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THE PARISH REGISTER

St. Andrew's Church

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Custom

In the Gospel according to St. Luke we have the story of Mary and Joseph taking the twelve year old Jesus to Jerusalem. The account begins, "Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the Feast of the Passover. And when He was twelve years old, they went up according to custom...." (St. Luke 2:41,42)

The part of the story that catches my attention is the phrase "according to custom." The Greek word translated custom is ethos. The literal meaning of the Greek word ethos is habit. In English the word ethos refers to character, guiding beliefs and the ideals and values that characterize a group. Ethos or habit easily moves toward the idea of personal character.

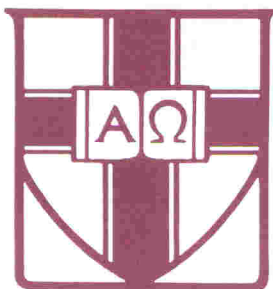
The Greek philosopher Aristotle drew that connection. He maintained that character is something we create by a process of imitation, coupled with practice, which forms habits (ethos) creating character. Character consists of what we habitually do and are.

Custom, habit or what we call tradition sets patterns that help shape our character and keep us in a stable condition. Without custom we become erratic and unstable. In such a state spiritual growth becomes stunted or non-existent. This not only negatively impacts the individual, but the group as well.

To develop good habits or ethos leading to good character we must practice the right behavior. There is an old saying that runs, "Practice makes perfect." I had a speech professor in college who often said, "Practice does not make perfect, it makes permanent." We need to be sure that we practice following the example of worthy people. Habit (ethos) does lead to character and as Christians we seek to develop Christlike character. One way to help us in our imitation of Christ is to study His habits or customs. There are three times in the Gospel of St. Luke when the word custom (ethos) is used.

The first time the word custom appears is in the story about Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to Jerusalem for Passover. It was a law in Judaism that every adult male who lived within twenty miles of Jerusalem must attend the Passover

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celebration in Jerusalem. Nazareth is sixty-five miles from Jerusalem. Yet we are told that Mary and Joseph were in the habit of attending the celebration in Jerusalem every year.

Passover was a remembrance of Israel's deliverance from Egypt. On Passover a lamb was sacrificed and eaten along with unleavened bread. At His last meal with the disciples Christ transformed the Passover meal into the Holy Communion. In so doing Christ became the sacrificial Lamb by whose broken body and shed blood we are saved.

The celebration of the sacrifice of Christ should be a habitual part of our lives as Christians. If it is it will help shape our character, our ethos. So as believers we should come together regularly and often for the celebration of the Holy Communion.

The second time the word custom appears is in St. Luke 4:16. There we read, "And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and He went to the synagogue, as His custom was, on the Sabbath day." The word synagogue means a place of assembly. In the weekly service the faithful gathered to pray and to hear the Scriptures read and expounded.

Our liturgies of Morning and Evening Prayer are actually patterned after the synagogue service. There is great value in common or corporate prayer. The habitual practice of participation in public worship shapes and develops our character. As the book of Hebrews advises us, "...not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another. And all the more as you see the Day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:25)

The word custom (ethos, habit) is found a third time in St. Luke 22:39. There we are told, "And He came out, and went, as was His custom, to the Mount of Olives; and the disciples followed Him." Why did Jesus go to the Mount of Olives? He went there for private prayer, which He did habitually. Even though Jesus was the Son of God, He felt it necessary to be alone with the Father in prayer. More accurately, it was because He was the Son of God that He felt this need. If we truly love someone we want to spend time with them.

Attending church services even on a regular basis is not enough for us to grow spiritually. We need to

practice personal daily prayer. It should not be a chore, but a desire of our hearts to talk to our Lord. However, even if it seems like a chore do it anyway. For in time it will become part of your character.

