

# THE MAGDALENE

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## From the Desk of Fr. Neil...

### RISEN & THE YOUNG MESSIAH

There are two movies out in theatres right now, competing for your hard earned money. Risen and more recently, The Young Messiah. Risen is based on history with fictional characters and storylines weaved throughout. It is a story of a Roman Tribune sent to seal, and set guards at the tomb of Jesus and later, after the resurrection to find the missing body of Jesus. The Young Messiah is a story about Jesus and some of the things – that we have no credible evidence of Him doing – at the age of about seven.

Risen is well made, very true to the Biblical story and narrative and the fictional characters are believable. The character, Clavius, played by Joseph Fiennes, is not a Biblical character - and as far as we know not a real person at all. He wrestles with the fact that he saw Jesus dead on the cross one day and a few days later he finds Jesus sitting amongst His Disciples, alive. The

Clavius character is very plausible.

What precisely went on in detail at the time of Jesus' resurrection, we only have the Bible to tell us. Even though Risen weaves fiction with fact, the fact side is done with great accuracy and reverence to the Biblical Story and the fiction side is done with taste, plausibility and does not mislead the viewer.

The Young Messiah is a story about Jesus as a 7 year old. This movie also weaves fiction with fact, however the fact side is overwhelmingly lacking. The Young Messiah is a hypothetical story about Jesus and His quest to "find Himself". IMDB.com says of the movie: Told from his childhood perspective, it follows young Jesus as he grows into his religious identity." Grows into His religious identity? What does that mean? Where does this idea come from? The Bible certainly does not teach this. It is a common refrain by some in our modern culture that at some point in their lives, they have to "find themselves." I'm not sure what this means, but this is a buzz-word in our modern culture, so it is understandable that a movie that portrays Jesus as searching for Himself resonates with some. We just have no evidence that this is true about Him. In fact the evidence points to the opposite.

The story opens as Mary and Joseph and other family and friends embark on their journey back to Bethlehem and eventually Nazareth. What stands out the most about this film is that fact that so much of it is guesswork. We do not know what transpired during the Holy Family's time in Egypt or their return. In its attempt to "fill in the blanks" we get a story that we have no way of verifying. Moreover the biggest flaw

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8am Mass  
10am Choral Mass &  
Children's Sunday School*

*Wednesday Service: 9am*

in the movie is the portrayal of Jesus as having no clue who He is. As the movie progresses, He does gain knowledge about His identity. Eventually Mary His mother has the talk with Him on a picnic blanket under a tree and there she tells Him His birth story, revealing to Him that He is God's Son. He replies rightly that we are all God's children. Mary says, paraphrasing, "Yes, but you are God's Son in a special way."

Jesus, in a flashback scene finds a dead bird on the seashore. He holds it in his hands, it comes to life and then He releases it. Through the memory of that event and with the encouragement of His female companion He uses that same power to bring a local bully kid back to life!

The Bible tells us in John chapter 2 that when Jesus turned the water into wine (as an adult, by the way) at the Wedding at Cana, that "This is the first of His signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested His glory. And His Disciples believed in Him. In other words, Jesus did no miracles until Cana. His miracle working in The Young Messiah is done out of compassion, which is Biblical but He does not know why He has the power. We are also told in the Bible from many passages that Jesus' miracles were done exactly to demonstrate who He was!

Admittedly we do not know how Jesus, being fully God and fully man could grow through childhood and act and play like a child and get sick and even later die. We just know that He did. In the movie, everyone, Mary, Joseph, James his cousin, Cleopas and others all seem to know who He is but they are keeping it a secret because they thought He was too young to fully understand who He was. This too is speculative. The Bible tells us that Jesus "increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man." (Luke 2) This does not say that Jesus at any time was unaware of who He was or what He came for. He certainly knew what He was here for at age 12. Read all of Luke 2. There Jesus says to Mary and Joseph: "Why were you

looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?"

