

First Sunday after Christmas

Holy Eucharist Service—Year B
December 28, 2014
Services:
8:30 AM Healing Liturgy
10:30 AM Choral Eucharist

St. Augustine of Hippo
A Parish of the Episcopal Diocese of New York



The St. Augustine's eCho

ORDER OF SERVICE	
Processional Hymn	<i>Hymnal 1982 p. 83</i>
THE WORD OF GOD	
Opening Acclamation	BCP p. 355
Gloria in Excelsis	<i>Hymnal 1982 p. S 280</i>
Collect: 1st Sunday after Christmas	BCP p. 213
The Old Testament	Isaiah 61:10-62:3
Psalms 147:13-21	BCP p. 805
The Epistle	Galatians 3:23-25; 4:4-7
Sequence Hymn	<i>LEVAS p. 21</i>
The Gospel	John 1:1-18
Sermon	The Rev. Nathanael Saint-Pierre
The Nicene Creed	BCP p. 358
Prayers of the People:	<i>(Available on screen only.)</i>
Confession of Sin	BCP p. 359
The Peace	BCP p. 360
OFFERTORY	
Choir Anthem	<i>To a Virgin, Meek and Mild</i>
Offertory Hymn	<i>Hymnal 1982 p. 102</i>
The Doxology	
THE HOLY COMMUNION: Eucharistic Prayer A	
The Great Thanksgiving	<i>BCP p. 361</i>
Sanctus	<i>Hymnal 1982 p. S125</i>
Memorial Acclamation	<i>BCP p. 363</i>
The Lord's Prayer	BCP p. 364
The Fraction Anthem	<i>LEVAS p. 268</i>
Agnus Dei	<i>LEVAS p. 270</i>
THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD	
Administration of the Sacrament	
Communion Hymn	<i>LEVAS p. 24</i>
Homeless Soup Kitchen Offering	
Welcome & Announcements	
Post Communion Prayer	BCP p. 365
Recessional Hymn	<i>Hymnal 1982 p. 87</i>
Dismissal	BCP p. 366



Weekly Services
Sunday Services
8:30 AM Said Eucharist
10:30 AM Sung Eucharist

Wednesday December 31st, 2014
No Healing Service

Mission Statement
St. Augustine's Church is a Christ-centered ministry where everyone is invited and welcome. We are a loving Christian body that seeks to enhance spirituality and community. We confirm this by developing ministries that empower the mind, body and soul. We are nurtured through service to others and one another.

The Clergy's Corner

December 28th, 2014

With Every Gift Comes A Set of Responsibilities

The Reverend Nathanael Saint-Pierre



The Rev. Nathanael Saint-Pierre
Priest-In-Charge

Jesus is a gift no different from the gifts described in several stories of the Bible. From the story of the talents the master gave to his servants in Matthew 25: 14-30, to James 1:17 where it is written: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.", we realize that gifts are not given to us to enjoy irresponsibly. The craziness of the secular Christmas may lead us to consider a gift that has only a positive outcome. The reality is that a gift can be a curse for the one who receives it. What kind of gift is Jesus for us? What are the responsibilities we face by receiving Jesus? What should we do with the gift of Jesus?

When my daughter was born on December 25th 1988, I was happy because I saw her as the best gift I had ever received. I was 25 years young and wanted a little toy, a "Mini-Me", a little doll I could play with and never considered the responsibilities I was called to face. A child is a heavy responsibility that sometimes we don't properly evaluate. We look at our babies as extensions of ourselves, creatures of our own doing, or as a gift that will bring us joy and joy only. Some of us are quite surprised when they

start crying, keeping us from sleeping at night. While Natou has brought so many wonderful moments to my life and I am so grateful and thankful to her for that, she is also the gift who deeply changed who I was. Yes, I was born in a homophobic culture and religion where even for a small difference from "the norm", an individual could be stoned because s/he was considered a sinner. While the majority of the leaders of the country, political as well as religious (including me), were corrupt and with no credibility (this has not changed), we wanted to keep the country under high moral values and, in our sick minds, moral values were limited to sexual behaviors and orientation, dress code, brief: every exterior accoutrement (disguise) we could use to demonize someone. **Fanaticism is a blinder that produces intolerance and hatred and prejudice, etc.** When one grows up in a culture like that and has lived under these rules for 30 years, it is unusual to change. "That's the way it is done", "That's the way we are", "Don't try to change it, it is tradition" are sentences I have repeated myself and comfortably. But God did change me. I have learned to successfully accept my beloved daughter for who and what she is and have stood, stand, and will stand by her, until I die, as one of the best gifts God has given me. I will defend her against all attacks from wherever they come. I stand also, from now on, beside all who are stigmatized or ostracized for their race, gender, orientation, or for any other "difference". Growing up in God helped me to understand that this is my responsibility. We don't pick our gifts, the giver somehow thinks that's what we deserve and can handle. My daughter is not just "Mini-Me" a female younger version of myself that I can mold the way I want. She is Natoutchika Nakianoel (*Born on Christmas Day*), just a mere extension of my DNA but a different and unique entity. A separate identity with her own ways, her own life, her own destiny. **She was introduced into my life to teach me new values... not the values I took for granted, not the values I wanted to be immutable.** Jesus is not a gift we wish, a gift we order "sur mesure" (made on size or customized), a gift we should try to or can control:

