

THE GRRAPEVINE

"I am the Vine, you are the branches" (Jn 15:5)

Number 12

First Sunday of Lent

March 5, 2006

WELCOME TO THE GRRAPEVINE!

We are growing! There just wasn't enough room to say everything that we wanted to say each time, so once again we change and adapt. We continue to invite your feedback, suggestions, etc. You can respond on the website, through email, in writing or in person. Let's keep the dialogue going. Once again, a reminder that our parish website address is: <http://www.geocities.com/saintmaryspg/>.

PASTORAL TEAM TIDBITS

Richard: It was a quiet week at the office, catching up. This weekend started with a trip to McBride on Saturday evening for Mass, and will end with the Rite of Election at Sacred Heart. This week I will be off to Fort Ware Tuesday to Thursday for a pastoral visit. Let's hope the flying is good!

Giselle: This weekend, we have the Rite of Election at the Cathedral, so I'll be busy helping to coordinate that. This coming week there is the usual, RCIA, Sacramental Preparation, presiding at Vespers and then a Parish Pastoral Council Meeting on Thursday. And then it's off to Terrace again for Lay Formation.

SEMINARIAN TIDBITS

Rectorino and Venerando will be admitted to candidacy for ordination at the Chrism Mass on April 3 at Sacred Heart Cathedral. In the meantime, Rectorino continues to live and work at Sacred Heart. Venerando will be returning to Prince George this weekend, and will take up residence at St. Mary's. He will be involved at St. Mary's and in several other ministries in the area. Both will be returning to Manila in the latter part of May to complete their studies and will return to Prince George after Christmas. Please continue to keep them in your prayers.

WATER AND DESERT



Lent is a very interesting season, full of many symbols: water and desert, light and darkness, life and death. On this First Sunday of Lent, we find the symbols of water and desert in the foreground. Lent is a time in which we join the catechumens as they prepare for baptism. As such, Lent is a time for baptismal preparation, not for baptisms. The Church strongly recommends that baptisms not be performed during Lent, but most appropriately at the Easter Vigil and during the Easter season. So, in one sense, we are journeying through the desert of Lent, yearning for that baptismal water that will quench our thirst. At the same time, every Sunday, we enter the church and bless ourselves with water from the baptismal font, reminding ourselves of our baptism. Do we really know what this means? Have we taught our children what this means? We are remembering our entrance into the death and resurrection of Christ, our initiation into the Christian community. In some churches, they actually remove the water from the baptismal font (and the holy water stoups) and replace it with sand. And yet, people still dip their fingers in the sand and bless themselves! Habits are good... sometimes!

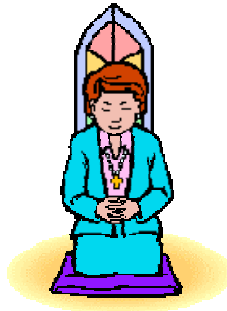


Perhaps during this season of Lent, we could make a conscious effort to reflect on why we are dipping our fingers into the baptismal font, the font in which we began our new life as Christians. Consciously think about what it means to be a Christian, and how we live out our calling in our day-to-day lives. How are we witnesses to the love of Christ during this season, a love that became incarnate so that we might have life, life that will last until the end of time.

*God is love, and those who abide in love, abide in God,
And God abides in them...(1 Jn 4:16)*

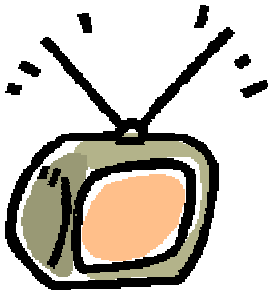
LENTEN PRAYER

Lent is traditionally a time to practice prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We have a variety of different prayer forms to offer you on our Lenten menu:



Morning Prayer	Weekday mornings	7:00 a.m.
Eucharist	Weekday mornings	7:20 a.m.
Eucharist	Monday evenings	7:00 p.m.
Lenten Vespers	Wednesday evenings	7:00 p.m.
Reconciliation	March 13 (STM Parish)	7:00 p.m.
Sunday Vespers	March 19	4:30 p.m.
Reconciliation	April 5 (IC Parish)	7:00 p.m.
Reconciliation	April 6 (COS Parish)	7:00 p.m.
Reconciliation	April 11 (SHC Parish)	7:00 p.m.

