

what happens in liturgies and bear personal witness to the soul deep meaning of what God is actually doing in the souls, hearts, and minds of the people present—participating and receiving the grace that the liturgy manifests.

I often notice that newcomers to the liturgical life and ministry are often confused by the experience they find themselves in the midst of. We are called to be stewards of God’s mysteries. This includes making ourselves present with newcomers, teaching them what is happening in the liturgies, and the souls deep meaning of what is happening. This is a truly wonderful, and meaningful responsibility!

Genesis 41:1-13; Psalm 55; Mark 2:23—3:6

**Birthdays:** Jennifer Korber, Pam Lopez

**Saturday’s Calendar:**

7:00 am	Hour of Power AA
9:30 am	Step Sisters Meeting
10:00 am	Bible Study ONLINE
5:00 pm	Holy Eucharist Rite II
8:30 pm	Not Alone Group

**Today’s Ministry:** Flower Guild

*Reflections by John Ferguson*

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*St. Mary's Episcopal Church*

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*“Growing into Jesus - Reaching out with Love”*

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ST. MARY’S  
EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Good News Daily

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**Sunday, February 18**

John 12:44-50 *Then Jesus cried: “Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me”* (v.44 NRSV)

Recently, I was having coffee with my friend Jim. Our conversation led to his telling me, “I really relate to Jesus, but I have difficulty relating to God, because God is beyond any reality I know about, or can conceive.”

I told Jim, “I experienced that same difficulty over the years. About ten years ago, I told my Pastor about my dilemma.” Fortunately, he told me, “John, Jesus came among us to reveal what God is like. Jesus is the human image and likeness of God. In that human image and likeness, Jesus revealed two very important aspects of the nature of God. First, God is unconditional love. Second, God is personally relational. While we can’t visualize or conceive a concrete image of God, we can experience God’s unconditional love for us. Through that love we can actually experience a personal relationship with God. We can experience God’s loving spiritual presence. Connected with that presence we can form a relationship with God.”

Jim replied, “I’m going to mull over what you’ve told me.”

Daniel 9:3-10; Psalms 63, 68; Hebrews 2:10-18

**Birthdays:** Carol Marsh, Candy Krumins

**Sunday’s Calendar:**

7:30 am	Holy Eucharist Rite I
9:00 am	Contemporary Family Worship
10:30 am	Holy Eucharist Rite II

**Today’s Ministry:** Communications Team

## Monday, February 19

1 Corinthians 1:1-19 *But that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose.* (v.10b)

I've been a member of Christian congregations for most of my adult life (53 years). Almost from the beginning of my congregational experience, I've noticed one aspect of congregational life that deeply bothers me. That aspect is that congregations are simply not on the same page about the purpose of the congregation's life and ministry.

A common experience throughout my many years of living in a faith community is the production of a "purpose statement" of the life and ministry of the congregation. I've observed that every purpose statement is actually a consensus document, not the unanimity that Paul is praying for the church in Corinth to create.

On a retreat at a Trappist monastery, I was invited to observe the monks creating a purpose statement for their community. What I saw was an experience of deep prayer. Every statement in their purpose document was prayerfully considered and wasn't accepted until every monk agreed. I wonder what could happen if a faith community abandoned "group process" and adopted a process of Spirit-led unity was undertaken?

Genesis 37:1-11; Psalms 41, 52; Mark 1:1-13

**Anniversaries:** Maurice & Janet Giannotti

**Birthdays:** Caroline Clark, Barbara Porcelli

### Monday's Calendar:

President's Day, Church Office Closed.

7:00 am Hour of Power AA

10:00 am Praying Hands (1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Mondays)

3:00 pm Daughters of the King (2<sup>nd</sup> Mondays)

5:45 pm ACOA

**Today's Ministry:** Cursillo

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## Tuesday, February 20

Mark 1:14-28 *And immediately they left their nets and followed him.* (v.18)

Every time I read or hear how the first apostles left their livelihood to follow Jesus, I ponder what it was that motivated the immediacy of those men. One thing that always comes to mind is that there was something so spiritually powerful about Jesus that it touched the depths of their souls.

The first few times I joined a congregation, it was because of something about the faith community I liked and admired. I think that's why many of us join a congregation. In my mid-fifties, I joined a faith community because that congregation made the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit very real to me for the first time. I wanted to be part of a congregation that continually fed my soul with the power and mystery of Christianity. I discovered that many other people were attracted as well.

