

THE FEAST OF THE CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL

January 25, 2020

*The Lord is Glorious in his Saints!
O Come, Let us Worship!*

4:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer:

✠ Psalm 72 | Amos 5:6-24 | St. John 6:41-end

5:00 p.m. – The Holy Eucharist

Introit Psalm 126:	page 500
The Gloria:	page 86
The Collect:	page 264
The Old Testament Reading:	Jeremiah 1:4-10
Surge Illuminare:	page 28
The Lesson:	page 264
Gradual Psalm 117:	page 482
The Holy Gospel:	page 265
The Creed:	page 71
The Homily	
The Prayers of the People:	L: Lord, in thy mercy; C: Hear our prayer
The Consecration:	page 82
Post Communion Prayer:	page 85

From the Rector _____

If you've ever stood by while someone you love suffered from a terrible illness you may know how much it hurt you; how helpless you felt. And you may recall how you felt when one who has given you so much that you hold precious in life suffers needlessly - from the meanness and cruelty of others. Imagine what it was like for the Christians in Smyrna as they watched their beloved and aged bishop, Polycarp, put to death in public - just because he was a Christian.

As a young man Polycarp was a disciple of the Apostle John. As an old man, he was the bishop of the Church at Smyrna in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). Persecution against the Christians broke out in that area and the crowd began to call for the Christians' leader Polycarp, so the authorities sent out a search party to bring him in. Polycarp was resting upstairs in a country home. The search party came in like a posse, fully armed as if they were arresting a dangerous criminal. Polycarp's friends wanted to sneak him out, but he refused, saying, "God's will be done;" and in one of the most touching instances of Christian grace imaginable, Polycarp welcomed his captors as if they were friends, talked with them and ordered that food and drink be served to them. Then he made one request: one hour to pray before they took him away. The officers overhearing his prayers began to have second thoughts: what were they doing arresting an old man like this?

Despite the cries of the crowd, the Roman authorities saw the senselessness of making this old man a martyr; so, when Polycarp was brought into the arena, the proconsul pleaded with him: "Curse Christ and I will release you." In response Polycarp offered this incredibly faithful response: "Eighty-six years I have served Christ. He had never done me wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who has saved me?" The proconsul reached for another way out: "Then do this, old man. Just swear by the genius of the emperor and that will be sufficient." But even that was too much for Polycarp: "If you imagine for a moment that I would do that, then I think you pretend that you don't know who I am. Hear it plainly. I am a Christian." More entreaties followed but Polycarp stood firm. The proconsul threatened him with the wild beasts. But that did not frighten him: "Bring them forth. I would change my mind if it meant going from the worse to the better, but not to change from the right to the wrong." And with that Polycarp was sent to his death.

The Church remembers St. Polycarp each year on January 26th. We recall his graciousness to his tormentors and his courage and faith. And we pray that when we are called to witness to the trust that we have in Christ in an time when we're not likely to ever face the threats and challenges that Polycarp did, that we may be just as courageous and brave; that others may know that Christ gives us the power to face whatever comes to us.

Parish Notices and Updates

ST. MARY'S WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY is held each *Friday*, at 10:00 a.m. at the Rectory. We're looking at the Gospel according to St. Luke. Everyone is warmly invited to join us; and if your schedule only permits you to attend occasionally, please plan to join us when you can.

PLEASE JOIN US NEXT SUNDAY following the 10:30 a.m. Celebration for our monthly **Shared Meal** as we gather as members of our Parish Family to celebrate our life together in Christ.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH OF ST. MARY, YORK, will be held on *Sunday, February 16th*, at approximately 12:15 p.m., following our weekly Coffee & Conversation. All members of the Parish are encouraged to take part in the meeting as we review our work as a Parish in 2019 and make plans for 2020. *In anticipation of the meeting, we are looking for your assistance in filling leadership roles within the Parish for the coming year.* Please give very prayerful consideration to how God may be calling you to share your gifts and talents; and speak to the Rector if you have any questions.



SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

JANUARY 29: EPIPHANY FERIA

6:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

7:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

JANUARY 30: CHARLES STUART, King & Martyr, 1649

8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

Followed by time for personal prayer in the Church

**FEBRUARY 1: THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE
TEMPLE: CANDLEMAS**

4:30 p.m. – Evening Prayer

5:00 p.m. – Holy Eucharist

**FEBRUARY 2: THE PRESENTATION OF CHRIST IN THE
TEMPLE: CANDLEMAS**

8:30 a.m. – Morning Prayer

9:00 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

9:45 a.m. – Sunday School for All Ages!

10:30 a.m. – Holy Eucharist

Followed by a Shared Meal in the Parish Hall!

The Anglican Church of Canada The Diocese of Fredericton THE PARISH OF ST. MARY, YORK



The problem with the world is that we draw the
circle of our family too small.

Saint Teresa of Calcutta

August 26, 1910 – September 5, 1997

PRIEST AND RECTOR

The Revd. Canon Kevin M. Stockall, B.A. (Hons), M.Div.

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