



THE GRRRAPEVINE

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

Number 24

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time

September 24, 2006

FREE PARISH PHOTO DIRECTORY

Just in case you're wondering about the parish photo directory and how much it's going to cost... It's basically free!!! The company that takes the photographs and publishes the directory make their money off of the sale of portrait packages. When you come in to get your photograph taken, you'll be given the opportunity to buy a portrait package of your family. There is NO obligation to do so, but some people take advantage of this opportunity to get a family portrait. As for the cost of the directory... there are two options:

Option 1: If you do get your picture taken for the photo directory, then you receive a complimentary photo directory free when they are published.



Option 2: If you do not get your picture taken, and want a photo directory, there is a fee (\$10-15/copy).

Last weekend we had 25 people sign up for our phoning committee. We still need about 75 people. All you need to do is phone people and schedule them for a photo sitting... We have sign-up sheets out again this Sunday!

BLESSING OF THE ANIMALS



FEAST OF ST. FRANCIS

Wed October 4, 2005 - 7 p.m.

In honour of St. Francis, Patron Saint of animals & of the environment, Fr. Richard will have a blessing of the animals on October 4. Everyone is invited to bring their pet(s) to receive a blessing.

Please remember that this is an inclusive event, (i.e. dogs, cats, fish, birds, rabbits, etc.) and all pets MUST either be on a leash or in a carrier, cage or bowl.

THEO TIDBITS—IT'S STARTED!!!

You've heard a lot about it (hopefully!!). Theo-Tidbits is here! How to Read the Bible is almost finished (only one more session on September 27). But then, we move into October and our next topic, which 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 at the end of November. Join us!!

CREATION HIKERS

Our last hike was Saturday September 16, to the Grand Canyon of the Fraser. It was a loonnnggg hike, 8 hours from the time we left the cars until the time that we got back. There were a lot of sore knees, legs and backs the next day! But it was very scenic. Check out the website for photos! Many thanks to our intrepid leader, Joe Plenk, who guided us along faint trails and tracks to this gem of the Fraser!

Our last hike of the year is going to be much tamer!!! We'll do a "stroll" from Fort George Park to the Cameron Street Bridge. This is a great chance to get out and enjoy the fall colours



in Cottonwood Park. This hike/stroll will take place on Saturday, October 7 at 1:30 p.m. We'll meet at Fort George Park (at the end of 17th Avenue). Bring your cameras and/or dogs! We'll have a vehicle waiting for us at the Cameron Street Bridge to ferry people and/or drivers back to their cars.

X-COUNTRY SKIERS??

Do you x-country ski? Want to join a group from the parish who will ski together during the winter? Call Erica at 564-1543.

PASTORAL TEAM TIDBITS

Richard: This past week was spent in Fort Ware. The August trip was cancelled because most people were going to be out of the village that week. Not much point visiting an empty village! This coming week will be taken up almost entirely with diocesan work – meetings of various boards and councils and the Diocesan Assembly at the end of the week. It will be good to get back to some kind of normal routine!

There have been many interesting things over the past couple of weeks – the beginning of Theo Tidbits, getting the Parish Pastoral Council meeting again (with a few new members), school starting up, scheduling workshops for various ministries and just settling into a new year's routine. I'm looking ahead to the various new projects and am quite excited about the possibilities. It will be a great year!

Giselle: The past few weeks have been a bit more hectic than normal! RCIA sessions have started again. Religious Education classes begin this Tuesday and it's been a mad scramble finding catechists. Thanks to those of you who graciously offered your services!!! We had our first Theo-Tidbits series and it looks to be fairly popular! And then there's the usual meetings of Liturgy Committee and Parish Pastoral Council, etc. Keeping the website up-to-date is an ongoing project. Thanks to those of you who give us some feedback on it! It's nice to know that people are looking at it and it's a useful communications tool!

WORKSHOP FOR LAY LED LITURGIES



We are offering a workshop for those who minister at Lay Led Liturgies. The workshop is on Monday, September 25 at 7:00 p.m. in the Church. It will be facilitated by Susan Campbell. Everyone involved in ministering at a Lay Led Liturgy is invited to attend: lectors, musicians, extraordinary ministers of communion and lay presiders.

WORKSHOP FOR LECTORS/COMMENTATORS

All lectors and commentators asked to attend a workshop on Monday, October 16 at 7:00 p.m. in the Church. Those who are interested in becoming lectors are also required to attend. We need to review some practical aspects of our ministry, both for new and for veteran lectors and commentators.

