



# THE GRRRAPEVINE

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

Number 40

3rd SUNDAY OF EASTER

April 22, 2007

## OUR 4<sup>th</sup> TABLE FOR TWO

Our fourth Table for Two took place on Friday, April 13. Ten people came out and enjoyed another wonderful dinner cooked by Fr. Richard and served by his able assistants. Table for Two is a no-strings-attached opportunity to build community and just enjoy the company of each other.



If you're curious as to how good a chef Fr. Richard is, you could talk to: *Mylana Brander, Noel & Susan O'Beirne, Hugh & Mary-Jo Norman, Alain & Jeannine St. Croix, Dave & Maureen Kenward, Erin & Nigel Beardwood, Nadine & Peter Hale, Bonnie Ollenberger, Lisa Norman, Shelley Stang, Cyndi Sarrazin, Henriette Bratton, Rita Gaudette, Bernie Lefebvre, Marie Ladoucier, Ted & Lynne Boulter, Kevan Perrins or Celia Perrins* (to name just a few).

This was the last Table for Two before the summer. In the Fall we plan to kick off the new academic year with one for college and university students.

## NEW TO THE PARISH??

Are you new to the parish? We'd love to hear from you!! Please introduce yourself after Mass, or fill out a registration form on the bulletin boards.

## SECOND ANNUAL PLANT SALE

SATURDAY MAY 19  
8:00 to 11:00 am

Our Second Annual Plant Sale is coming up in less than a month. It takes place on Saturday, May 19 from 8 am to 11 am in the School Parking Lot. We're going to have a LOT of plants for sale!! There will be perennials, bedding plants, vegetables (cherry tomatoes), geraniums, etc. All proceeds of the Plant Sale will go to help St. Vincent de Paul, so come and help us make it a great success.



We're also looking for gifted and talented people to help us get things off the ground... On May 19, we need help with the following:

- 6:30 am muscular people to help move tables and plants into position
- 8 to 11 am friendly people to ring up sales and help people carry their purchases to their cars
- 11 am tidy people to help us hose off the tables and carry them all back inside

This year, the Fair Trade Coffee folk will be in attendance as well. You can buy a cup of coffee to sip as you browse (or you could buy pounds of it).

## PARISH CAMP-OUT



Did you know that the Diocese has a piece of property out at West Lake? Yup, it's true. As a parish, we haven't made use of it recently, but we thought it was high time we did something out there. So, on the Sunday/Monday of the July long weekend (July 1 & 2), we have booked the property for a St. Mary's Parish camp-out. After Mass on Sunday, we're all invited to come out to the property and pitch our tent or trailer or RV on the meadow and stay awhile. More details as the date comes closer. Mark it on your calendars NOW!!!

## CREATION HIKERS

Our first hike took place on Saturday, April 14. If you weren't there... you missed it!!! Eight people and 1 dog enjoyed the fine spring weather as we did an easy walk from the Cameron Street Bridge to Cottonwood Island Park. Our next hike will be led by our own intrepid Fr. Richard and will take place on Saturday, May 26. Keep your eye on the Grrapevine for the exact time and location of this hike!!



In case you're curious, take a look at the bulletin board for posters of our latest hikes.

## THEO-TIDBITS



Our series on the Paschal Mystery is almost over, which leaves just one more series before the summertime!

Sr. Hazel Dalton UJ, Chancellor of the Diocese of Prince George, will give our next Theo-Tidbits on Tuesday, May 8 & 15. She will present on the topic of Divorce & Annulments. If you're curious as to what the church teaches about divorce and annulments, come and check it out!!! Sessions will be held in the Parish Office Meeting Room at 7:30 p.m., after Vespers

## PASTORAL TEAM

Richard: The weeks fly by! It hardly seems like two weeks since Easter, but I spent a week catching up in the parish and diocesan office and I have been to Edmonton for meetings and had a chance to visit my family. Mother continues to go downhill, so I ask you to continue your prayers for her. Gardening plans are in full swing, and the transplants for the garden and all the plants for the sale are going gangbusters.

Giselle: I have to agree with Richard, the weeks have sure flown by this spring!!! Different parish programmes are slowly wrapping up before the summer. RCIA has concluded for the year, and Religious Education is finished on April 24. Our last Theo-Tidbits is coming up in May and that will be it until the Fall. It's nice to have a bit of breathing space, but I also know it's time to start looking ahead to the Fall!!! In the meantime... I'm off to Europe for a few weeks: Germany, Austria, and Hungary. Originally Prague in the Czech Republic was on the list as well, but it looks like that one might fall by the wayside. Instead there might be some more time in Salzburg & Austria. I hope I have enough memory sticks for my camera!!!

