

Pastor Bill Mugnolo

St. John/Zion Parish

**March 2018 Article: "Our Most Sacred Meal Together"**

It has been said that "March goes in like a lion and goes out like a lamb." This year, with Maundy Thursday and Good Friday falling on March 29-30, this month will end with the Lamb of God and our commemoration of the events of His suffering, death, and burial. This year, Maundy Thursday Services will be held at Zion while Good Friday will be held at St. John. Both services will be at 7:00pm.

As a central focus of our Maundy Thursday service, we celebrate how on that night before He died He gave to us the sacred meal that is the Lord's Supper. He gave this not only to remember His death, but as a means of grace where He gives to us His true body and blood for the forgiveness of sins. Through this Holy Supper, we also proclaim our unity in Christ as "one body who partakes of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17).

1 Corinthians 10-11 speak of Holy Communion as our most sacred meal together that we would celebrate as a congregation. We are called to come to this meal properly prepared and in full understanding of the seriousness of what we are doing. To come to the Lord's table uninformed as to what we are doing would be like getting a prescription drug from a pharmacist without any label on it telling us how to correctly use it. St. Paul, in these chapters, warns us as to how spiritually dangerous it can be for us to misuse the Lord's Supper.

To worthily partake of our most sacred meal together means that we must be properly informed as to what we are doing. Indeed, we have traditionally required our youth to undergo a long period of instruction before communing while we have been allowing adult visitors to "march up" to the rail with no questions asked. This needs to be corrected and to this end the following Communion Statement will be included in our bulletin for Communion services:

**THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

In Holy Communion, we both participate in the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness of our sins, and in the unity of faith that we believe, teach, and live out here at St. John (1 Corinthians 10:16-17). We invite to commune our baptized and instructed members and those from our sister congregations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. To all others wishing to commune, we require of children under eighteen (and strongly encourage adults) to first be instructed by our pastor on Holy Communion and on the basic teachings of our Church before communing here for the first time. Should you have any questions, please speak to our pastor.

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In a few weeks time, I also will have available a pamphlet on Holy Communion to aid in our preparation for Holy Communion. May the Lord guide us in our most sacred meal together.

Your Brother in Christ,

Pastor Bill