The Bible is our final authority on many things, including and most importantly, Jesus! What God has revealed to us is sufficient. All Scripture is breathed out by God and is profitable so that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. Anything outside of the Bible must be checked by the Bible. If the Bible is silent, then we must conclude that God does not desire that we know. It is human nature to want to know. I'd like to know. But, we are only told about Jesus at His birth, and then about one event at age 12. After that the Bible is silent about Him until He is about 30 years of age and beginning, officially, His ministry and mission.

Speculating on Jesus when the Bible is silent will only leave us wanting. We don't know if our speculations are true or not, so where is the pleasure in speculating? We might be wrong. And even if we are right, how will we know? The movie was good (a bit slow) but there was always in the back of my mind, the struggle of knowing this was all speculation.

I'm not surprised that the secular culture is applauding The Young Messiah. It is in many ways a false portrayal of Jesus. What is surprising is lots of Christians are praising it as well! So, some of you might be saying, "So what?" "What's the big deal?" "What is it hurting to speculate on the early life of Jesus?" It is a big deal, because it portrays Jesus in an unbiblical fashion. It puts into our minds ideas that cannot be verified, which can lead to dangerous beliefs about Jesus. Many Christians already lack a proper knowledge of Jesus. We don't need false impressions and incorrect ideas, no matter how well intentioned to confuse us even more.

Go and see Risen. It's much more accurate. If you see The Young Messiah keep in mind, though it is a heartwarming and touching story, it is in many places guesswork and in others, outright incorrect.

## REDISCOVERING THE DAILY OFFICE

### PART3

In these brief meditations the last two months we have considered how saying Morning and Evening Prayer is both historically catholic and theologically sound. The Daily Office provides us with an objective offering to God and gives us a common rule of life that benefits us spiritually in its regular practice.

Those who are new to the Daily Office might find it overwhelming. Each office contains a prayer of confession, the Lord's Prayer, a psalm or two, an Old and New Testament reading, two or three canticles, the Apostle's Creed, and several collects. There is a daily lectionary you have to reference and instructions, called **rubrics**, which you have to follow. You might be left thinking, "We have to do this *twice* a day!" Perhaps you have been left to wonder how you could ever fit the Daily Office into your busy daily routine.

At first prayer in this way might not seem practical for the hectic, multitasking modern lives we lead today. It is already a struggle to balance our work life with our family and spiritual lives. Those with unused gym memberships know well how much willpower it takes to take on healthy habits. However, I would encourage you first to reconsider what it means to live a life of prayer.

Last month I had the pleasure to once again go on a Lenten retreat at a Benedictine abbey where for a brief time I could join in living the Rule of St. Benedict, the spiritual tradition we have inherited in the West. At the abbey monks come together several times for prayer: 5AM (Vigils), 7AM (Lauds), 11AM (Eucharist), 5PM (Vespers), and 8PM (Compline). Between these times of prayer, each monk has responsibilities: working in the kitchen, landscaping the abbey grounds, or maintaining the retreat center for visitors. All of these tasks are done in the spirit

of hospitality and following the creed that *laborare est orare, to work is to pray.*

Both St. Benedict and St. Paul taught us that everything we do should be done as an offering unto God (Col 3:23). Before we set aside 20-30 minutes of our busy day for prayer, we have to remember that *everything* we undertake is an expression of prayer and is dedicated to the glory of God in thankful recognition of His blessings to His people. We should meditate on the words of Micah 6:8, and reflect on how we can be mindful of God's presence in whatever it is we are doing throughout the day.

As you begin to pray the Office on a daily basis, you should keep it simple. Don't combine it with your personal devotion time. Morning Prayer should be said before you begin your daily tasks or chores, but Evening Prayer can be said any time after 3PM before you start your evening routine. I say Evening Prayer in my office before going home where rowdy kids would make it impossible. You might also take advantage of the many online resources that exist. I especially recommend **CommonPrayer.org** and **CradleOfPrayer.org**. And of course, Fr. Neil and other clergy are always there to help us deepen our life of prayer.

**Sean Cochran, Postulant**

The Commission on Ministry has moved Sean from Aspirant to Postulant. He is now in the process of doing his canonical exams. Please pray for him.

