



THE GRRRAPEVINE

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

Number 17

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

May 21, 2006

PASTORAL TEAM TIDBITS

Richard: The past week included a trip to Kitimat for Rector's ordination to the diaconate. Budget, personnel and diocesan priests and finance council meetings have taken some time, but there was some time left over to play in the dirt (some might call it gardening). During the coming week I will celebrate Reconciliation with the Grade 2 children for the first time, and then will travel to Vanderhoof to celebrate the 45th Anniversary of Fr. Andy Takach, OMI and the 50th Anniversary of Fr. John Mulligan, OMI. Now that the snow seems truly gone for the summer, I hope to spend more time playing outside.

Giselle: This past weekend, I too was in Kitimat for Rector's ordination to the diaconate. I also spent a fair amount of time getting back up to speed following the Rome trip and a Lay Formation weekend in Terrace. This week we had a Diocesan Liturgical Commission meeting as well as a Regional meeting. And in the coming weeks it's baptism preparation for older children and the last few RCIA sessions. In early June, I'll be in Terrace for the last Lay Formation weekend followed by the Stewardship Conference in Vancouver. And then it's summertime! Time to relax and make plans for the fall!!!

WELCOME TO THE GRRRAPEVINE!

As we move into spring, we continue to reflect on the call to Stewardship and what that means in our daily living. We continue to invite your feedback, suggestions, etc. You can respond on the website, through email, in writing or in person. Our parish website address is:

<http://www.geocities.com/saintmaryspg/>

SUNDAY EVENING EUCHARIST

We have good news and we have bad news. Which do you want first?

The good news is that Prince George will once again have a celebration of Eucharist on Sunday evenings! The bad news is... it won't be at St. Mary's Parish! But the good news is the city will have Sunday Evening Eucharist all year, not just during the summer!



Fr. Rey Sorgon, pastor of Christ our Saviour parish, left the Diocese at the end of April, and we won't have a replacement for the foreseeable future. In the meantime, Fr. Edpoe from Immaculate Conception Parish has graciously offered to minister at Christ our Saviour.

Part of this ministry, however, necessitated a review of Sunday Mass times in the two parishes, ultimately resulting in a reduction of Sunday Masses at Christ our Saviour (from 2 to 1) and a rearranging of Sunday Mass times at Immaculate Conception Parish.

Beginning June 4, 2006, Sunday Mass times at the two parishes will be:

9:30 a.m. at Christ our Saviour Parish
(this may change to 9:15 a.m.)

11:00 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Parish
7:00 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Parish

We thank all of you for completing the parish survey before Easter on the idea of have a Summer Sunday Evening Eucharist here at St. Mary's.

SEMINARIAN TIDBITS

Many gathered in Kitimat on Monday, May 15 to celebrate Rector's ordination to the diaconate (pictures on bulletin board and website!). With this celebration, Rector was incardinated - he has made a commitment to serve the Diocese of Prince George for life, first as a deacon, and then as a priest. We welcome Rector to the ministry of the ordained in our diocese and we thank God for the gift of his service to our local Church. Please keep Rector in prayer as he now completes his preparations for ordination to the priesthood.

Vener has been away the past couple of weeks helping to prepare for Rector's. He is looking forward to his own ordination to the diaconate sometime around the New Year.

Both Vener and Rector will be leaving on May 21 for Manila to complete their studies. They will spend time with their families before returning to University around June 10. The both have one semester to complete; they will be finished with all their academic requirements by the middle of December, and they will be returning to Prince George at the end of December. We wish them well in all they do, and will keep up with the news about them as they continue their journey.

STEWARDSHIP

In our reflection on Stewardship, we continue to focus on the call, or vocation that we receive. Last week, we took time to reflect on the fact that we are called as individuals, each with our own unique gifts and talents. However, we are called to be part of a community as well, and we have certain rights as well as responsibilities as members of the community of faith.

We are free to respond to the call either in the positive or negative. We can say "Here I am, Lord", or we can say "No, thanks." (See the story of the rich man in Matt 19)

It is all well and good to say that we are called and to know that we have responded to the call. We must remember that Jesus not only calls people to himself, but then he forms them and sends them out in his service (see Matt. 10:5ff, Mark 6:7ff, Luke 9:1ff.). Being sent on a mission is a consequence of being a disciple. Whoever wants to follow Christ will have much work to do on Christ's behalf - announcing the good news and serving others as Jesus did.

Jesus' call is urgent - he does not call us and tell us to follow him sometime in the future, but here and now - in these circumstances and at this moment. As we hear the call, we must decide what our response will be and how we will fulfill the mission Jesus gives us.