Once I get back, it'll be prime hiking season. Keep your eye on the Grapevine for our next planned hikes. And don't forget to look at the website every once in a while for photos of the latest parish events... It's had a little bit of a face lift in recent weeks, hopefully it's more organized!

## A MUSLIM FRIEND I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE KNOWN

Whenever I hear of Basra, Iraq, I think of a Muslim I would like to have had as a close friend.

Her name was Rabia al-'Adawiyya. She was born in Basra around 714 CE, a time of great political turmoil. The fourth daughter in a very poor family, she was sold into slavery at an early age. In the evenings when her daily labour was done, Rabia took up the habit of prayer. One night as he passed by her room, her owner saw a halo of light around her and freed her the next day. She withdrew to the desert.



In time she made the pilgrimage to Mecca and her journey there was filled with miraculous tales. The Kaaba is a large structure located in Mecca, said to have been built by Abraham. All Muslims turn towards the Kaaba for their prayers five times a day. It is the most holy site for Muslims. Yet Rabia said she experienced the Kaaba as "only ... stone", meaning that she sought 'only' God.

When she returned to Basra, friends and seekers gathered around her, sensing in her a unique spiritual depth. With a faith grown confident from her unique intimate acquaintance with God, she remained there for the rest of her life. She died peacefully at the age of ninety and was buried in Basra.

For Rabia, only one thing mattered, her love for God - a love exclusive of all else, even thoughts of God's eternal rewards:

One day Rabia was running with fire in one hand and water in the other. People asked her the meaning of her action. She replied: "I am going to light fire in paradise and to pour water on hell so that both veils may completely disappear ...and the servants of God may see Him without any object of hope or motive of fear."

Rabia taught that love is the only authentic motive for serving and worshipping God. Such love must be truly disinterested: we do not love *in order to*; we do not love because of; we simply love and are loved. Period. Rabia says: "O God! if I worship Thee in fear of Hell, burn me in Hell; and if I worship Thee in hope of Paradise, exclude me from Paradise; but if I worship Thee for Thine own sake, withhold not Thine Everlasting Beauty" [from me].

With such a love, Rabia holds up for us a much broader idea of sin than most people have: personal sin is everything that is not union with God. For her, even the act of confession is "hurtful in the highest degree to the soul" because it separates the soul and the Beloved. To repent, she says, we focus on ourselves, not on God.

Similarly Rabia has a surprising attitude towards nature. Many people find nature a source of inspiration and a pathway to God. For Rabia nature is yet one more distraction. One story tells that she is urged by another to go outdoors to admire God's works. She replies from within her home, "Come rather inside to behold their Maker. Contemplation of the Maker has turned me aside from contemplating what He has made."

In our world of terrorism and fear, in our world of simplistic understandings of others' religions, close friends like Rabia could save us from easy conclusions, perhaps from hastily legislated security measures. God will always be far bigger than our understanding. All our conclusions about the religion of others must include that vastness. Otherwise we fashion God after our own image.

If only we all could have met Rabia!

GROWING TOGETHER is a series of five Sunday bulletin inserts for the ecumenical education of Christ's faithful. Prairie Centre for Ecumenism 600 - 45th Street West Saskatoon, SK S7L 5W9 CANADA © 2007

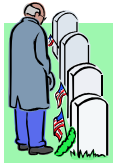
## REJOICING & REMEMBERING

We welcomed the following members in the sacrament of Baptism:

Renan Giroux  
Craig Hale

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

Alice Cote  
Shirley Jones  
Margaret Busby  
Annabelle Schell  
Richard Greenan



## WORDS AREN'T ENOUGH

In today's Gospel, Jesus challenges Peter to move beyond a verbal profession of faith and into concrete action. He asks Peter, "Do you love me?" And Peter responds "Of course I love you". Jesus says "Feed my sheep". Do something about it!



We too need to hear Jesus speaking to us today. We profess to believe in God, in Jesus and in the Holy Spirit. But in order for our faith to be living, it must be active. It isn't enough to say "I believe." We must put that belief into action, in every aspect of our lives.

If your spouse or parent were to say to you "I love you", but never showed that love in concrete action, you might begin to question the sincerity of their love. Love demands to be lived out in action. How do you live out "I love you" in your life?

## MINISTRIES IN OUR COMMUNITY CATECHISTS

When we think of the word "catechist", we might think of someone who catechizes or instructs others in the faith. We might think of the religious education catechists who teach our children on Tuesday evenings. Or we might think of the catechists who instruct adults seeking initiation into the Catholic community through the RCIA process. And yet, really, we are all catechists!