#### THE SACRISTY (SACER, LATIN FOR SACRED)

Please help keep the sacristy a sacred place.  
Please keep conversation to a minimum.  
Please keep voices low at all times.  
Please no unauthorized entry by non-clergy or non-altar guild members.  
10-15 minutes before a service, please leave ministers to prepare for worship.

# ORDO CALENDAR ACTIVITIES

## April 25<sup>th</sup> St. Mark, Evangelist

St. Mark, author of the Book of Mark is an interesting Biblical figure. There is both strong Biblical evidence as well as Church tradition regarding Mark. Mark is almost universally thought to be John Mark (Acts 12:12). Mark is thought to have written his Gospel account based on the testimony of St. Peter. We have a glimpse of Mark in his own Gospel when he writes about the arrest of Jesus in the Garden and, "And a young man followed him, with nothing but a linen cloth about his body. And they seized him, but he left the linen cloth and ran away naked." The Church has long held that this is the same Mark.

Traditions vary because of so many Marks in early Church history. Some say he was the cousin of Barnabas, a companion of St. Paul. Some say he was one of the Seventy Two Disciples Jesus sent in pairs to preach the Gospel (Luke 10). Some say Mark was one of the servants who poured wine at the Wedding at Cana where Jesus turned water to wine.

Mark is said to have founded the Church of Alexandria. His feast day is celebrated on April 25<sup>th</sup>, and his symbol is the Winged Lion.

Read Mark 14:13, 51-52 and Acts 12:12

## GUILDS, GROUPS & EVENTS

### **NEW ARE SELLING JEANS FOR A BUCK!**

Our first New2You sale of the year is scheduled for **Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> from 8am to 2pm.**

The BIG news is that we will be highlighting women's and girl's denim jeans for **ONLY \$1** each! What a fantastic deal! Most items run from \$1 to \$3.

Of course there will be lots of clothes for everyone in the family, and yes tables with fun jewelry, beautiful potted gardens, and lovely new crafted items from our very own craft guild.

Please consider coming out and supporting all the women who work so hard to make these sales possible. Bring a friend, shop a little then have lunch at one of Old Town's delicious cafes.

Volunteers are needed for set-up on **Thursday, April 14<sup>th</sup> and Friday, April 15<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 6:30pm.** **We will also need help for clean up after the sale on Saturday.** For more information or to volunteer, contact Elizabeth Sneddon.

**All money received is sent directly to our Outreach Missions. None is used to finance the daily operations of the church.**

## **GOD TELLS US PERSISTENCE WORKS**

Sean Cochran will be leading the Men's Group for April in studying the Parables: The Friend at Midnight and the Unjust Judge.

We look forward to seeing you on the **first Sunday of each month, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 9:00am to 9:30am** in the Church followed by Morning Prayer.

## **DEVOTE TIME FOR STUDY**

Join the women on the first Sunday of the month, **April 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 9:15 to 9:45am** as they discuss: Who Raised Jesus From The Dead And What Does That Mean



In Our Daily Lives? If you have any questions about this devotional time, please contact Karen Carlson.

# THE NEWS REPORT.....

## LISA'S BABY LUNCHEON

The women are getting together to have lunch with Lisa Cochran in celebration of the birth of her new son on May 7<sup>th</sup> from 11:30am – 1:30pm at the Katella Grill, 1325 W. Katella, Orange. If you plan on attending, please sign up in the Narthex.

## SPRUCE UP YOUR PATIO

Join us in the Parish Hall on **April 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am** to see Denise Abbott demonstrate how to make a potted Cactus garden. If you would like to try your hand at this, just bring a small pot, some potting soil, some colorful rocks or shells and a shovel. Guys this is a perfect demonstration to attend to learn how to get your patio looking spruced up for the spring.

## BIBLE STUDY WEDNESDAYS

Back by popular demand, Bible Study Wednesday will begin again on April 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:30pm on the Gospel of John. Please bring your bible or one can be provided for you. Anyone, whether novice or expert will enjoy Fr. Neil's teaching style.