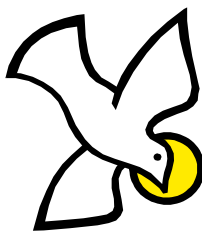
This call or vocation to follow Jesus comes to us through our baptism. For those who are baptized as adults, the call to follow Jesus might seem quite clear. For most of us, baptized as infants, we may not necessarily recognize that we are indeed called as disciples. It is up to us to take the time to listen attentively and to discern openly to that we may hear Christ's call, understand it and respond to it as he wishes for us to respond.

How aware are you of the call to be a disciple of Jesus? Do you see it as a personal call?

What are the consequences of the call for you in your daily living (how is it lived out)?

PENTECOST VIGIL

Come and celebrate the close of the Easter Season with a vigil celebration for Pentecost on Saturday, June 3. We will begin at the regular Mass time of 7:00 p.m., but it will be a longer celebration than usual. The Vigil for Pentecost follows the pattern of the Easter Vigil, with seven readings which continue the story of God's love for the people created in God's image and likeness. The readings for the Pentecost Vigil focus on the work of the Spirit in the world. We do not have a service of light at this Vigil, nor do we normally celebrate sacraments of initiation. The Vigil is a fitting close to the most important feast and season of our liturgical year. Come and celebrate!



SCRIPTURE INSIGHTS

The first reading narrates the conversion of Cornelius, a Roman officer and the first Gentile to receive the faith. The Holy Spirit is usually given in Baptism, but here the Holy Spirit preceded Baptism, signaling that God intends all, Jews and Gentiles alike, to belong to Jesus. Whoever fears God and acts uprightly is acceptable to God. True religion is a matter of the heart and deeper than external labels and rites.

In the responsorial psalm, Israel rejoices and praises God for his acts of salvation in her, for God's acts of salvation in Israel make God known among the nations, revealing him as the God of salvation. By celebrating and living a saved life in the world, the Church reveals the God of salvation to the nations.

The second reading singles out a characteristic of God that must be embodied in the Church if she is to reveal God: Christian communities must be loving communities. God's love became life-giving when God sent the Son into the world; so also we who live because of God's love are to be, with Christ, the life of the world. As such, the Christian community is defined by love, hence the injunction, "love one another as I love you" (Gospel). Jesus uses a very intimate phrase, "I love you", and he means every word of it. This love is not just his, but it is the Father's love for him that he pours on us. His love for us draws us into the bosom of the Father. He now commands that we also love each other as he loves us, that is, even to laying down our life for others. How different would parish life be if the most important project were to love one another as Jesus loves us! The Christian community would be different and the world would be transformed into one huge family of God.

If "love one another as I love you" were the pastoral plan of my parish...

What keeps us from embracing each other and how might the Holy Spirit breath through this?

How does the Gospel reading relate love to command or commandment?

Taken from At Home with the Word

Nature is too thin a screen;
The glory of the omnipresent God
bursts through everywhere.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

CREATION HIKERS

A few of us here at St. Mary's are interested in forming a loose hiking group. We'd like to do a hike once a month or so. It's a chance to get out into creation and enjoy the fresh air! Our group so far includes a geology person and a forestry person. (All we need is a bird watcher!). We'd be happy to share a little bit of our knowledge about the rocks and trees that we see around us (that's stewardship!!! Sharing our gifts and talents with others!). Our first few hikes are going to fairly tame, but we hope to upgrade to more strenuous hikes as the summer progresses. Our next hike is on June 24 and will take us to Fort George Canyon (5 km one way, flat most of the way). For more information, call Giselle at the parish office.



RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Our religious education classes for this year have concluded, but we will be starting up again in the fall.

The religious formation of our children is very important and is the responsibility of the entire Christian community.

Do you have a good rapport with children? Would you be willing to help us form them in their Catholic faith? We are looking for religious education catechists for the fall. Maybe think it over during the summer... You don't need a theology degree!!

BAPTISM PREPARATION FOR INFANTS

Do you have a newborn you want baptized? Are you expecting a baby and want to have the baby baptized? We periodically have a baptism preparation session in the parish to help parents prepare for the baptism of their children. Our next session will be on Tuesday, May 23 at 7:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. If you want to have a baptism in the next two or three months, please attend this session, as we may not have another until sometime in August.

BAPTISM PREPARATION FOR OLDER CHILDREN

Do you have an older child (5 to 10) who would like to be baptized? Beginning Tuesday, May 23, we will be offering a 5 session baptism preparation programme for older children. The sessions are usually about an hour long and extend over 5 weeks. The sessions will be held May 23, 30, 6, 13, and 20, in the Conference Room. If you are interested, please phone Giselle at the parish office, 564-4097. Our next series of sessions will begin in the Fall.

RCIA

We have entered the period of mystagogia after the Easter Vigil, and our sessions will be ending on June 5. Come the fall, we will begin again. If you know of anyone who might be interested in becoming Catholic, please let us know. Maybe it's somebody you met during the Parish Mission last November... or maybe it's a family member... Just give us a call!!