I often wonder what would happen if every congregation was centered on continuously feeding people's souls with the power and mystery of Christianity.

Genesis 37:12-24; Psalm 45; 1 Corinthians 1:20-31

**Birthdays:** Elli Hernandez

## Tuesday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA

9:30 am Women's Bible Study

12:10 pm Healing Service

**Today's Ministry:** Daughters of the King

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## Wednesday, February 21

1 Corinthians 2:1-13 *Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God.* (v.12a)

The Baptismal Liturgy of the faith community I belong to states the person being baptized is anointed with Holy Oil and "sealed by the Holy Spirit...and marked as Christ's own forever!"

We believe that we have received the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is eternally dwelling within the depths of our souls. We are filled with God the Holy Spirit. What that actually means is that we become incarnated with God, that in every minute of every hour of every day, God the Holy Spirit is active within us, uniting us to God the Father and the Son, Jesus the Christ.

We are empowered and equipped to carry out the ministry of Christ in and for the world. From the day of baptism, we have everything we need to do whatever God calls us to do. Our part is to allow the Holy Spirit to teach us to believe and trust that this is dependable and true!

Genesis 37:25-36; Psalm 119:49-72; Mark 1:29-45

**Anniversaries:** Art & Jacqueline Lorr

**Birthdays:** Dee Dee Nice, Sam Crocker, Ron Chabot

### Wednesday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA

9:30 am School of Prayer

10:00 am Life Group

4:30 pm Mary's Kitchen

6:00 pm Soup Super & Lenten Study

**Today's Ministry:** Eucharistic Visitors

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## Thursday, February 22

Psalms 50 *Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and pay your vows to the Most High.* (v.14)

On a retreat a few years ago, my Trappist spiritual father suggested that I needed to spend more of my prayer time giving thanks to God for everything I was grateful for in my life; including those experiences that, on the face of it, seemed to have been conflicts or problems but ended up being something for which I could give thanks. I decided I should do these thanksgivings when I awoke in the morning, before getting up from bed.

This has been an amazing experience! Prior to undertaking these thanksgivings, my awaking had often been met with things I was worried about, sometimes making me dread the coming day. I now find myself being more positive. I've learned I have much to be thankful about. I'm more grateful in my whole life.

I invite you to try starting the day with thanksgivings. It's a

wonderful enriching, life-giving, peace-creating experience!

Genesis 39:1-23; 1 Corinthians 2:14—3:15; Mark 2:1-12

**Birthdays:** Eddie Beverly

### Thursday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA

7:30 am Men's Bible Study

10:00 am Holy Eucharist Rite II

4:30 pm Life Group, Smith Hall

5:30 pm AA California Group

7:00 pm AI-Anon- Stepping Stones

**Today's Ministry:** Facilities Committee

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## Friday, February 23

1 Corinthians 3:16-23 *Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?* (v.16)

During the middle years of my faith journey, I frequently found myself searching for a sacred place to pray over some matter much on my heart and mind. There were times when I simply couldn't find a place that felt right. After one unsuccessful search, I went back to my hotel. I was reading 1 Corinthians when the words, "You are God's temple" leapt off the page.

Paul had something else in mind when he wrote those words, but sometimes the Holy Spirit uses words in the Bible to teach us important lessons. The Spirit was using those words to remind me that the indwelling Holy Spirit made my soul a sacred place, fitted for prayer in any location, anywhere, at any time, in any situation.

From that day, I stopped searching for a place or building with the right atmosphere to pray. Sometimes, I'm led to a place or building with a prayerful atmosphere which pleases my senses. However, I know that I always have within me a temple of the Holy Spirit, an eternal gift from our loving God!

Genesis 40:1-23; Psalms 40, 54; Mark 2:13-22

**Birthdays:** Spencer Nardone, Nick Nickerson, Mary Maskal

### Friday's Calendar:

7:00 am Hour of Power AA

9:30 am Life Group

10:00 am Grief Support Group

8:00 pm AA Friday Nite Young People

**Today's Ministry:** Finance Committee

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## Saturday, February 24

1 Corinthians 4:1-7 *Think of us in this way, as servants of Christ and stewards of God's mysteries.* (v.1)

I respect and admire clergy. They have made truly helpful and deeply meaningful contributions to my spiritual journey. However, I've known many laypersons who believe clergy are the only stewards of God's mysteries.

Every Christian, laity or clergy, are called to be stewards of God's mysteries. The Church calls clergy to preside over God's mysteries, but all of the members of a congregation are called to teach and explain