WORKSHOP FOR EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF COMMUNION

All Extraordinary Ministers of Communion are encouraged to attend a workshop on Thursday, October 12 at 7:00 p.m. in the Church. It is extremely important that all EMCs (new and old!) attend so that we are all on the same page.

WORKSHOP FOR RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CATECHISTS

All Religious Education teachers are invited to attend a workshop with Sr. Mary-Ann Bates on Sunday, October 15 at 7:00 p.m. We will meet in the Parish Office building (1088 Gillett Street—the little grey house next to the carport).

OBLATE PARISH MISSION

Last year, the OMI Mission team was in Prince George to facilitate a Regional Parish Mission at Sacred Heart Cathedral. This year, from October 22-24, they're in town for a follow-up mini mission. There will be three Great Assemblies and St. Mary's Parish will be hosting them. Mark it on your calendar and try to keep it free!!! More information as the date gets closer... and closer... and closer... Don't worry, we don't have to do door-to-door home visitations this year!

A CALL TO MINISTRY

Each year, as we get underway, we invite people to share their gifts and talents in the various liturgical ministries at our weekend celebrations. This year is no different! We ask you to prayerfully consider your gifts and talents and see if there is some ministry that has been quietly calling your name. Maybe this is the year that you will answer that call!

We offer a variety of workshops to train people, so if you're a little unsure of yourself, we can help! Remember... it's not just Fr. Richard's parish... it's OUR parish!! We'd love for you to share your creative gifts and talents with us, maybe as a:

Lector

Eucharistic Minister

Altar Server

Greeter

*Catechist &/or helper
for Children's Liturgy of
the Word*

If you are interested in serving in any of these ways, please contact the Rectory and leave your name and phone number. If you would like to nominate someone, please call the Rectory and leave their name and phone number. We will contact those who have been volunteered to see if they would consider serving.

To all of you who are now ministering and sharing your talents with us, a heartfelt thank you. If you wish to continue, please contact us and let us know. It is okay to retire from a ministry, but we need to know if we should leave you on the schedule or take your name off.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: A CHRISTIAN IMPERATIVE

Over the past hundred years, various popes have spoken out and written rather strongly and bluntly on the topic of social justice. Reaction has been varied, but often people question why the Church would speak about social justice. After all, it has "nothing to do with religion". As we read through the Letter of James, however, we begin to see that social justice, working for peace and equality and seeking the good of all people is very much a matter of faith. James equates faith with good works in the living out of one's discipleship and reminds us that works flow from faith, and that faith without works is quite dead.

James asks where disorder, wickedness, conflicts and disputes arise. His response is quite blunt - they arise from within, from our self-centred and greedy desires. For the faithful Christian, James would say, a concern for others, for peace, harmony and good will, for equality and justice, is paramount. But, we are not to be just concerned about these things; we are also to actively engage in making them a reality in our world. Social Justice is not just a nice idea to which we are called to pay lip service. The popes' calls to live justice and build a just society are not forays into civil politics and interference in our day to day lives, but rather are reminders of who we are and how we are called to live out our faith each day.

When we promote and purchase Fair Trade Coffee, when we refuse to buy items produced in Asian sweatshops that exploit children, when we contribute to Share Lent and support development projects throughout the world, when we speak out against injustice, racism, war, economic slavery, etc. and when we pray for our own conversion and the conversion of others, we are living out the faith that we profess. We are responding to James' call to show our faith by our good works. The two go hand in hand, and social justice is a call to Christians to continue the work of Jesus and build the kingdom.

FAITH IN ACTION

In past issues of the GRRRAPEVINE, we began a series of reflections on Stewardship, taken from the US Bishops' Pastoral Letter . This year, we will continue to reflect on this important topic, but the reflections will be drawn from many different sources.

Most Rev. Robert Morneau, Auxiliary Bishop of Green Bay, Wisconsin offers this short reflection:

"Shakespeare's Hamlet struggled with a mighty question: "To be or not to be?" We also struggle with our own mighty question: "To give or not to give?" The way of Jesus is not ultimately one of receiving but one of giving, the very giving of ourselves to the will of God. Discipleship is expressed in a life of stewardship - joyfully returning to the Lord a proportion of all that the Lord has given us."

When Bishop Morneau speaks of stewardship, he is not referring just to money, but he is talking about a way of life. We give of our time, our talents, our friendship, our energy as well as our material goods to express our thanks to God for all that God has given us. We have as our model Jesus, who gave everything out of love for us and for the Father. In living as disciples, or followers of Jesus, we are called to model his giving in all our daily activities. Living our faith is a call to give, to share. St. James, in his letter to the Churches, reminds us that faith is lived out in action, that faith is a call to action, not to a passive life.

