

Enews to the St. Mark's Pews
71st Edition August 6, 2021
St. Mark's Anglican Church est. 1792
Niagara-on-the Lake, ON
Hear the Good News! Hear the Good news!

Sometimes gilded objects are made out of precious materials like silver, but they're usually made of humbler material like wood or bronze. Gilding makes things of pedestrian material look beautiful and dazzling, even if their beauty and lustre is only skin deep.

Many years ago I read a story about a prominent New York socialite. It wasn't a flattering portrait, but it was a deliciously gossipy one. The lady in question was one of the world's great collectors of the decorative arts of eighteenth-century France, an era almost synonymous with gilding. The author's contention was that in order to gain an entrée in High Society, the lady made herself over as a collector and connoisseur of these fine, rare, and splendid objects and that, the more splendid her collection became, the more sophisticated she became. The irony was that though she now lived in ducal style on Fifth Avenue, she had come from a modest, mid-western family. And the article's title? "Gilt Complex."

Of course there are people who truly do seem to be comfortable in their own skins, who go through life seemingly oblivious to what others think, but they are in the minority. Most of us do care about—and actually go to great lengths to perfect—our image, from the style of our clothes to the cut of our hair to the homes we keep. And our pretence is, for the most part, convincing. But there are always times when the mask slips, the façade cracks and our true self is glimpsed—if only for a moment.

Today—August 6—is the feast of the Transfiguration. It commemorates the time when Jesus' true self was revealed, a self even more wonderfully splendid than what was visible to the naked eye.

It's a story about both the glory of authenticity and the truth that the divine image is to be found beneath our carefully polished veneers and behind our painstakingly crafted façades. Perhaps this divine image isn't terribly attractive, especially since it's the image of One who had no form or majesty that we should look at him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him. Yet it's also undeniably compelling—gilded, though it may be, with blood. It's very hard to

resist.

And if it's hard to resist it's because it's truly beautiful—more beautiful than all of the vermeil and ormolu in the world combined—since it reveals the deep truth which tells us that in order to become who we really are, and have secretly always longed to be, we must be willing to walk the path that leads to the place of haunting beauty where we see that behind gore there is glory, where forgiveness transforms sin into salvation, and where the power of guilt complexes is neutralized by the power of love. If we dare to go there, our true selves will be revealed.

So yes, the beauty we meditate on today is a curious beauty—at least, curious by the world's standards. But it's not a beauty which is fragile and brittle and false. It's a beauty which is intense and profound true, as intense and profound and true as the mystery and meaning of death—and life. And infinitely more precious than gold.

Every blessing
Leighton

PARISH UPDATES

Father Leighton will be away August 9 to August 24. Please contact the parish office in case of need or emergency.

Keeping in Touch On-line

*Now that we are back to Church in-person our Sunday morning services are **live streamed** on Facebook and YouTube at 10:30 am. Simply go to St. Mark's Niagara-on-the-Lake Facebook page.*

Please use these URLs to watch:

<https://www.facebook.com/St-Marks-Anglican-Church-Niagara-on-the-Lake-235477056649804/>

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-vVgNf0GbuxrfIjW4sOXzQ>

Our Enews and Order of Service can also be accessed through new website:

Enews: <https://stmarksnotl.org/news/news>.

Order of Service: <https://stmarksnotl.org/worship-ministry/order-of-service-bulletin>

WARDEN'S LETTER

Yes, it is August and we have had our first in-church service last Sunday with 42 very excited folks so thankful to be there. It was so meaningful to be together, sharing the liturgy and music. Are we making progress? We believe we are. Although events and fundraising are still on hold under Diocesan policy, the COVID numbers suggest we might see changes soon. If you have not had your shots, we urge you to do so not only for your own protection but, for others around you. There are new variants here that medical experts state are more contagious than the original COVID 19.

The repairs to the pine floor in the church have been completed and this week we hope the sanding and finishing will be complete. If anyone wants one of the old nails (dating to the 1800s), let the office know. Probably hand forged!

As we plan for the expanded opening of services, we need to update our greeters and counters assignment lists. A note will be sent out to the captains to confirm your wish to continue. If you have not served in either of these roles and would like to help, please let the office know. For at least the next month we will require one additional greeter to assist in the duties.

A gentle reminder to check the expiry dates of your debit/credit cards for your donations!

Please continue to advise the office, the Rector or the Wardens of anyone who should be contacted or needs assistance.

Stay safe - keep well

Called to Life – Compelled to Love

Your Wardens

WORSHIP:

Sunday Prayers with Bishop Susan in the Summer

Start Date: July 4, 2021 - 10:00am

End Date: September 6, 2021

We invite you to join Bishop Susan and people from across the diocese and beyond for a time of worship, prayer, fellowship, and teaching.

Each Sunday during the summer our diocesan service will begin at 10:00am on our [diocesan Facebook page](#) and then will be posted on our [YouTube channel](#). We'll have a number of special guest preachers to open up the Word of God for us.

On the third Sunday of the month the service will include spiritual communion. Spiritual communion will take place on August 22 during the summer months.

READINGS FOR ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

[Sunday, August 8, 2021- Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost -LINK](#)

2 Samuel 18:5-9,15,31-33 David's son, Absalom, has rebelled against his father, forcing the king to seek sanctuary in his lands beyond the Jordan. Now he counter-attacks, with Joab, Abishai and Ittai as his military commanders.

Ephesians 4:25-5:2 The first readers of this passage appear to have been new converts to the faith, people who have been "taught to put away [their] ... former way of life, [their] old selves ... to be renewed ..." We hear what conduct is expected of them.

John 6:35,41-51 Jesus has miraculously fed a large crowd, "about five thousand in all". But they think the nourishment he offers is like manna, which was also "from heaven".