



THE GRRAPEVINE

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

Number 22

21th Sunday in Ordinary Time

August 27, 2006



ARE YOU IN OR ARE YOU OUT?

Joshua and Jesus both challenge their followers in today's readings. Are the Israelites going to choose God over the pagan gods in their new land? Are the disciples going to choose Jesus even though his teachings are hard? Both the Israelites and the disciples choose to follow the path of life. When faced with the question "are you in or are you out?" they know that the only answer that makes sense is to follow the one who gives life.

We too are faced with those sorts of questions everyday. Are we going to choose the path that leads to eternal life or not? Are we in or are we out? Every time we come to a celebration of the Eucharist, we are asked that question. And if we say yes, then we take up the mission and the ministry of Jesus. We partake of the Eucharistic banquet, given life by the life-giver Jesus, and then called and sent to go out and spread the life and love of Jesus to everyone that we meet. Which is sometimes not an easy thing. To have compassion on those in need. To love those who have hurt us or offend us. To have mercy towards those who stumble and fall. To be faithful in following the path we are called to tread. Choosing life means that we become life-givers to everyone that we meet, sharing with them the life and love of Jesus and calling them to that same path of life that we tread. If we're like the Israelites and the disciples, our only answer can be "yes". Choose life so that you may live, and have life abundantly!

THEO TIDBITS—IT'S STARTING!!!

You've heard a lot about it (hopefully!!). And it's now getting off the ground! Theo-Tidbits is coming this September. We're going to start off with the most popular topic (according to our scientific survey from the spring): How to Read the Bible. Sessions will begin on Wednesday September 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the St. Mary's Conference Room, and continue on the two following Wednesdays (September 20 & 27). The Bible can be a daunting book for many of us and sometimes very confusing. Do we read it literally or not? What about creation and evolution? Is there some sort of overall plan to the Old Testament? Why are the Four Gospels so different? Was St. Paul really as sexist as he comes across in some of his letters or not? This is a great opportunity to come out, learn a bit about our faith, share that faith with others and have some good old-fashioned community time!

If you're interested, and we know you are, take a look at the posters on the bulletin boards and pick up one of the wallet-sized cards with our schedule on it. In October, our topic will be: Planning a Funeral and Writing a Will, facilitated by Fr. Richard. Sessions will be held on the following Tuesdays, October 3, 10, 17. And, because some find it harder to get out in the evening, we'll be offering two times: 1:00 to 2:30 p.m. in the afternoon and a repeat in the evening from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

In November, Mary-Anne Lewis Jamin will tackle The End... of Time. What about the rapture? Will the world end with a bang? Is Armageddon just around the corner? Does the Book of Revelation tell us when the end will come? And finally, Bishop Gerry will introduce us to Mary in the Life of the Church. Come and join us!!

CREATION HIKERS



Our last hike was on Saturday, August 19, and we explored Eskers Provincial Park. A cool morning evolved into a glorious sunny day and we were blessed to see a couple of deer, a beaver and umpteen squirrels.

On Saturday, August 26, we'll do a little (but steep!) 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.

PARISH PHOTO DIRECTORY

Six years ago, we published our last Parish Photo Directory. It's kind of out-of-date now!! The PPC decided in the spring that it might be a nice idea to redo our photo directory and we're moving ahead with that plan this Fall.

The company that produces the directories, IPC, had an opening during the first week of December (4-9), and we grabbed it!

This notice is a "heads-up" of what's coming down the pipeline this Fall. We'll be needing volunteers to phone parishioners to schedule photo appointments, etc. If you're good talking on the phone, we need you!!!!

SEMINARIAN VENER

It is nice to be back in circulation once again! It has been two and a half months since I have had any news for you. Well, I am back!

Last week was my Mid-term exams and tomorrow will be our *Ad Audiendas Confessiones* (Jurisdiction) Exams or in English *On Hearing Confession*. We are supposed to undergo this kind of examination in order to determine and evaluate our capacity in giving appropriate pastoral response to the need/s of the penitent/s through our knowledge of Canon Law and Moral Theology. This week we also started our review for our Comprehensive Exams in Dogmatic Theology, the review will continue until the second semester of this School Year. Next week we will start our Presiding Liturgy class, so I am quite a bit busy with my studies. Please pray for us. I miss you all! Hope to see you again after Christmas! May God bless you all.

