



# THE GRRAPEVINE

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

Number 21

17<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time

July 30, 2006

## YOU HAVE IT IN YOU

This weekend we begin the “Bread of Life” discourse in John’s Gospel. The readings from The Second Book of Kings and the Gospel of John recount the feeding of crowds. In both cases, the question is asked: “What is this among so many?” The disciples of Jesus and the servant of Elisha are intimidated by the task and their natural reaction is to sit back and do nothing, since they obviously cannot fulfill the task. Both Elisha and Jesus respond to their skepticism and doubt by giving the direction to have the people seated and fed. They are to be fed with what is available, trusting that God will bless the gift offered and ensure that there is enough.

How often do we, when faced with the mission of proclaiming the Gospel, building a world of justice and peace, caring for the poor, homeless and hungry, feel intimidated, inadequate and we ask “How can we do anything in the face of this enormous task?” Our response is often to sit back and do little or nothing because we do not feel that we can accomplish our mission.

Jesus, in giving us the mission of continuing the building of the kingdom, knows that our resources are inadequate. Yet, God has given each of us gifts, and we are called to use the gifts we have, trusting that God will use our gifts and that they will be enough. Jesus would say to us, “You have it in you to do this” and promises that if we offer and use the gifts we have, that they will be enough, and more than enough. We cannot sit back; we are called to action.

## Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors–Welcoming those with Disabilities

1. I will *speak directly* to the person with a disability or difference, not only to the nearby companion, family member, interpreter, or canine companion.
2. I will *offer to shake hands* when introduced to a person with a disability (persons with limited hand use or who wear an artificial limb usually can shake hands. Shaking the left hand is acceptable, too).
3. I will *place myself in a chair at eye level* for easy conversation with a person using a wheelchair or walker.
4. I will *offer assistance and wait* until the offer is accepted. I will wait for instructions but not insist.
5. I will *give my whole, unhurried attention* a person who has difficulty speaking rather than speaking for the person.
6. I will *encourage a person* with a disability to serve, to distribute

- communion, to greet people at the door, take up the collection, to bear the gifts, to proclaim the scriptures, to sing in the choir or lead the singing — according to the individual’s gifts and talents.
7. I will *treat adults* with developmental disabilities as adults, not as children. I will use first names only when using the same familiarity for all persons.
8. I will get the attention of someone who is hearing-impaired by *lightly tapping* their elbow or shoulder, or by *waving* my hand. I will look directly at the person and *speak clearly*, slowly and expressively to establish if the person can read my lips.
9. I will *offer to read* the weekly bulletin to a person who is blind.
10. I will guide a person with visual impairments by giving verbal clues to steps, doors, curbs, or escalators. I will *first identify myself*.

## CREATION HIKERS

Our last hike was on Saturday July 8. We hiked across the Continental



Divide, along the Giscome Portage Trail near the Huble Homestead. It was a gorgeous sunny day and the bugs were out in full force! But we saw lots of blueberries (mostly unripe) and relaxed with ice cream sandwiches at the Huble General Store afterwards.

Our next hike will be on Saturday, August 19, and we’ll give Eskers Provincial Park a little exploration. The trail we choose could be 4 km long or 12! Gently rolling terrain through pine forests with a few small lakes along the way. Estimated time to complete: about 4.5 to 6 hours. We’ll meet at 8 am in the St. Mary’s School parking lot.

On Saturday, August 26, we’ll do a little hike up Teapot Mountain (about 2 hours), near Summit Lake. Just a little hike! Same deal: meet at 8 am in the St. Mary’s School parking lot.



## AUGUST 6—THE TRANSFIGURATION

The early church was fascinated with the transfiguration of Jesus. The story appears several times in the yearly liturgical cycle. It later became a favorite in the art of the Renaissance, and one can see the magnificent works of Lorenzo Ghiberti and Fra Angelico in Florence and Raphael in Rome.

Why this fascination? We can speculate that one of the reasons is that it is very difficult for us personally to grasp an image of what it is like to be transfigured. We can imagine some of what Jesus did--being healed or cured. We can experience being fed by bread, and we all know what it is like to be forgiven. But transfigured? What does that mean in our everyday, practical lives? Were the writers, sculptors, and painters trying to grasp the meaning of the resurrection and what we would all be like after our own resurrection?

In the transfiguration, Jesus was not only showing us who he is but who we are. Early believers wanted to try to grasp what Jesus would be like after the resurrection. Scripture scholars believe that the transfiguration is really a resurrection story--or at least a preview of the glorified body of Jesus. What happened on that mountain was a theophany, a revelation of God. One humanist theologian of the early fourteenth century wrote that "every single creature is full of God. Every creature is a book about God." Paul Tillich, the late, great Protestant theologian, called God "the Ground of Being." When we contemplate God--or when those disciples along with Elijah and Moses saw Jesus transfigured--they were drawn into something greater than themselves. With Moses and Elijah standing there, Peter, James, and John could be drawn to a truth they previously had not understood: Jesus is the new Moses, the new Lawgiver and the new Elijah, the great prophet.