This free event is open to the public.

## CALLING ALL SMM MEN

It's time to start looking for that perfect recipe! The Men's Chili Cook-Off is just around the corner.

Any questions, contact Lou Carlson.

## TONS OF EGGS

Easter Services were again the best ever. The choir out did themselves with beautiful music, Fr. Neil's sermon was moving, and the Easter egg hunt was lots of fun, with lots of children and a ton of eggs hunted. We are so fortunate to have such a great bunch of fun loving and caring members. Absolutely everyone enjoyed the delicious treats and wonderful fellowship.

## FABULOUS RECITAL

Tarina Lee from Chapman University gave a lovely recital filled with romantic and emotional songs performed in Italian and English. She was fantastic. We are fortunate to have her supporting our choir.

## MORE THAN \$800 RAISED FOR THE LIVING WELL



The Women's Guild came together for lots of fellowship and tea in mid March to help raise funds for our local Christian based Pregnancy Center. Violet, Mary Jo and Sharon hosted tables and 24 women gathered around to eat lots of scones with lemon curd and homemade marmalade, cupcakes, tea sandwiches, and all kinds of goodies.

With over 200 people in the room, silence fell as Director, Dr. Geeta Swamidass spoke on the current state of affairs. He brought up a couple of her past clients. These women bravely told their stories of how Living Well helped them through desperation and despair.

Dr. Geeta thanked everyone who attended and spoke about her Christ centered programs as the answer for all women in need. She also asked for prayers for her ability to continue in this ministry.

Everyone left with a grateful feeling for the lives with which we have been blessed.

**MARY’S KITCHEN**

The peanut butter, jelly and vienna sausage collections are going well. With two weeks left to go, we should reach our collection goal. Thank you for your support and keep it coming.

Watch for announcements on when we will be preparing these sack lunches.

**CHANCE THEATER**

Almost 30 church members and their friends came to hear Lisa Zaradich and Mike Levan perform show tunes and original jazz compositions. It was a great performance and well worth the price of the ticket. Thank you to everyone who came to support our terrific choir members. Attending their musical events is a wonderful way to say thank you for your dedication to the church.

If you want to hear Mike LeVan’s “Blue Nocturne” again, go to [www.MikeLevan.com](http://www.MikeLevan.com)

**CALLING FR. NEIL**

St. Mary Magdalene Church is a conservative, traditional Anglican church. We report only to Archbishop Mark Haverland, head of the Anglican Catholic Communion. If you want to call and talk, please leave a message with a name and phone number. All calls are welcome.

**CALENDAR AT A GLANCE**

<b>APRIL</b>		
Men’s Fellowship	4/3	9:00am – 9:30am
Women’s Devotional	4/3	9:15am - 9:50am
Bible Study Wednesday	4/6	6:30pm start Gospel of John.
Men’s Group	4/10	11:30am
Women’s Guild	4/10	11:30am
Vestry	4/13	7:15pm
New2You Sale	4/16	8:00am – 2:00pm
Craft Guild-Knitting	4/17	11:30am
Bible Study Wednesday	4/20	6:30pm NT Book
Sunday Brunch	4/24	Noon, Katella Grill
Bible Study Wednesday	4/27	6:30pm NT Book
<b>MAY</b>		
Men’s Fellowship	5/1	9:00am - 9:30am
Women’s Devotional	5/1	9:15am – 9:50am
Bible Study Wednesday	5/4	6:30pm NT Book
Ascension Day Mass	5/8	8:00am& 10:00am
Men’s Group	5/8	11:30am
Women’s Guild	5/8	11:30am
Vestry Meeting	5/11	7:15pm
Craft Guild- Demo	5/15	11:30am
Bible Study Wednesday	5/18	6:30pm NT Book
Chili Cook-Off	5/22	11:30am
Bible Study Wednesdays	5/25	6:30pm NT Book

\*\* The Women’s Conference where guest speaker Nancy Guthrie will be attending is now \$75 per person. The Guild will not be attending as a church event. It was decided that this money could be used more appropriately for our Outreach missions.