LENTEN FASTING

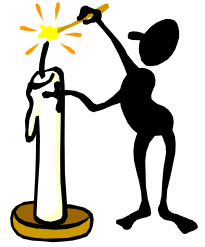


One way in which we can help build community and fast during Lent, is by simply turning off our televisions. It's hard!! But ultimately very rewarding. One way to start would be to designate one day of the week as "TV Free"

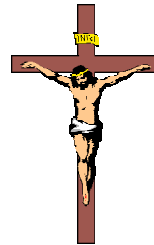
day, perhaps Sunday. Another way would be to limit the amount of TV that we watch each day. Instead of turning it on when we get up in the morning, leave it turned off. You have the control! Remember, you control the remote, it doesn't control you!

WHAT IS LENTEN VESPERS?

Vespers is a Latin word and refers to Evening Prayer. The early Church consecrated the different times of the day by praying at various hours: morning, noon, evening, etc.. It used to be that these different prayers (collectively called the Liturgy of the Hours) were considered the sole reserve of monks and religious. Vatican II, however, offered the rich prayer of the Liturgy of the Hours to the entire Church as a way of consecrating the entire day. The beauty of it is that it is the prayer of the whole Church and at any given day or time, somewhere in the world, others are praying the same prayer. Vespers is a wonderful way to close out your day, to come and sit in the silence, to pray with the community, and to offer praise and thanks to God. This Lent, why not come and give it a try, on Wednesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.



STATIONS OF THE CROSS



Lent is traditionally a time during which Catholics pray the Stations of the Cross. Interest has been lackluster in the last few years, so we have decided not to offer a communal Stations of the Cross on Fridays during Lent. Individuals can still pray them at any time, or if you would like to take part in a communal celebration, Sacred Heart Cathedral will be praying them on the following Fridays at 7:30 p.m. - March 10, March 17 and March 24

LENTEN ALMSGIVING

St. Vincent de Paul Society seeks to respond to the needs of the poor in our community, but they rely on our help to do so. We have a collection bin at the entrance of the church to receive food donations. If you are looking for some practical almsgiving, find the column with the first letter of your surname, and contribute some of the items listed in that column to our food bin. The food bin is the big blue Rubbermaid container at the back of the church.



A-C

Pasta
Canned Fish
Breakfast cereal
Pasta Sauce
Crackers

D-J

Canned Meat
Rice
Canned/Powdered Milk
Canned/Dry Beans & Peas
Cereal bars

K-N

Dry/Canned Soups
Dry/Canned Stews
100% Fruit Juice
Infant Formula
Tea

O-Z

Peanut Butter
Flour
Canned Fruit/Veggies
Baby Food
Hot Chocolate

LENTEN & EASTER CUSTOMS

We are looking for Shrove Tuesday and Lenten customs for our next edition, and after that we would welcome Easter customs. Get your pens out and start writing! You can send things to us by email, regular mail, the web page or in the collection basket. We can't let Richard be the only one to submit customs!!! This is your chance to get your name in lights!! (or at least in print...)

HOW WE CELEBRATED LENT Richard, omi
Growing up in the late '50's and early '60's, Lent was quite different than it is today. Rules for Lent were quite stringent. **NO MEAT ON FRIDAYS - PERIOD!** Wednesdays were usually meat free as well (part of the Ukrainian tradition). Since fresh fish was scarce on the prairies, especially in winter, we had a lot of pickled herring during Lent. It came in a small wooden cask, usually from Holland. Pretty good fare, we thought. The penance seemed more like a treat. Fridays after school we knew that we had a job - making perogies, since that was a Friday staple. Since the cows were often dry by then, the perogies were potato and sauerkraut, which were still in plentiful supply. No bacon to go with the fried onions. Potato pancakes were for Ash Wednesday, with regular pancakes for supper on Shrove Tuesday. We all had to give up something for Lent (as children it seemed that we gave up everything!). What money we did not spend (10 cents for a movie or 5 cents for candy) went into a jar on the table. At the end of Lent, that went to the Holy Childhood collection at school. We were taught that our penance should help someone else too.

HOW WE CELEBRATED LENT Giselle Jakobs
Growing up in the late 60s and early 70s, my experience of Lent is a little different from Richard's. We would go to the Ash Wednesday celebration, and I'm pretty sure we fasted and abstained from meat on Friday's during Lent. We'd usually get fish sticks on Friday's which wasn't much of a hardship for us kids! Mind you, giving up the chocolate for Lent... **THAT** was a hardship!! And of course, we'd usually go to Stations of the Cross on Friday's as well. I also remember collecting coins for the Share Lent can which sat on our dinner table.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Another way in which we can help build community in our parish is by rejoicing with parents when a child is baptized, celebrating with couples when they are married, or mourning with families when a loved one passes on.