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.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

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



Marvin Lane
Bernie Lefebvre
Joseph & Frances Glasser
(Kathy Labonte's parents)
Judy Nelson
(Ann Robertson's sister)
Chuck Robertson
Anne Beaudette
(Fr. Richard's mother)
Ugo Marotta

REJOICING & REMEMBERING

We witnessed the marriage of:

Patrick Fonseca
& Danielle Burchill



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

Jan Ficek



WEBSITE UPDATED

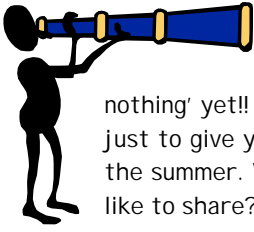
Check out the photos from Giselle's trip to Rome, including some photos to accompany the Roman Rocks article from last month's Grrapevine.

Also check it out for pictures of Rector's ordination to the diaconate...

EASTER VESPERS

Only a couple more Wednesday evenings to go and then Easter will be over! We will celebrate Vespers on May 24 and 31 at 7:00 p.m.

Or you could join us for Vespers this Sunday afternoon at 4:30 p.m.



LOOKING AHEAD

If you thought St. Mary's was a happening place this past fall and winter... well... you ain't seen nothing' yet!! Everybody says that life in PG takes a hiatus between Victoria Day and Labour Day, so... this is just to give you a little foretaste of what's possibly coming in the fall... Something for you to think about over the summer. What gifts and talents do you have that you could share with others? Do you have a hobby you'd like to share?

PARISH PHOTO DIRECTORY

Our last parish photo directory is dated 2000. And we thought it might be a good idea to do another one this year. Unfortunately, we've run into a tiny, little, minor, insignificant glitch. The company that does the directories (IPC) is no longer coming out to BC.

But... we're thinking about forging ahead regardless.

Most of the work on the directory is organization (planning appointments, phoning parishioners, getting the parish list up to date, etc.) which we would have had to do with IPC anyway. In addition, if we go ahead on our own, we would need to take the photographs (any photographers out there with a digital camera?), layout the proofs on computer (MS Publisher aficionados out there?), and print the photo pages at one of the printing places in town (we're checking into the cost of printing the photo pages locally).

So... keep your eye on this newsletter for more information in the fall. And look at your gifts and talents to see if maybe you can help (Phoners? Photographers? Publishers?).



TABLE FOR TWO



Another bright parishioner suggested this idea as a way to build community. It's basically an evening out for two people (e.g. friend/friend, husband/wife, mother/daughter, father/son, brother/sister, etc). We'd host it in the conference room (individual tables with candles!) and provide a meal from Chef Richard and his capable assistants. It's free! No strings attached (i.e. it's not a recruiting drive). And... we might even be able to provide child care in the gym so that husbands and wives can come and enjoy. More information in the fall...

THEO-BITS

Have you thought about taking Lay Formation but are daunted by the time commitment? Want to learn more about your faith, but in smaller bites... well then think about Theo-Bits! These would be a series of sessions (3 or 4 evenings each) on different issues of our faith. We could start with the letters of Timothy and call it "Tim-Bits"! (Well... maybe not...) More info later!

BIBLICALLY BASED BOOK DISCUSSION

That's a mouthful! But it's a neat idea. Read something like *A Purpose Driven Life* and dig into it deeper by looking at the scriptural footnotes in the book. It's sort of a bible discussion, but rooted in a cultural event. Any interested parties out there??

SENIORS' SOCIAL TEA

We have a fair number of seniors in our parish, some of whom don't get out all that often. If we had people who could bring them to the parish on say, a Tuesday morning, we could offer a Seniors' Social with tea and crumpets (or tea and Timbits). Just a chance for some social time or maybe a few card games. Do people still play games with a deck of cards or is it all Internet games now?

PEW SOFTENERS

Not quite the same as water softeners... Someone had suggested that we provide a basket of cushions at the doors to the church for the use of our seniors and elderly. Let's face it... our pews are pretty hard, and as one gets older, they become even harder! Now... fabric and foam are not a problem... it's just combining the two into something resembling a cushion... Do you have a sewing machine and the ability to sew a reasonably straight line? Then we could use your talents! More information coming this fall... Or if you're really eager, give Fr. Richard a call at the parish office...

FANS OF FILM



Are you a film fanatic? Harry Potter? Lord of the Rings? Chronicles of Narnia? Would you be interested in getting together maybe once a month to watch a movie and then have some discussion (theological or otherwise) around it? We could do this! All we need is some interested parties... Which could be you... Or you... Or you...

OTHER

Do you have another idea or talent or hobby that you would like to share? Call us!