



ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY — June 25, 2023

“Wise as Serpents and Innocent as Doves”



Serpents have always been known for their shrewdness in approaching their preys inadvertently, and then attacking them at the right moment. For this reason, they have been seen as a symbol of wisdom in many ancient cultures.

The Bible story in the Book of Genesis has the serpent as the creature that induces human beings to lose their “innocent” stage of perfect harmony with the Creator, and become aware of good and evil, thus breaking this initial harmonious stage, and initiating a “fallen” conscious stage where gracious redemption would only become possible by the self-giving sacrifice of God incarnate, the Son of Man.

Doves, on the other hand, have always represented innocence. They are seen as peaceful creatures that would not normally be suspicious of any threats and would be confident enough to expect to be treated with love. The Bible narrative in Genesis uses a dove as a symbol of the moment when, after the flood, dry land has reappeared, and the earth has become a habitable place again. When the dove brings a branch of olive in its beak, Noah knows the land is dry again.

The dove is also used in the New Testament as a representation of the Holy Spirit, descending upon the Son of Man at His Baptism in the Jordan River.

There seems to be a connection between this new use of the dove symbol and the previous one, in that the dove with the branch of olive that Noah received in the Ark is a foretaste of the Covenant of the preservation of nature and humankind that God declares after the flood, whereas the latter is a symbol of the New Covenant of redemption established through Christ's blood, and His constant presence with us and the whole of creation to remind us and guide us in God's Way of Love.

When Jesus sends out his twelve disciples to carry out God's reconciling mission, He instructs them to be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves". As contradictory as this injunction may seem, there is great wisdom in it.

Jesus' followers can no longer be in the initial state of innocence of humankind. They need to be totally conscious and aware of the world they are living in. It is a hostile world, full of contradictions and selfish interests. It is a world where the ruling powers are led by ambition and fear of losing their power. In this world Jesus' Way of Love is mainly alien, and represents a threat to the interests of the ruling classes.

So, Jesus' followers must be ready to speak and act in this world. They should anticipate persecution, prison, and even death. They must be aware of rejection and betrayal even within the family.

But they will be guided by the Holy Spirit, represented by the dove at Jesus' Baptism. They will be courageous, but not violent. They will speak out the words that the Holy Spirit put in their mouths, but will not retort with insolence or virulence.

They will trust the Holy Spirit's right discernment at all times, and act peacefully in all circumstances, even when they are being unjustly slandered and attacked. They do not need to fear physical death, which can only kill the body, but rather fear the true death of the soul, when we are led by the dark forces of evil that sever us from God's life and love.

For us who claim that we are the present-day followers of Jesus, His injunction is as valid today as it was then. Let us then be "wise as serpents and innocent as doves."

Fr. Carlos Espósito

Readings for The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Jeremiah 20:7-13 Romans 5:15b-19 Psalm 69:7-10, 16-18 Matthew 10:16-33

CALENDAR

Note: We continue worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer at 10:00am are held in All Saints' St. Mary Chapel.

SUNDAY June 25, 2023 The Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

Christian Formation Meets next on Sunday July 9 and 23 at Noon in the Rector's Office. Book Study: "God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible" by Adam Nicolson

TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

THURSDAY Spanish Class 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the Flower Room. Taught by Fr. Carlos

FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel

SUNDAY July 2, 2023 The Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally