



THE GRRAPEVINE

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

Number 23

23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 10, 2006

HOW TO LIVE THE GOSPEL

We read from the letter of James for the next few weeks. As we listen, we are being reminded, in very concrete terms, what it means to live according to the Gospel. James is quite blunt in his words to the Christian community, reminding them (and us) that justice, impartiality, concern for the poor and a concern for the truth are the hallmarks of the faithful Christian. The focus on good works as a sign of one's faith is not a concept that we normally associate with living as disciples of Christ. Certainly there is often an emphasis on professing belief in Christ as Lord and Saviour, but too often we leave out the practical living out of that profession of faith. James challenges us to look at our faith and ask ourselves whether we profess it only with our lips, or whether we profess it with our lips AND our actions.

Certainly our attitudes are also challenged by James' exhortation. How do we look at the world around us, at the people who are part of that world? Who and what gets preference in our thoughts and activities? For James, everyone is equal and deserving of the same respect and generosity. All of creation is a gift from God, given for the good of all people. We are not to look at things in a selfish or self-centred way, but rather see all the gifts of creation as given for our good and the good of all. How do we respond to James' letter? Do we use it as a reference for our reflections and lives, or do we dismiss it as pious "granola do-goodism"?

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 Saturday, August 26, up Teapot Mt. Only 2 intrepid and diehard hikers came out for this hike. It was strenuous but very rewarding at the top.



On Saturday, September 16, we'll be guided into the Grand Canyon of the Fraser by Joe Plenk. It's about an hour's drive east of PG and then a 2.5 hour hike in, mostly flat. Meet at 7 am in the St. Mary's 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!!!!

PASTORAL TEAM TIDBITS

Richard: We begin another year! I was in McBride last Sunday for Eucharist, and will be heading up to Fort Ware on September 17 after the Sunday celebrations here. It seems that the schedule keeps getting tighter all the time.

With the beautiful weather, there has been some time spent in the garden, and I hope to continue to do that on my day off. Giselle and I have also been busy in the office doing a bit of painting and renovating. All a lot of fun, with a sense of accomplishment at the end of each project. I am looking forward to the year, as it should be quite full and exciting.

Giselle: I was off in Terrace this past long weekend, visiting my mother and doing a bit of hiking. This is the month when things really get going and I don't see a lot of free weekends in my future! RCIA is starting up, along with Theo-Tidbits, Religious Education, Parish Pastoral Council, etc. It's going to be a very busy fall!

I've also been roped in (well... OK... I volunteered!) as apprentice carpenter as we do some renovations on the parish office. We're desperately short of meeting space and with a bit of rearranging of office space, we've managed to come up with a couple of extra meeting rooms in the parish office building. The extra space will give us a lot more flexibility in scheduling different parish events and meetings. Keep your eyes on the Bulletin & Grapevine!

MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

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

Bank Balance:	2.43
DDF Balance:	173075.64
<u>Accts Receivable:</u>	<u>832.12</u>
Total Assets	173910.19

INCOME		EXPENSES	
Donations	10593.22		
Fees	950.00	Admin.	12075.08
Programs	0	Programs	376.00
Other	540.00	Oper./Maint.	2316.28
<u>Rentals</u>	<u>3200.00</u>	<u>Rental Oper.</u>	<u>923.58</u>
Total Income	15283.22	Total Expense	15690.94
		Net Income	- 407.72

MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Our month end balance is very low, as you can see. As is normal, our summer time collections have been lower than usual. With summer also comes repair and maintenance, which adds to the expense line of our financial statement. So far, we have been able to do all of the work and carry on the mission of the parish using only the income from the Sunday collections and the rental facilities. We have not had to use any of our savings this summer for the repairs, as had been the case in previous years.

With the coming of September, and a return to a more normal routine for many of us, we can look forward to an increase in our weekly income, which will ease the financial picture considerably. We still have to pay for the new furnace for the conference room and foyer, and there is some painting and other maintenance still to be completed.

Thank you to all members of the parish for your continued support for the financial needs of our parish community. As we move into the fall we continue to rely on your generosity.

WEBSITE

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, postings for coming events, as well as pdf copies of past issues of the Sunday Bulletin and the Grapevine. Check us out! And don't forget to give us your feedback and sign our guestbook on the main page. <http://www.geocities.com/saintmaryspg/>

PASTORAL CARE OF THE SICK

The Church provides ritual and prayer to assist those who are sick. The Anointing of the Sick is a sacrament that we are encouraged to celebrate when we are in need of healing. The introduction to the rite states: "Through the Apostle James, the Lord has commanded us: 'Are there any who are sick among you? Let them send for the priests of the Church, and let the priests pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord Jesus'". The Sacrament of Anointing is not reserved for those who are dying, but is meant for anyone who is in need of healing.