1. **Jesus is the gift that saves.** Jesus is a spiritual gift similar to the gift Natou is in my material life. He is not a toy to distract and only release stress. Sometimes Jesus can be the cause of our stress. Differently from Natou though, Jesus comes with a user manual: the Bible, but most of us do not take the time to read until we end up with a part in our hands that we don't know where it fits. You opened up your gifts last Thursday, but how many of you have taken the time to read any literature contained in the box? I have to tell you, sometimes they are so ridiculous. I've read one that came with an electric iron I received as a gift: "Do not iron cloth on yourself" or on a medication "Keep out of reach of children. This contains poison and might kill" ... "drink milk if ingested". We have no time to waste reading the user manual of a product made in China and Google translated. You should see some French translated user manual for computer where the driver for a printer or any device become the chauffeur when translated. We tend to try by ourselves to assemble that gift we receive from a well-intentioned friend. If you want to know what kind of gift Jesus is, read the Bible. **Jesus is the gift that saves:** "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God," (*Ephesians 2:8*). "So we have come to know and to believe

(Continued on page 3)

the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him." (1 John 4:16). "Even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you." (John 14:17) and the most descriptive one, when it comes to Jesus, is the well known passage from John 3:16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." Certain people may believe you are lost. Jesus has given his life to save you and me. Certain people may think we do not deserve that gift; God has selected you and me!

2. **We have the responsibility to serve one another.** "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace." (1 Peter 4:10). The Bible also explains what to do with the gifts we have received from God: **they should be multiplied.** "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;" (Romans 12:6). We have not received the same gift. God is not Santa he knows the tool set that will make us better beings. We don't all have the same faith and our prophecy (our proclamation or preaching) cannot be identical. Our results cannot be the same. We will touch some people and will upset others with the same words or the same actions. Let us pray for God to provide tolerance, love, respect and understanding to receive his gifts without preconceived ideas and expectations. Jesus is a gift that can make us stumble both when we preach it and when we receive the preaching. The word of God is not always music to one's ears. We don't serve one another by saying what we believe is good to hear but by saying what God wants us to convey. We have not received a crown in Jesus, **we have received a cross: a call and challenge to maintain a relationship with God but also to acceptance toward each other.** We have received the grace in Jesus Christ and also a call to newness where everything we know may come to pass and all things in him are anew (redeemed, refurbished, rebuilt, reformatted, reconstructed).
3. **Jesus is the gift that takes away the sins of the world.** "And when he returned to Capernaum after some days, it was reported that he was at home. And many were gathered together, so that there was no more room, not even at the door. And he was preaching the word to them. And they came, bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men. And when they could not get near him because of the crowd, they removed the roof above him, and when they had made an opening, they let down the bed on which the paralytic lay. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Son, your sins are forgiven.' " (Mark 2:1-5) One cannot receive the gift of Jesus and not be transformed. There will be transformation in word, thought and deed. By receiving Jesus, we accept to become a gift ourselves and transform lives the way our own is being transformed. Accepting the gift of Jesus is to become self-offering to God in his plan of salvation for the world. No, I am not asking you to let yourself be crucified with a hammer, and 5 nails on a cross, but people will sin against you. **Learn to do with them what the gift of Jesus has done for you.** Free yourself by letting go of their offenses, free them by your forgiveness.