RENOVATIONS

We've been doing a few renovations on various parts of our parish complex. The Conference Room has been repainted and is almost complete. The Freeman entrance is also going to get repainted. The Hacienda Room (Richard's old office) in the Parish Office has been repainted, new mouldings have been put in and a new French door installed. The next item is to rearrange furniture from the basement to the Hacienda Room, so it can better serve as a meeting space. The dining room in the basement of the Parish Office will also be rearranged as a meeting room. We've needed extra meeting space for a long time!!!

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.

WEBSITE

Our website is a great place to find information on what's happening in the parish and what's coming up. Check us out! And don't forget to give us your feedback and sign our guestbook on the main page. We'd love to hear from you!!

<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)
- Beverly Teegee
- Gracie George
- Judy Nelson
- Eugene Bachand
- Sr. Margaret Quinn

REJOICING & REMEMBERING

We welcomed the following member in the sacrament of Baptism:



- Katelin Taylor Davidson
- Tyrese Austin

We witnessed the marriages of:



- Nigel Beardwood & Erin Smith

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



- Kevin Hicks
- Katherine Zukewich

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 October 18 & 19 at 7:00 p.m. in the Parish Office (1088 Gillett Street).

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

DAILY PROPHET: HOSEA THE FAITHFUL HUSBAND



Hosea is something of a mystery man to us. We know that he was probably a native of the northern kingdom of Israel and that he probably prophesied in the capital city of Samaria from about 750 BC to about 722 BC. His personal life is also perplexing. He was commanded by God to marry Gomer and had three children with her. It is unclear as to whether or not Gomer was a prostitute when Hosea married her, or whether her infidelity came later during the marriage. What makes the Book of Hosea so interesting and troubling, are the parallels drawn between Hosea's marriage to the unfaithful Gomer, and God's relationship with unfaithful Israel.

Hosea begins his ministry during a time of prosperity for Israel. The Assyrians have been experiencing internal weakness and haven't had time to deal with the expansion of Israel's borders. During this time of relative peace, Israel has increased its wealth and power, but at the expense of the poor and the orphaned. Shortly after Hosea begins his ministry, there is a power shift in Israel, and a succession of dodgy kings take the throne. This time of unstable leadership coincides with a strengthening of the Assyrians and doesn't bode well for Israel. Bad political choices in which Israel tries to align herself with Egypt eventually result in the Assyrians saying "enough is enough". They invade Israel, destroy the capital city of Samaria and carry the Israelites off into exile.

It is during this pre-exilic time of instability that Hosea prophesies and proclaims his message. As with Amos, Hosea's message is primarily one of doom and gloom. Things are not looking good for Israel, and unless they repent and change their ways, disaster is looming on the horizon. At the same time, there is always the hope of future restoration that tempers the doom and gloom in the message. Where Hosea differs from many of the other prophets is in his vision of the relationship between God and Israel. It is not simply a business-like covenant or agreement outlined by the various duties of each party. It is an intensely personal relationship rooted in love and concern for the other. The closest that Hosea can come to describing this relationship is to compare it to the marriage of husband and wife. It is in this context that Hosea's marriage to Gomer must be understood. Hosea is not giving us a personal account of his marriage for its own sake, but to demonstrate the love and concern of God for unfaithful Israel. Hosea is trying to drive home the infinite love of God and how Israel's infidelity and idolatry are a rejection of God and of God's love.

Hosea foresees the time when God will chastise Israel in an attempt to lead her back to her senses, to lead her back to the covenantal relationship with Infinite Love. Some of the passages in Hosea that speak of this chastisement are quite harsh and blunt and must be understood in their context. These texts from Hosea are not condoning domestic violence or the abuse of women, but are a call to Israel and to each of us to repent and turn towards Divine Love. "Come back to me with all your heart, don't let fear keep us apart".

WHO'S ON FIRST...

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

Sept 27	Theo-Tidbits—Giselle	Oct 14 & 15	Giselle preaching
Sept 28/29	Diocesan Study Days	Oct 15	Vespers-Richard presides
Oct 1	Richard in McBride	Oct 22-Nov 10	Richard on holidays
Oct 4	Richard blesses animals	Oct 27-29	Giselle at Lay Formation
Oct 3, 10, 17	Theo-Tidbits—Richard	Nov 11 & 12	Giselle preaching