Whatever we imitate and practice will in time become habitual and form our character. As believers our goal is to have a Christlike character. The first step to that character is to follow the customs we see in the life of Christ.

by Rev. F. M. Levi

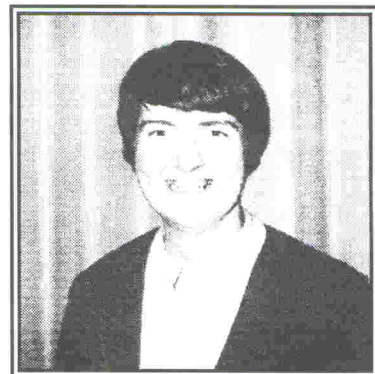
Mother/Daughter Salad Supper

A number of mothers & daughters attended the Salad Supper at St. Andrew's on Saturday, April 30, 2005. Mrs. Susan Davinger, President of PASS Pregnancy Care Centers, was the guest speaker. All of the mothers and daughters had a very enjoyable time.

51st General Council

The 51st General Council of the Reformed Episcopal Church will be held June 22, 23, 24, 2005 at St. Alban's Cathedral in Oviedo, Florida. Our General Council will be held in conjunction with the General Council of the Anglican Province of America (APA). The actual business sessions of the REC and the APA will be conducted separately. Do be in prayer for this very important council.

Missionary of The Month



Judy King, Bible Translation/Discipling.
Sumner Institute of Linguistics. Amazonas, Brazil.

Happy Birthday!

June 3 - Madeline Levi
 June 7 - Grant Chessman
 June 8 - Mildred Buescher
 June 8 - Melissa Drobnak
 June 9 - Patty Levi
 June 14 - Carl Spencer
 June 16 - River Christenson
 June 17 - Dave Sellers
 June 18 - Jacqueline Robertson
 June 18 - Paul Sellers
 June 21 - Anita Rago
 June 23 - Brian Stultz
 June 30 - Frank Levi, Jr.



Flag Day

June 14, 2005

I Am Old Glory

I am Old Glory: For more than nine score years I have been the banner of hope and freedom for generation after generation of Americans. Born amid the first flames of America's fight for freedom, I am a symbol of a country that has grown from a little group of thirteen colonies to a united nation of fifty sovereign states. Planted firmly on the high pinnacle of American Faith my gently fluttering folds have proved and inspiration to untold millions. Men have followed me into battle with unwavering courage. They have looked upon me as a symbol of national unity. They have prayed that they and their fellow citizens might continue to enjoy the life, liberty and pursuit of happiness, which have been granted to every American as the heritage of free men. So long as men love liberty more than life itself; so long as they treasure the priceless privileges bought with the blood of our forefathers; so long as the principles of truth, justice and charity for all remain deeply rooted in human hearts, I shall continue to be the enduring banner of the United States of America.

Written by Marine Master Sergeant
 Percy Webb (1879-1945)

Shield of Faith

Every Thursday at 9:00 a.m., on WJYS Channel 62.
 Do pray that this ministry will bear fruit for Christ's Kingdom.

VBS

Vacation Bible School will be from June 27 to July 1, 2005.

Rummage Sale

Date: June 4, 2005
 Place: St. Andrew's Church
 Time: 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p. m.

Father's Day Special

June 19, 2005
 by Ruth Lommatzsch

Now and then it's time to say
 Something in a special way,
 And so to father's everywhere,
 May God grant you His special care.

Give you health and happiness
 And all your families richly bless,
 Not just while Father's Day is here,
 But on each day of every year!



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JUNE 2005 CHURCH CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2 Shield of Faith 9:00 am Bible Study 7:30 pm	3	4 Rummage Sale 9:00 am - 1:00 pm
5 2nd Sunday After Trinity MP - 9:30 am HC - 10:30 am	6	7	8 Vestry Meeting 7:30 pm	9 Shield of Faith 9:00 am Bible Study 7:30 pm	10	11 <i>St. Barnabas</i>
12 3rd Sunday After Trinity MP - 9:30 am HC - 10:30 am <i>Coffee Hour.</i>	13	14 <i>Flag Day</i>	15	16 Shield of Faith 9:00 am Bible Study 7:30 pm	17	18
19 4th Sunday After Trinity MP - 9:30 am HC - 10:30 am <i>Father's Day</i>	20	21 Summer Begins	22	23 Shield of Faith 9:00 am Bible Study 7:30 pm	24 <i>Nativity of St. John Baptist</i>	25
26 5th Sunday After Trinity MP - 9:30 am HC - 10:30 am	27	28	29 <i>St. Peter</i>	30 Shield of Faith 9:00 am Bible Study 7:30 pm		