REJOICING AND REMEMBERING

Since the beginning of January, we have welcomed the following members in the sacrament of Baptism:



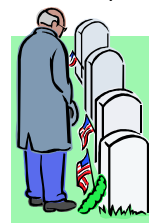
Theodore Peter Kellis
Ashley Isaac
Audrey Helena Kerry Callaghan
Rhiley Christian Joseph Milkovich
Breanna Kristina Milkovich
Katarina Maria June Milkovich

We also witnessed the marriage of:

Brian Milakovic
& Chantel Desharnais



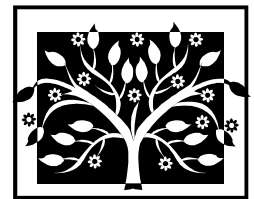
In the hope of the resurrection, we bid farewell to:



Theresa Violet Vincent
Joseph Leroy Taylor
Ladislav Dernesch
Carmen McInnes
Janetta diBenedetto
Pauline Lobermayer

TREE OF LIFE

In case you looked at the list of recently deceased and wondered "Who is that?"; we have a solution. The Parish Pastoral Council has been looking at the idea of having a Tree of Life banner at the back of the church. It would include the names and pictures of those who have died in the last 12 months. What do you think??



INTERCESSORY PRAYER

Please remember the sick and suffering in our community and families:

Magdalene Martin
Marvin Lane
Joseph and Frances Glasser
(parents of Kathy Labonte)
Judy Nelson
(sister of Ann Robertson)



STEWARDSHIP

Beginning with this issue of the *GRRRAPEVINE*, we will have a regular column on the subject of Stewardship. As was mentioned in one of the earlier editions, Stewardship was the theme of the Pastoral Study Days for the Diocese in September.

The concept of Stewardship is rooted in the Scriptures, beginning with the book of Genesis. There we read that God gave humans all the gifts of creation for their well-being and gave them dominion over all of creation. See Genesis 1:28-30. Again in Genesis 2:15 we read "The lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it". The community of Israel had a deep sense that the gifts of creation were just that - gifts. The gifts were given them by God for their well-being and they in turn had a responsibility to care for these gifts and pass them on to future generations. The sacrifices of the Old Covenant were made in gratitude for the gifts of God's love expressed in so many different ways.

The Parish Pastoral Council has begun reflecting on the pastoral letter of the U.S. Bishops, entitled "Stewardship: A Disciple's Response". The coming columns will be a reflection of the pastoral letter on Stewardship as well as some of the responses that come out of the Pastoral Council reflections. At the end of each column there will be some questions for reflection, and we invite all members of the parish to take some time to reflect on this topic, individually, as families and even perhaps in your listening centres if you are participating in one.

LISTENING CENTRES

Several of the Listening Centres that began with the OMI Mission in November are still meeting on a regular basis. They would welcome interested participants! Listed below are the active Listening Centres for St. Mary's Parish:

Suzanne Lefebvre	964-9580	College Hts.
Terry Bopp	564-2635	Westwood
Janice Haddock	563-0159	Ospika & Massey
Tom Makowsky	564-3838	Spruceland
Paul Laliberte	563-8465	Tabor & 1 st Ave
Angie Hoksbergen	562-9844	10 th & Freeman
Dorothy Reimer	562-3749	Central
Tony Cue	962-8680	Hart Hwy.

MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT



Below is the synopsis of the February financial statement. The detailed financial statement is posted on the bulletin boards for your information.

Bank Balance:	1718.19
DDF Balance:	170689.17
Accts Receivable:	357.66
Total Assets	172765.02

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Donations	14342.27	Administration	14989.04
Fees	450.00	Programs	1457.87
Programs	622.00	Operation/Maint.	5136.61
Other	145.00	Rental Operation	2312.27
<u>Rentals</u>	<u>3855.00</u>	Total Expense	23895.79
Total Income	19414.27	Net Income	-4481.52

FINANCES, MAINTENANCE, ETC.

A quick look at the financial report shows us in a relatively health position at the end of February. All our major bills are paid and there is money in the account! Income from the general collections is still about \$1000 over last year's income and our total income is about \$10,000 over last year. Most of that increase is accounted for by the income for the Mission. All other categories of income remain about the same or slightly above the previous year.

Looking at the figures in comparison to the budget, we are about \$2000 below budget in general collections, and at budget or above in the other income categories. On the expense side, we are close to our budget in most categories, except for Administration and Programs, where extra salaries and benefits and the cost of the Mission are reflected. We need to keep in mind that most of the Mission cost was recouped from the other parishes. Snow removal costs were high in the past month, as a couple of the snowfalls required repeated snow removal.

There have been some major problems with the sound system in the Church over the past few months, to the point where the system was unusable at times. We are waiting for some estimates to replace the present system.

All in all, we are doing well. Thank you to all for your generosity.