God had a plan in giving me Natou. God HAS a plan in giving Jesus to the world. A plan that to this day is still unfolding. Sometimes I question it, sometimes I try to walk away from it because it goes against what I have been raised to believe. But through it all, I am blessed and have grown up spiritually because God's plan for me AND FOR YOU is that **no gift given to us is to be dismissed or wasted.** God wants us to receive Jesus in the Eucharist today as the gift that saves, the gift that compels us to face our responsibilities and transforms who we were, and the gift that takes away the sins of the world. "And the word became flesh and lived among us..." **Jesus is right here, right now among us as a gift from God to transform us.**

Office Hours

9:00-12:00/1:00-5:00

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The Staff

The Rev. Nathanael Saint-Pierre,

MIS, MCPD, Priest-In-Charge

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Mrs. Carolyn Bensen,

Acting Director of Music

Ms. Sandra Joseph, Bookkeeper

Mr. Roberto Perez, Sexton

Mr. Oland Saltes, Verger

The St. Augustine's Project

Mr. Rodger Taylor, Chair

Ms. Minnie Curry, Vice Chair

St. Augustine's Project

Website: www.staugproject.org

The Vestry

2015

Mr. Nimrod Daley, Warden:

(917) 576-9603

Ms. Irene Alladice

Ms. Barbara H. King (Clerk)

Mr. Oland Saltes

Ms. Phyllis Simmons

2016

Ms. Barbara Allie

Mr. Christopher Morris

Ms. Gwendolyn Pereira

Ms. Bobby Wright

2017

Mr. William Gordon

Ms. Raquel Murray, Treasurer

Ms. Sharifah Seña

Mr. Rodger Taylor

SERMON NOTES:

CHURCH INTERCESSIONS

Shut-Ins/Homebound: Ellen Bradley, Gwendolyn Hanks, Harry Fiyalko, Eleanor Suriel, Lorraine Albritton, Robert/Mittiefrances Combs.

Prayers: Mr. Basile, Bernice Henry, Daly (Maybelle/Sanford), Beverly Rosario, Diane Ellis, Doadie Brown, Dorothy Henderson, Edgar Hopper, Ellen Daley, Frederick/Lorraine Albritton, Jacynth Paterson Orridge, James Robinson-Parran, Joyce Johnson, Juan Cosme, Kenny Johnson, Krauser Family, Luis/Annie Garcia, Marissa Nicolo, Marlene Ward-Torain, Mildred Hancock, Minnie Curry, The Mussenden Family, Nancy Scott, Norberta Miele, Nydia Flores, Ruth Strother, Walford Family, Tyrone Wong, Robert/Vernestine Exum, Zoraida Oliveri.

Armed forces: Brian Robertson, Andrew Davis; Frank, Magezi Johnson, Kevin Rudell, Francis Heard, Bobby Carter, Todd LeGroan.

We remember those who celebrate another anniversary of their birth, especially: December: 1st Kenneth Scott, ShayQuan Spain, James Williams III; 2nd Barbara Allie; 3rd Charlene Cox, Denise Peterson, Margaret Wade, Brianna Hamilton; 4th Edward Lewis, Lynn Collins, Jeremy Gonzalez; 5th Marilyn Singleton, Andrew Warbington, Vanessa Ortiz; Pamela Semper, Alexandra Small; 6th Chante Ferrell, Margaret Jenkins, Juanita Walker; 7th James Campbell, Beverly Graham, 8th Mark Kelly, Michael Steele, Terrance Franks Jr., 10th Ebony Christian, Matthew Green Jr., Marcus Reid, Jennifer Woody, Jessica Woody; 12th Victoria Vessells, Vanessa Vessells, Gabrielle Strother, Jayla Terry; 13th Edna Fenton, Charlene Cox, Sandra Jefferson, Jeffrey McBride; 14th Daniel Padilla, Khaylan Ramsey; 15th Jamal Brock, Tyrah Mulaine; 16th DeShawn Adams, Robert Blackwell, Romare Taylor, Kira Britt; 17th Richard Patterson, Betty Vessells; 18th Xavier McInnis; 19th Vivian Duncan, Justin Pretlow; 21st Verleese Mulraine, Mialonie Martinez; 22nd Warren Bradley, Zendrah Bonnick; 24th William Curry; 25th Doris Daly, Shaun Fortune, Onika Abraham, James Archibald, Noreen Archibald, Ebony Smoot, Damien McMillion, Natoutchika Saint-Pierre; 27th Ruth Fenton, Eugene Simmons; 28th Latoya Singleton, Keiche Winfield Harris, Darrell Samuel, Carlie Vasquez; 29th Aquira Greene; 30th Ellen Allen, Jaclyn Gutierrez; 31st Ashley Hartley, Brandon Samuel.

We pray for those who have died: Etta Jean Winfield, Lionel Davis, Sidney Richards

Justice and Peace in all lands: Especially we pray for: Japan, China, Western India, Darfur, Afghanistan, Haiti, the Holy Land, Lebanon, Iraq, Niger, Sierra Leone; Sudan, all of Africa, this nation and the United Nations. Niger, Sierra Leone; Sudan, all of Africa, this nation and the United Nations.

The St. Augustine's eCho is a newsletter to keep our members and the larger community informed about what is happening at St Augustine's and beyond. We welcome story contributors to submit articles, poetry, advertising, and any information one may want to share. Please submit your contribution by e-mail to info@staugnyc.org no later than on Wednesdays for the Sunday edition.

In an effort to reach a broad audience, St. Augustine's Church occasionally records, through video and photography, its services for publication on the Internet. Your attendance at a service or event constitutes your consent to be included in any filming, photographing, audio recording or broadcast and for any other use in whole or in part, including publicity and promotion.

Announcements Insert

Welcome Visitors: We welcome you this morning. We are happy that you have come to worship with us. If you have no church home, we invite you to unite with us. The process begins with you completing a Parish Census Form that can be found on the table in the church. Give it to an usher and we will be in touch with you very soon. However, if you are just passing through, we are honored by your presence, and we wish you Godspeed as you complete your journey.

Our organist this morning is Ms. Carolyn Bensen, who has graciously extended her service as our Acting Music Director.

Usher's Guild will host Coffee Hour for the month of December.

SCOPE- "Senior Citizen (Church) Outreach Program and Eldership" is seeking for volunteers. Bingo is now the only activity we have for the Senior Citizens. Please contact Mr. Daley or Father Nat for assistance. It would be great to have some help and to develop this ministry to include other health and recreational activities.

Congregation Census Form: Help us update our Records. Have you changed your address, your telephone number, married, divorced or changed your email address? Please update your profile by filling out the Census form available in the back of the Church and return it in the alms basin or give it to the Warden (Mr. Nimrod Daley).

Sunday's collection: December 21st total 4,072.25. Pledges 999.00 Open Plate 49.00; Regular Support 0.00; Special Offerings 301.00; Tenants 0.00; Rentals 1,200.00; Jackie Funds 275.00 Other Sources 1,100.00; Soup Kitchen 50.25; SCOPE/Bingo 98.00 compared to: **December 14th total 4,783.00** Pledges 2,084.00 Open Plate 26.00; Regular Support 0.00; Special Offerings 82.00; Tenants 1,500.00; Rentals 900.00; Jackie Funds 130.00 Other Sources 61.00;

Please be aware that pledge envelopes will be delayed and that your pledge envelope number may change.

Our website is being revamped and you are invited to provide feedback. Now available for download online Bulletins and Order of Service.

ECW and Men's Guild, the next meeting will be held on January 18th 2015 at 1PM (*After Sunday service*).

The Vestry, Next meeting will be at 9:30AM on January 10th 2015.

Confirmation classes will resume on January 7th at 7PM, in the conference room. Please use Madison Street. entrance.

Next Baptism is set for **Sunday, January 4, 2015.** Applications for baptism can be found on the table in the back of the Church. Instruction for baptism will be Saturday, January 3, 2015 at 12:00 noon.

Join Us for Healing Service on Wednesdays at 12:00 noon.

Need Prayer? Call church office and request your name be added to the prayer list. Let us know when you are available so we can pray with you.

Moving forward, let us get together as a team, and put our time, talents and treasure to the service of our church.

The Parish Hall and common room are available for conferences and for recreational group use. These spaces have capability for projection use and Internet access.

Electronic Waste Reuse Program Manager/Technician Position Available, send a cover letter and resume to info@lesecologycenter.org. Visit lesecologycenter.org for details.

Registration Deadline has passed:

Congregational teams may be made up of clergy and/or lay leaders. As with the first Indaba, we hope that the Rector or Priest-in-charge will participate where possible, and that the team will reflect the diversity of the congregation. We encourage the participation of a young adult where possible. The three 2015 weekends will be January 24-25, May 2-3, and September 26-27. If interested, contact us within office hours 212-673-5300 or 917-232-9583.

Jackie Bradley's Funds: Please contribute to Jackie's formation. Envelopes are available on the table in the back of our church.

We are accepting Articles and Advertisements to publish in the St Augustine's eCho.

Change in administration, Volunteers are welcome to help with the phone lines.

Worship Services:

New Year's Eve

Wednesday, December 31

No Noon Healing Service

11:00 PM Holy Eucharist

Second Sunday after Christmas

The Epiphany

Sunday, January 4

8:30 AM Said Eucharist

10:30 AM Sung Eucharist