 24 10:00am
Palm Sunday**

Palm Procession and Choral Eucharist

As we begin Holy Week, come and participate in the great drama of Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and then experience the Passion of Christ in the words of the Gospel of Luke.



**March 27 7:00pm 10:
Wednesday in Holy Week
Tenebrae.**

A service of darkness and shadow reflecting the somber mood of the journey to the cross 6:0

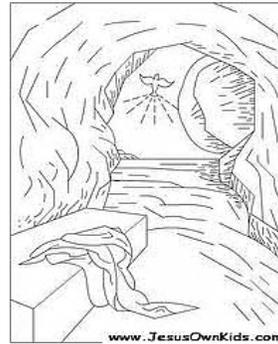
**March 28
Maundy Thursday**

5:30pm A simple supper as we share fellowship as Jesus and his disciples did.
7:00pm Institution of the Eucharist
We celebrate Holy Communion, "strip the altar", then leave the church in the Darkness of Gethsemane.

**March 29 10:00am
Good Friday**
The Celebration of the Lord's Passion

A time to reflect on our complicity in Jesus' death in word, music and prayer.

**March 30 Time to be announced
Holy Saturday**



Blessing of the New Fire, Renewal of Baptismal Vows, & Holy Eucharist
An ancient liturgy where we remember God's work of Salvation throughout faith history.

A Resurrection

Party will follow the service as we come together in Word, Sacrament, and fellowship.

Held at St Philip's, Etobicoke

**March 31 10:00am
Easter Day**

Choral Eucharist
A joyous celebration of the Resurrection

**May 9
Ascension Day**

5:30pm Potluck Supper
7:00pm Informal Eucharist to mark Jesus' Ascension to the Father

**May 19 10:00am
Pentecost**
The Birthday of the Church
Choral Eucharist