

On the mind of the Rev. Adrian Dannhauser...

A couple of years ago, I attended a virtual talk by Sister Joan Chittister, a Benedictine nun, theologian and prolific spiritual writer. I've always looked to Sister Joan for wisdom about the inner spiritual life, but this time her theme was more justice oriented. She spoke of her "ministry of irritation" and offered a parable about an oyster to explain.

During the spawning season, when sand invades the oyster, the oyster emits a gel to protect itself from the sand. The more sand that comes in, the more gel is excreted. So at the end of the process, after layer and layer of gel, you have a pearl. Thus the oyster has become more valuable. Chittister likened herself to the sand and the oyster to the Catholic Church, specifically with regard to sexism. Both are improved in the pearl-making process and both become closer to what God intends them to be - "followers of Christ, who listened to women, taught them theology, and raised them from the dead."

Joan Chittister reminds me of the widow who continually appeals to the unjust judge in Luke 18. He finally relents and grants her request for justice against her adversary so he won't be worn out by her persistence. Jesus completes the telling of the parable with these words: "And will not God bring about justice for his chosen ones, who cry out to him day and night?" (Luke 18:7).

This is an auspicious time to celebrate the ministry of irritation. Today is Juneteenth — or June 19th — the day in 1865 when slavery finally fell in Texas as the last state to enforce the Emancipation Proclamation. This is also Pride Month, when we affirm the LGBTQ movement. The fight for equal rights continues for many people, and the ministry of irritation is inherent in it.

Irritation is uncomfortable for the irritating and the irritated alike. I'm sure we've all been on both sides of that equation, whether at the interpersonal or the institutional level. But when irritation is a faithful response to God's call, it gets us all one step closer to liberation and transformation.

Perhaps it's no surprise, then, that Jesus likened the Kingdom of Heaven to a pearl. (Matt. 13:45-46).

Adrian+

READING SCRIPTURE WITH THE CHURCH FATHERS – Wednesday, June 22

7:30 to 9:00 p.m. Join the Rev. Nathaniel Jung-Chul Lee, PhD for the second of four sessions on Christopher Hall's *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers*. Learn how these early Christians – including their world, their perspective, and their interpretation of Scripture – can help us grasp the deep roots of what has grown into the faith we practice today.

Remaining classes will be held on June 22, June 29, and July 6 from 7:30 to 9:00 p.m. on Zoom. All are welcome, even if you haven't read the book. Contact Nate at nlee@churchoftheincarnation.org with any questions.

INSTRUCTED EUCHARIST – Sunday, June 26

11:00 a.m. Members of the Eighth Grade Confirmation Class will lead us in an "Instructed Eucharist," offering short narrations explaining the significance of various parts of the liturgy. This Instructed

Eucharist will help us understand and enter more fully into the celebration central to our Christian worship in the Anglican tradition.

SIGN UP FOR A SUMMER SMALL GROUP

Our summer small group series begins in July and will focus on *Being Disciples* by Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury. In this book, Williams turns his attention to what is required for us to continue following Jesus and growing in faith. In doing so, it asks questions about holiness and the virtues, forgiveness, and how to maintain faith and a spiritual life in the midst of the world we live in today.

Small groups will meet weekly for three consecutive weeks, and there are already three small groups to choose from:

- **Tuesdays**, 7:00-8:00 p.m. on Zoom (begins July 11)
- **Wednesdays**, 4:00-5:00 p.m. on Zoom (begins July 12)
- **Thursdays**, 7:00-8:00 p.m. in the Parish House (begins July 13)

Contact the Rev. Dr. Nate Lee if you would like to participate in one of these lay-led small groups or to suggest another time and day of the week for creating an additional group.

SUMMER HYMNS

Do you have a favorite hymn you would like to sing as part of a Sunday morning service over the summer? Contact our Director of Music, David Ralph, through the church website, churchoftheincarnation.org/contact-us. Hymns should be in the 1982 Hymnal and seasonally appropriate.

WEEKDAY WORSHIP AT INCARNATION

Wednesday Holy Eucharist: Join us each Wednesday at 12:15 p.m. for this Rite I spoken service of Holy Eucharist, which includes a brief homily and organ music.

Thursday Candlelight Communion: Join us each Thursday at 6:15 p.m. for Candlelight Communion, a service of Holy Eucharist that incorporates chant and silence as well as elements of contemporary worship. This service is informal and contemplative, with music led by a Cantor and a brief reflection by one of the clergy. You can also stream this service at youtube.com/churchoftheincarnation.

Daily Office: Services of Morning Prayer, Noonday Prayer and Compline are held via Zoom. To view the weekly schedule, go to churchoftheincarnation.org/worship.

To receive access information for offerings held via Zoom, join our email distribution list by filling out the yellow Connect Card found in your pew or signing up through our website.