

### Collect of the Day

O God, from whom all good proceeds: Grant that by your inspiration we may think those things that are right, and by your merciful guiding may do them; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.



## St. Matthew's Cathedral eNews

Christ + Compassion + Community

### *From the Dean*

## The Blame Game

*The man said, "The woman you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate. . .  
The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate." Genesis 3:12, 13*

**There you have it: from the beginning of creation**, the Blame Game. None of us likes to be found wanting. So, we blame someone else. Here we have Adam blaming Eve and Eve blaming the serpent. Readers of Dr. Faustus will recall the bargain that Faustus made with Mephistopheles as an emissary of Lucifer in which Faustus achieves success in exchange for his giving his soul to Lucifer upon his death. Baby Boomers will remember Flip Wilson of "Laugh In" asserting, "The Devil Made me Do It!"

Why do we play the blame game? Because, deep down inside, we know we are often at fault. We—I—want others to think well of us—me.

This is a need we have as old as creation: what do we do about sin? We are all infected with it, and all the explaining away, or the blaming away, will not help us to feel better about ourselves. The only lasting solution is the unconditional love of God through the gift of Jesus Christ.

In *The Voyage of the Dawn Treader* by C.S. Lewis, there is a character named Eustace Scrubb (whom Lewis writes, "almost deserved it"). Eustace is on an island in the world of Narnia with his cousins when he sneaks off from the group and encounters a dying dragon. In the story, Eustace **discovers the dragon's horde and falls asleep with greedy thoughts. In the morning, he has turned into the dragon.**

**Eustace—the dragon—needs to shed his skin and turn back into Eustace but can't do it on his own. Here is Lewis's description:**

"Then the lion said — but I don't know if it spoke — "You will have to let me undress you." I was afraid of his claws, but I can tell you, I was pretty nearly desperate now. So I just lay flat down on my back to let him do it.... That very first tear he made was so deep that I thought it had gone right into my heart. And when he began pulling the skin off, it hurt worse than anything I'd ever felt. The only thing that made me able to bear it was just the pleasure of feeling the stuff peel off."

C.S. Lewis is telling us that just as Eustace did, we all need to be converted. True conversion begins only when I realize that I cannot change my skin on my own. My condition is not someone else's fault. It is mine. Only if and when I surrender to the One who only can remove my dragon skin can I become the person that God intended to be.

No more Blame Game. Only gratitude. Only then can we say and mean, "It's all good."