PASTORAL TEAM TIDBITS

Richard: August came and went—it's hard to believe that it's nearly over. There were a couple of trips to McBride—for Sunday Eucharist and a funeral. Summer is not usually a time for a lot of funerals, but there have been quite a few this summer. With a couple of weddings and a 50th Anniversary celebration, the Saturdays were busy. The scheduled trip to Fort Ware has been postponed to late September, so I had some extra time to putter in the garden and office. I moved into a different office at the rectory and my former office is getting painted, and will become a meeting room for the parish. It seems that I always have projects on the go, including transforming the front and back yards at the apartment into gardens! What would a pastor be without a project on the go? I am looking forward to September and some of the new projects, programs and ideas that we have in store for the coming year. It is going to be a fun year!

Giselle: This summer seems to have gone by so quickly! I took a bit of time off here and there and spent about a week camping in the Rockies and another week touring my mother around PG. I also had visits from my sister and brother-in-law and expect my father sometime in September. In amongst all those visits I picked a few berries, canned a few jars of jam and jelly and preserved some of the yummy vegetable hand-outs from Fr. Richard. Who ever said summertime was a lazy time!??? As September approaches, I'm also laying the groundwork for our fall events: Theo-Tidbits, Religious Education, RCIA, Children's Liturgy of the Word, Parish Handbook, new Parish Pictorial Directory, website, Grapevine, Parish Pastoral Council Meetings, etc, etc. It's going to be a busy Fall! But, I should still have some time for a few last hikes this Fall and maybe a bit more jam and jelly-making... I don't think I've ever been this busy!!

DEACON RECTOR

Greetings to all the parishioners of St. Mary's!

It has been two and a half months since I left the Diocese. For the first three weeks of my stay here in the Philippines, I visited my family, relatives and friends in Bulacan, my home province. My Mom and the rest of the family are very happy to see me now as a Deacon. As I related to them my experiences with you, they were very joyful and thankful for the accommodation and good hospitality that you have shown me during my stay in the Diocese of Prince George.

On the 14th of June, we officially started the 2006-2007 School Year. I am enrolled in my last three required courses for the Seminary Program: *Ad Audiendas Confessiones* (On Hearing Confessions); Presiding at Liturgy; and Holy Orders. I ask for your prayers particularly on the 12th of August when I will be taking the exams for the Ad Auds course. Passing the Ad Auds exams will allow me to hear confession when I am ordained as a priest.

Meanwhile, my weeks look something like this: Saturday and Sunday - Ministry in the Parish Church; Monday - Day off; Tuesday to Friday - Classes. For your information, I am studying at the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University and completing the Seminary Program and Masters Degree in Pastoral Ministry.

I am presently doing my diaconal ministry at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Caloocan City. Just in case you would like to contact me:

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Once again, I would like to convey my sincere thanks to all of you for supporting me through your prayers and kind generosity. In a particular way, the parish of St. Mary's, as far as I remember, served as my first landing place in the Diocese a year ago. Thanks for giving me the impression that I am very welcome in the Diocese. I enjoyed the RCIA sessions every Monday evening. May God bless you all! Enjoy the summer there, while we enjoy our rainy season here in Manila, Philippines.

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

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



Marvin Lane
Joseph & Frances Glosser
(Kathy Labonte's parents)
Beverly Teegee
Gracie George
Don Binnie
Bernie Trottier
Valerie Kabai
Leonila Prado
Judy Nelson
Eugene Bachand

VESPERS

Our next celebration of Sunday Evening Vespers will be on Sunday, September 17 at 4:30 p.m. Come and experience this universal & ancient sung prayer of the Church

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!! Just a desire to share your faith with the church of tomorrow. Please consider sharing your gifts with us, either as a catechist or as an assistant.

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:

Hannah Elisabeth Tassie
Lindsay Norma Mahoney



We witnessed the marriages of:

Mark Erickson &
Nichole Basaraba
Kertis Reay &
Amber Bolinski

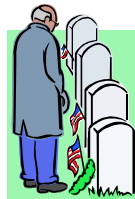


We celebrated the 50th anniversary of:

Maurice & Marion VanCaesele

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

Clarence Fillion
Marie Gervais
Diane Garneau



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 slowly going to get back up and running this fall. We'll have our list of hosts and facilitators back in the Grapevine in the next issue.

REFLECTIONS ON EUCHARIST



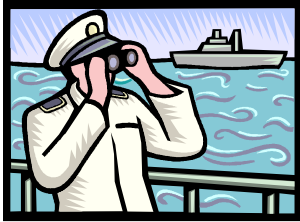
Over the past few weeks, we have been listening to the 'Bread of Life Discourse' from John's Gospel.

As we listen and reflect, we are challenged to grow in our understanding, celebration and living out of Eucharist. In today's passage, some of the disciples stop following Jesus because of this teaching; what is our response?