So it is with us. We plod through life. We pray. We worship. We hope to be able to see God in the many and different circumstances of our lives, in peak experiences and ordinary happenings. Sometimes we have great revelations when we see God and people more clearly than ever before. But we have to find God here, where we live and work and play. Peter wanted to build a few tents to hang out on the mountain, but Jesus said "no," we have to go down into the world. You have seen a different glimpse of who I am, but for now, you have to find me through both the sufferings and the triumphs of life. It will be in those experiences that we will find God.



## PASTORAL TEAM TIDBITS

Richard: It can't be the end of July yet - I just got back from Fort Ware, it seems! The month has gone quickly, with lots of time in the office, both here in the parish and at the Diocesan Centre. There has been time in the garden, and I have been hoping to get at a couple of projects around the yard and apartment, but they just have not been accomplished yet. Next weekend will include a trip to McBride for Sunday Eucharist, and then it will be back to the routine of parish life again, with time to get the projects done, hopefully.

Giselle: Half of the summer is already gone?? How did that happen?! I've been keeping busy both in and out of the office. Using some holiday and banked time, I've gone berry picking (raspberries, blueberries, huckleberries) and done a bit of hiking. In the office, I've been laying some of the groundwork for our Fall programmes and catching up on paperwork that has been piling up since Lent!

## SEMINARIAN TIDBITS

Vener and Rector: Both Vener and Rector have been hard at work in their classes. Right now they are preparing for mid-semester exams, so there is a little stress in their lives. They have had some time off from class because of the typhoons that have been hitting the Philippines in the past week or so, but are hoping that their routines will soon be back to normal. They are enjoying their studies (knowing that it is their last semester of study may be helping the enjoyment factor) and are looking forward to the end of their semester and their comprehensives and syntheses before returning to Prince George right after Christmas. Vener reports that his father is much better, is at home and recuperating. Rector continues to do ministry in his home parish and former diocese. He had hoped to do some ministry in Manila itself, but that has not worked out so far. In our last conversation, both asked to be remembered to the community and to send their greetings. They remember with fondness their experiences at St. Mary's.

## WEBSITE UPDATES

Our website is a great place to find information on what's happening in the parish and what's coming up. We have photos of past events as well as pdf copies of past issues of the Sunday Bulletin and the Grrapevine. Check us out!

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

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

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



- Marvin Lane
Joseph & Frances Glosser (Kathy Labonte's parents)
Dennis Downey
Beverly Teegee
Gracie George
Kay McEwan
Don Binnie
Bernie Trottier
Valerie Kabai
Leonila Prado
Judy Nelson
Amelia McGraw
Alfredo DoCouto
Josephine Nykoluk
Jennifer Willocks

VESPERS

We will not be celebrating Sunday Vespers in August. We'll resume our celebrations on the third Sunday of September (the 17th). Until then, have a good summer!

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

Fair Trade coffee will be available after the Sunday morning Masses on the 3rd Sunday of the month. Come and buy some of this delicious coffee. Your support helps Third World farmers receive a living wage.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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. You don't need a theology degree!!

MOVING? AWAY FROM THE PARISH? INTO THE PARISH?

If you're moving away this summer, Farewell and Good Luck! Please let us know your new address so we can forward income tax receipts to you.

If you're moving into the parish, Welcome! We hope that you will feel welcome in our community. We'd love for you to introduce yourself to the Pastoral Team. Give us a phone call, or drop by the parish office. And please, fill out a parish registration form so we know who you are!

REJOICING & REMEMBERING

We welcomed the following member in the sacrament of Baptism: Myra Angela Barrette

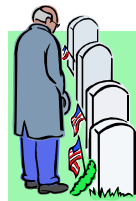


We witnessed the marriages of: Stephen Burns & Maria Stevens, Garrett Taylor & Bridget O'Beirne



We celebrated the anniversaries of: Joseph and Gabrielle Hamelin (60 years), Larry and Mary Crooks (50 years)

In the hope of the resurrection, we bid farewell to: Magdelene Martin, Victorine Poitras/Todd, Marietta Cosco, Claire Fontaine



BAPTISM PREPARATION FOR INFANTS

Our next baptism preparation session for parents who wish their infants or young children (under 5 years old) to be baptized, will be held on two consecutive evenings: September 5 & 6 at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Office building (1088 Gillett Street).

Parents who wish to have their children baptized must come to both sessions. Please phone the parish office ahead of time so we have an idea how many couples to expect.

LISTENING CENTRES

The Listening Centres are taking a break over the Summer, but will resume in the Fall. Stay tuned!

