

On the mind of Vestry member and chalice bearer Barbara Clark...

Like many people, I have a wall calendar tacked to a bulletin board above my desk. For the past several years, I have had the pleasure of gazing at the New York in Art mini calendars published annually by the Metropolitan Museum, which my mother-in-law gives me faithfully each Christmas. When I turn the page at the beginning of each month, I like to imagine that the images hold some kind of portent for what the next thirty days have in store for me. Will they be extra busy? Chaotic? Will good fortune come my way?

This past June 1, I turned the page and drew a sharp intake of breath. The artwork for that month, *Man and His Monuments* by Carlos Anderson, created circa 1939, seemed to show a likeness of Church of the Incarnation. I mean a remarkable likeness. I didn't want to include an image with this post for fear of running afoul of copyright law, but it can be viewed on the website of the National Gallery of Art. The work is a black-and-white lithograph completed under the auspices of the Federal Art Project, a New Deal program that was part of the Works Progress Administration.

I had to examine the image very closely to determine that it does not, in fact, depict Incarnation. There is a church sitting dead center in the image, with a neo-Gothic spire and windows topped with pointed arches. Like Incarnation, it sits on the corner of a busy city block, flanked by buildings much taller than it is. People and cars fill the sidewalk and street. And the church, as represented by Anderson, is dark. It's the darkest building in the cityscape, sitting like a lump of coal in a sea of white and light gray.

It's easy to figure out what Anderson was suggesting in the image—or at least I think it is: The title gives it away. For him, the church is a monument, like the stark white office building soaring into the sky behind it. The former is a monument to God; the latter is a monument to Mammon. But for Anderson, the two symbolize the same thing—humanity's worship of things of its own creation. I interpret the image as profoundly secular.

But wait: You can't take God out of a picture. You can't take God out of anything. (This reminds me of the time a young man said to me, "I don't want God at my wedding—I don't want God to be anywhere near my wedding." Too bad, dude. God was there anyway.) I could also be wrong about Anderson's secular intention—after all, he created a lithograph of the Church of the Transfiguration (the Little Church Around the Corner) that is positively serene and gentle by comparison, a loving portrait.

Regardless, though, I think the key to *Man and His Monuments* lies in the color contrast. The church is dark, shadowy, mysterious. The office building behind it is bright, showy, aggressive. The church is intricate and detailed; the office building is simple and rectilinear.

The office building seems to say, "Enter on the ground floor if you want enlightenment. Nothing is hidden here. Within these walls you will rise to the top of the material world and rule over everything you survey." The church, on the other hand, seems to say, "Come in if you want to explore the murky corners inside. Enter these doors if you've been acquainted with the night. Enlightenment may or may not be possible."

That's why I walked through the Church of the Incarnation doors nearly thirty years ago.

SUMMER STEWARDSHIP

As of today, **70 households have pledged a total of \$233,138** to this year's stewardship campaign. If you haven't yet made a financial commitment to Incarnation for 2025, please consider pledging to the annual campaign to help us maintain and grow our many ministries.

Pledge cards can be found in your pew and at the stewardship display at the back of the church. You can also pledge online at churchoftheincarnation.org/support-incarnation. Thank you for your generosity.

SHARE YOUR SUMMER POSTCARDS AND PICS

What are you up to this summer? Incarnation invites you to share pictures and postcards from your vacation or other leisure activities. We welcome everything from a trip abroad to a day at the Met or a picnic in Central Park. Postcards can be mailed to the Church of the Incarnation, 209 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10016. Photos can be emailed to Senior Warden Susan Ridgeway at sridgeway718@gmail.com.

Sending photos will be considered 'permission granted' to display them inside and outside the church and in our social media posts. They might even end up being one of the "Pics of the Week" in the Friday e-minder!

UPDATE YOUR PARISHIONER PROFILE

Over the summer we're working to update parishioner profiles in our church database, REALM. Your REALM profile is completely secure, cloud-based, and only accessible by you and church staff. Some basic information that we are collecting includes:

Contact Information	Personal Information
Name Email Phone	Birthdate Gender Ethnicity
Address	Membership Status

Please email Thomas Reefer at treefer@churchoftheincarnation.org with this information to update your profile. You can also update your profile directly by going to acstechnologies.com/realm. Email Thomas if you need to create a REALM account. In addition to the foregoing, you'll have the option to include important life events (baptism, confirmation, wedding), list family members, and let us know your skills and interests. Thanks for helping us stay in touch with you and getting to know you better!

EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY (EFM) INFORMATION SESSIONS

Sunday, August 24, 12:30 to 1:15 p.m.

Sunday School was GREAT! But do you ever feel like something is missing from your understanding of the Bible in adulthood? If so, **EfM may be for you!**

EfM provides an adult perspective on scripture, approaching it as a college-level academic offering. Your experience in reading common weekly assignments is then shared with other participants in the class; this enriches your study of the Bible as it expands a personal experience by linking it to a communal one.



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 healing prayer with holy oil.

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: Morning Prayer is held via Zoom. To view the weekly schedule, please follow the link to churchoftheincarnation.org/worship.

Church of the Incarnation

209 Madison Avenue at Thirty-Fifth Street, New York 10016
(212) 689-6350 • www.churchoftheincarnation.org