

# “Exploring Sacred Space”

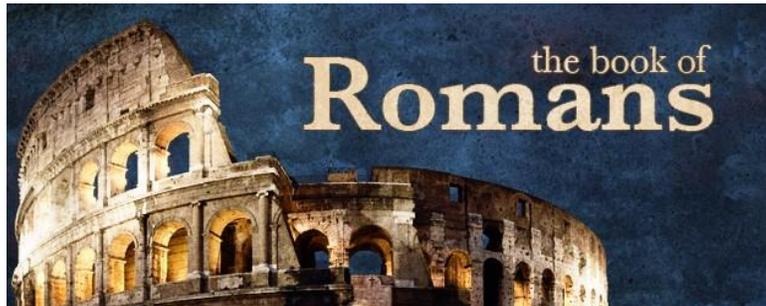
## St. Michael’s Yearly Theme 2018 ~ 2019

### Advent and Christmas ~ Home

*Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. (Deuteronomy 6: 4-9)*

We will explore the biblical and contemporary concepts of home.

- How do we make our homes “Sacred Spaces”?
- How do we “Come Home Again” when we have wandered off?
- How can we find “home” with God?



### Epiphany ~ Rome

*That night the Lord stood near Paul and said, "Keep up your courage! For just as you have testified for me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome." (Acts 23:11)*

We join the Episcopal Church’s “Good Book Club” to read Paul’s Letter to the Romans during Epiphany. This book of the Bible contains some of the fullest theology written by Paul. We will also explore some of Rome’s rich history as the seat of Western Christianity. Rome can conversely be understood as the place of Dominant Culture, often opposing Christian Values. This has been an issue for modern and ancient Christians.

- What joys and struggles of the young Church in Rome do we share today?
- How do we live as citizens of “Rome” and of “The Kingdom of God?”
- What historical role does Rome have in the Christian Faith?

### Lent ~ Wilderness

*“And the Spirit immediately drove Jesus out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan; and he was with the wild beasts; and the angels waited on him.” (Mark 1:12-13)*

God often speaks to us in the literal and figurative desert places in our lives. We sometimes wander in the wilderness before finding the right path. Other times, we need to seek a quiet place apart to find the sacred. We will seek the Sacred Space of the Wilderness through Labyrinth walks, quiet days, and other opportunities.



- What “drives you into the wilderness?”
- What hardships and temptations do we face in the desert?
- How might some intentional “Desert Time” allow you to seek God?

## Easter ~ Sanctuary & Temple



*“You shall keep my sabbaths and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.” (Leviticus 19:30)*

*“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers... Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, and day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.” (Acts 2:42,46a, 47b)*



Our places of worship are Sacred Spaces. We will explore Jewish and Christian imagery, symbols, aesthetic and architecture, as we discover how God speaks to us in and through these holy places.

We will culminate the Easter Season with a one-day pilgrimage to The Washington National Cathedral, The Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land and The Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

- **What about St. Michael's worship space draws you close to God?**
- **How can we enhance the Sacred in our own space, both in the nave and on the grounds?**
- **How does visiting other Sacred Spaces inform your spiritual life?**



## Early Pentecost (Summer) ~ Creation

*“The heavens are telling the glory of God; and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.” (Psalm 19:1)*

As summer begins and the pace slows, we take time to work in the parish Community Garden, and look forward to our Shrine Mont Retreat. We pay attention to the Sacred Space of Creation – how we enjoy it and how we care for it.

- **Where in Nature do you find Sacred Space?**
- **What “re-creation” might help you engage the Sacred?**

## Late Pentecost (Fall) ~ The Holy Land

*“Thus says the LORD: I will return to Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem; Jerusalem shall be called the faithful city, and the mountain of the LORD of hosts shall be called the holy mountain.” (Zechariah 8:3)*

While twenty-four folk from St. Michael's prepare to go on pilgrimage to the Holy Land October 14-28, 2019, all of us will learn about the history and importance of sacred sites in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Galilee, Nazareth and other areas. Guest scholars will support our learning, and bible studies will explore Old and New Testament texts of place. All of us can explore how the Holy Geography of the bible maps to our own spiritual lives.



- **How might Israel's engagement with the Land inform our sense of Holy Place and Sacred Space?**
- **What places in the bible seem most like place you know today?**
- **What counts as “Holy Land” for you? Is it a physical place, or a spiritual state?**