"The disciples seem mystified by Jesus' "difficult teaching". Yet two thousand years and many Christians later, do we understand the sacredness of what we're doing when we share Eucharist? The liturgist Virgil Michel once said that the Eucharist is the feast where everyone has an equal place at the table, where there's enough to feed all the hungers of the world, and where those who can't come in to the meal have it brought out to them. The implications of this are huge! As we attend to the Eucharist, our notions of community will constantly be stretched. Our reliance on a pecking order in society will be challenged. Our belief in scarcity, resulting in a need to acquire all we can, will be dispelled. Our willingness to serve others will be expanded. In short, gradually we will be transformed into the body of Christ. We are what we eat!

(taken from At Home with the Word 2006, Liturgy Training Publications)

LOOKING FOR...



The U.S. Marines used the recruiting slogan "Looking for a few good men". At St. Mary's, we're always looking for a few good people to fill some ministry or other, and today is no exception. We are looking for a few people to fill vacancies on our Parish Pastoral Council. We were one member short during the past year, and now two current members have resigned, so we are looking for three people for Council.

The ministry of the Parish Pastoral Council is varied and enriching. We take time to pray together, to study and to form community. We also take time to reflect on the pastoral needs of our parish community and try to find ways to respond to those needs. In a word, we are modeling Church as we gather. We generally meet once a month, for a couple of hours. There are sometimes 'assignments' that are carried out between meetings. The work load is not a burden - we recognize that people have work and home as well as the parish!

Are you interested in exploring this possibility for yourself? Do you know someone who might be able to respond to this need in our parish? Call Giselle or Richard at the parish office and give us names. We will respond - believe it!

DAILY PROPHET—INTRODUCTION



Have you ever tried to read the Bible cover to cover? You start off OK in Genesis and Exodus, stumble and yawn through Numbers and Leviticus, and then pick up again through Joshua and Judges, Samuel and Kings and eventually end up in Maccabees. Those books are all arranged in a more or less historical sequence and you can sort of follow the storyline. After Maccabees, you can drift through the Wisdom books (Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Wisdom, etc). But then...

you end up in the prophetic books, major ones like Isaiah and Ezekiel and then 12 minor ones with funny names like Obadiah and Habbakuk. Where do they fit in the grand scheme of things? Who were these prophets? Could they foresee the future? What is a prophet anyhow?

The term "prophet" in scripture, does not mean somebody who can gaze into a crystal ball and predict the future. A prophet was someone sent by God to communicate God's Word to the people. The messages were not timetables of events for the distant future but rather a call to the people to respond to God's word right NOW! Sometimes the people listened and repented (as in the case of Jonah) and in other instances they ignored the message (as in the case of Amos). Quite often the messages of the prophets are full of doom and gloom. The people are doing bad things and bad things will happen to them. It can get kind of depressing. But if you look closely, their messages of doom and gloom are always tempered with hope.

Now, if you try to read the prophetic books in the order in which they are presented in the bible, you could be forgiven for getting a little confused. Their arrangement in the bible has nothing to do with historical sequence but simply book length (biggest at the front, littlest at the back). Amos for example deals with events before the Exile while Joel deals with events after the Exile, yet in the Bible they're next to each other. Talk about confusing!

So, we're going to start a little series here, sort of a more user-friendly introduction to the different prophets. Hopefully we can shed some light on these mysterious people, their message, and their situation.

Before we begin our series with Amos, a shepherd and tender of sycamore trees, it's helpful to know a tiny bit of background. After David's son, Solomon, died, the unified Jewish kingdom split into two: a southern kingdom (Judah) and a northern kingdom (Israel). This happened around 930 BC and each kingdom saw a series of mostly bad kings come to power. Things were slowly going downhill for Judah and Israel. Social justice was falling by the wayside. Immorality was increasing. Alliances were being made with pagan kings. Idol worship was coming out of the woodwork. And it's in this increasingly corrupt period, that God sends a series of prophets to call Judah and Israel to repentance and conversion. As we shall see, it doesn't succeed and in 722 BC, Israel is carted off into exile, followed in 586 BC by Judah. All is not lost however and in 539 BC, the Judeans come back to the land. That's it in a nutshell, and next issue we'll take a closer look at the prophets and their message.

WHO'S ON FIRST...

Just a little tracking system so you have an idea of who's where doing what!

Sept 3 Richard in McBride
 Sept 13,20,27 Theo-Tidbits—Giselle
 Sept 16 &17 Giselle preaching
 Sept 17 Vespers-??? presides

Oct 1 Richard in McBride
 Oct 3, 10, 17 Theo-Tidbits—Richard
 Oct 14 & 15 Giselle preaching
 Oct 15 Vespers-Richard presides