At St. Mary's we celebrate the sacrament of anointing twice a year in a special celebration. All members of the community are invited, encouraged and welcome to seek the sacrament when they are in need. If you are seriously ill, preparing for surgery or will be hospitalized you are invited to call the rectory and arrange to be anointed. The sacrament can be celebrated in several ways: during a daily celebration of Eucharist, in private at home or in the church, with a group of family and friends, or in hospital (in this case, ask the nurses to call the Pastoral Care Pager for a priest). Please take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to welcome the Lord's gift of healing and strength. Like Eucharist and Reconciliation, the Sacrament of the Sick is given to us as a gift to assist us on our journey of faith.

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
Sr. Margaret Quinn

FAIR TRADE COFFEE

Given James' letter in the liturgy these weeks, we see that a concern for Social Justice is an imperative not an option. Buying Fair Trade Coffee is one way that we can respond to the call to put our words into action.

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.

NEW TO THE PARISH?

If you've moved into the parish this summer, 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:

Clifford Isaac
Latoria Isaac



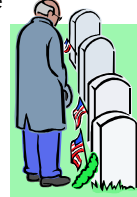
We witnessed the marriages of:

Michael Ostberg &
Lindsey Morrison



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

Maria Manfredi
Vernon Poitras
Carmine Fuoco
Otelia LaPlante



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: October 18 & 19 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

Several of the Listening Centres that began with the OMI Mission in November 2005 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.

VESPERS

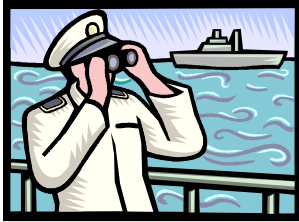
You've heard a lot about it, but maybe you're still a little unclear as to what it actually entails. Vespers is a Latin word and refers to Evening Prayer. The early Church consecrated the different times of the day by praying at various hours: morning, noon, evening, etc. (matins, lauds, etc). It used 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. If you're interested in learning a bit more, take a look in the Sunday Missal book on page 587 and following. There, you will see abbreviated versions of Morning and Evening prayer.

Vespers is actually a sung version of evening prayer, and if you find that a bit daunting, relax! We have music ministers who sing most of the really serious stuff. 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.

Our next celebration of Sunday Evening Vespers will be on Sunday, September 17 at 4:30 p.m. Come and join us for this beautiful prayer.

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: AMOS THE FARMER



Amos comes to his role as a prophet rather reluctantly. He is by trade a farmer, a shepherd and a tender of sycamore trees. He lives near Bethlehem in the southern kingdom of Judah. Around the year 760 BC, God calls him from his farmyard to go to the northern kingdom of Israel and to call the Israelites to repentance.

At first glance, it might seem that things are going quite well for Israel at this time. The aggressive Assyrians to the north are having some internal difficulties and are in no position defend their conquered territories. Israel takes the opportunity to expand its frontiers to the north, invading and conquering parts of modern day Syria. The increased military and political power of Israel results in increasing commerce and wealth for the northern kingdom. Riches and wealth are flowing into the kingdom, and the Israelites still seem to remember that it's important to offer sacrifices to God, so they continue to worship on the sacred mountains of Bethel and Gilgal.

There is, however, one tiny fly in the ointment for Israel, and that is the fact that the wealth and power are not being distributed evenly. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer. The poor, the widows and the orphans are being neglected and even cheated, in order that the rich may line their own pockets.

Amos, called by God, shows up at Mount Bethel and delivers God's message, and it's pretty harsh. God alone is sovereign over all the earth and all nations are called to serve God. While all nations are called to service, God has chosen Israel as a special people to be God's very own, to enter into a covenant with God. Part of that covenant requires that Israel live rightly. And while Israel may have thought it was doing OK, Amos shows them how wrong they are in that thinking. Their worship is empty and shallow and intolerable to God. They are lazy and indolent, dishonest and fraudulent, trampling the poor and the needy in their desire for more wealth and leisure.

And then Amos delivers the harshest statement yet, Israel will be destroyed, carried off into exile. There is very little hope that Israel will turn and repent. They've had many chances in the past, and always fell off the wagon again. The end is now coming.

The priest at Bethel basically tells Amos to go and fly a kite and to take his message elsewhere. He basically accuses Amos of being a prophet for hire, one who earns his daily bread by prophesying. Amos disabuses him of this notion by pointing out that he is self-sufficient (well-to-do farmer) and has no need to preach for money. On the contrary, it was God who called him to prophesy. We are left with the impression however, that his message is pretty much rejected by the Israelites. Less than 40 years later, however, in the year 722 BC, Amos and his message are vindicated as the Assyrians invade northern Israel and carry them away into captivity, scattering them throughout their conquered territories.

Lest we think that Amos is all about doom and gloom, however, the book does end with a message of hope, that some day, Israel will again come back to the land.

WHO'S ON FIRST...

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

Sept 13,20,27	Theo-Tidbits—Giselle	Oct 1	Richard in McBride
Sept 16 &17	Giselle preaching	Oct 3, 10, 17	Theo-Tidbits—Richard
Sept 17	Vespers-Giselle presides	Oct 14 & 15	Giselle preaching
Sept 17-23	Richard in Ft. Ware	Oct 15	Vespers-Richard presides