

Liturgy We Live *by Dr. Gil Haas*

Our BCP identifies the Rogation Days (from Latin rogatio - “asking”) as the three days before next Thursday’s Ascension Day celebration. In the fifth century, fasting and prayer for three days prior to Ascension Day by the city of Vienne, France, prevented a disaster which threatened it. A commemoration of this Pre-Ascension Day event spread, but it was not immediately adopted by the church since it was thought that fasting was inappropriate during the Easter season. For this reason, when rogation days were added to the church’s calendar, fasting was omitted. In England, the days became associated with a blessing of the fields in hopes of a bountiful harvest. On this day, the vicar “beat the bounds” of the parish with willow rods, processing around the fields reciting psalms and the litany. . Although this custom dates back to the 9th century, it was abolished by Elizabeth I. However, in recent times the practice has been revived. The BCP (pp. 208-9), lists three propers for Rogation Days entitled “fruitful seasons”, “commerce and industry”, and “stewardship of creation”. Lectionaries for these propers are listed on page 930. Our Book of Occasional Services contains material for a Rogation procession.

If you have a liturgical question or an inquiry about anything that transpires during or around our worship service, please forward the question you would like researched to: gghaas@aol.com, or drop the question in the offering basin. Please note whether we can credit you as the source of the question.