PRAYER OF THE EYES

An icon — a holy picture — can help you pray. The Greek word icon means "image," a sacred image of Jesus, Mary or a saint that is painted in two dimensions on wood panels, usually with egg tempera paints. Here's how you can use an icon or other sacred image to focus your prayer.

You want to be in a comfortable position and you want to be able to look into the image's eyes. If you don't hang the image on a wall, you might find an easel (or one of those hinged wooden stands used to display plates) to hold the image on a table.

Praying before an icon or a sacred image is a matter of looking deeply. Think of how deeply you look at the face of someone you love. You never tire of that face and you notice every detail: the way light and shadow fall across the nose and cheek, how the brow moves, the subtle changes of expression. Look at the sacred image this way, too. Such intense looking will center you in prayer, in the presence of the holy person depicted. You may want to light candles or incense before the sacred image, too.

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AUGUST 22  
QUEENSHIP OF MARY



Pius XII established this feast in 1954. But Mary's

queenship has roots in Scripture. At the Annunciation Gabriel announced that Mary's Son would receive the throne of David and rule forever. At the Visitation, Elizabeth calls Mary "mother of my Lord."

As in all the mysteries of Mary's life, Mary is closely associated with Jesus: Her queenship is a share in Jesus' kingship. We can also recall that in the Old Testament the mother of the king has great influence in court.

In the fourth century St. Ephrem called Mary "Lady" and "Queen" and Church Fathers and Doctors continued to use the title. Hymns of the eleventh to thirteenth centuries address Mary as queen: "Hail, Holy Queen," "Hail, Queen of Heaven," "Queen of Heaven." The Dominican rosary and the Franciscan crown as well as numerous invocations in Mary's litany celebrate her queenship.

The feast is a logical follow-up to the Assumption and is now celebrated on the octave day of that feast. In his encyclical *To the Queen of Heaven*, Pius XII points out that Mary deserves the title because she is Mother of God, because she is closely associated as the New Eve with Jesus' redemptive work, because of her preeminent perfection and because of her intercessory power.

AUGUST 15—ASSUMPTION OF MARY

The doctrine of the Assumption teaches that at the end of her life, Mary, the mother of Christ, was taken body and soul (i.e. both physically and spiritually) into heaven to live with Christ for ever. Human beings have to wait until the end of time for their bodily resurrection, but Mary's body was able to go straight to heaven because her soul hadn't been tainted by original sin (Immaculate Conception).

The Assumption of Mary is actually an ancient teaching, first found in the 5th century, but it remains controversial to Protestants because it is not explicitly referred to in the Bible. The doctrine of the Assumption was proclaimed as infallible by Pope Pius XII on All Saints Day 1950 in the bull *Munificentissimus Deus*.

"We pronounce, declare, and define it to be a divinely revealed dogma: that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory."

This was only the second time in the last 200 years that a Pope has proclaimed a doctrine to be infallible. The Pope justified the Assumption not on Biblical authority but largely on: the "universal consensus of the Church" and the theological "suitability of the doctrine".

The "universal consensus of the Church" means that what the Church as a whole teaches and believes must be treated as a revealed and thus indisputable truth. The Church can only reach such a consensus through the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Before proclaiming the doctrine Pope Pius XII made sure that there was really was a consensus in the Church. In 1946 he wrote to all the Roman Catholic bishops to ask them (a) whether they thought the Assumption should become Catholic dogma, and (b) whether the priests and the laity agreed with them. 99% of the bishops said yes.

The other main argument for the Assumption was that it fitted well with other Catholic teaching, and would reinforce believers' faith that they too would eventually go to heaven. The Assumption was also clearly in harmony with other Catholic ideas about Mary: her Immaculate Conception, her perpetual virginity and being the Mother of God.

Eastern Orthodox Christians celebrate the feast of the Assumption (Dormition) on August 15 as well and believe that Mary died a natural death before being resurrected and assumed into Heaven. Most Catholics also believe this, but others believe she was assumed into Heaven without first passing through death. The Church does not bind us to a particular answer because the tradition is not clear. In an apocryphal collection of stories called *Transitus Mariae (The Passage of Mary)*, attributed to Bishop St. Melito of Sardis (died c. 200), Mary died in the presence of the apostles in Jerusalem, and then depending on the story, her body just disappeared, or was buried and then disappeared. We don't really know.

What we do know is that the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin is a singular participation in her Son's Resurrection and an anticipation of the resurrection of other Christians (CCC #966).

WHO'S ON FIRST...

Just a little tracking system so you have an idea of who's in town, who's not, and who's doing what!

Aug 6 Richard in McBride  
Aug 20 (pm) to Aug 25  
Richard in Fort Ware  
Aug 26 & 27 Giselle preaching

Sept 3 Richard in McBride  
Sept 6, 13, 20 Theo-Tidbits—Giselle  
Sept 16 & 17 Giselle preaching  
Sept 17 Vespers-Richard presides