Each of us, at one time of our life, has instructed others in the Christian faith. As parents, we are the first educators of our children, teaching them many different things. One of the most important things we can pass on to our children is our faith. And our instruction, although it might include such things as teaching them our Catholic prayers, is also much more subtle. How we live our lives of faith teaches our children a lot about our relationship with God and what God is like. And children love to imitate adults, so in living our faith before them, we are allowing them to imitate us.

Beyond the parents, we know that older siblings also play a role in educating our young ones in the knowledge and practice of our Catholic faith. The older sibling can share their faith with their younger siblings, encouraging them to foster a relationship with God.

Outside of the immediate family circle, we also find strong catechists in such folk as grandparents, aunt, uncles, cousins and of course Godparents. All of these people exert a formative influence on the faith life of a child.

The teachers in our Catholic schools and our Religious Education teachers are also catechists, teaching our children the basics of our Catholic faith.

As you can see, catechists include a fairly broad spectrum of people, and it is good for us to recognize the role that we play in the faith lives of those around us, children as well as adults!

## FRUITS OF THE HARVEST



Do you have fruit trees or bushes in your backyard? Do you have time to pick all of the fruit? If you're already dreading the harvest season, because you have too much fruit and don't know what to do with it... Well, we have a solution that might benefit everybody!!!

There are some people in the parish who love to pick fruit or berries. And there are others who love to make jams, jellies or pies from the aforementioned fruit and berries. If we put all three of these groups together (provider/picker/preserver) we could have some fun and use our gifts to harvest God's gifts to us!

We thought that maybe those of you who have fruit trees or bushes that are too much for you to handle, could phone the parish office and leave your name and number and the type of fruit that is overwhelming you. We could then post this information on the bulletin boards or here in the Grrapevine and then the pickers and preservers could contact you and arrange to harvest your crop.

In return, the pickers/preservers could give a portion of their product to the provider and a portion could go to St. Vincent de Paul. Let us know what you think!!! This is a bit early, but we thought we'd plant the seed now and watch it grow by the fall!!!



**CONFIRMATION & FIRST COMMUNION**

Confirmation & First Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, April 22 at 2:00 p.m. The children have one follow-up session on Tuesday, Apr 24.

**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 Wed, April 25 & Thur, April 26 at 7 pm. Please phone the parish office at 564-4097 to pre-register



**WEBSITE**

Our website has lots of cool information on past and future parish events. Why not take look! And if you have a bright idea... let us know!  
[www.geocities.com/saintmaryspg](http://www.geocities.com/saintmaryspg)

**MARRIAGE PREPARATION**

Please call 964-2805 to register for the following Engaged Encounter weekend.  
 May 11-13

**DAILY PROPHET: JONAH**



Our last prophet, fittingly enough is Jonah, a man who didn't quite fit the regular profile of a prophet! The book of Jonah is considered by many scholars to be a work of fiction. If we examine it in a bit of detail we find numerous historical and chronological errors. And if we consider it as a work of fiction, the story of Jonah actually becomes much broader and wide reaching than if it were firmly rooted in history.

Jonah is a man who does almost the exact opposite of what we would expect. God calls him, in a typical prophetic calling, to go and prophesy to the hated citizens of Nineveh, preaching repentance. Jonah turns tail and runs away. No discussion, no asking of questions, he heads for the hills. And from the hills he journeys down to the seacoast, down to the docks, down to a ship, down into the hold of the ship and ultimately down into the belly of a great fish. He can't really get much farther away from God and yet even there God continues to work with him and call him. God wants Jonah to proclaim this message to Nineveh and he won't take "no" for an answer.

Jonah eventually capitulates and is ejected onto the beach, from which he journeys to Nineveh. He walks into Nineveh, looks around and tells them that in 40 days Nineveh will be destroyed and then walks back out of the city, rather eager to see what will transpire. Much to his chagrin, the Ninevites actually take his rather brief message to heart and repent, right down to the last cow clothed in sackcloth. Jonah is an unhappy man and complains to God that God has spared the Ninevites just as Jonah had suspected he would. And that is just NOT FAIR. The Ninevites are bad and evil and they should be punished for their bad ways. God has no business forgiving them their sins. And yet God argues with Jonah and encourages him to look at it from God's point of view. God is merciful to all people of all times and places. That's a message that runs counter to many of the other prophets that we have looked at, who gleefully promised the end of Israel's enemies, promising that they would receive their comeuppance eventually.

And that's a powerful message even for us today. When we look around us at the people who are less than good and realize that maybe, just maybe God loves them too. Could God possibly have mercy on people like that? But it isn't fair!!! We've gone to Sunday Mass our whole lives, we try to live a good life, and then somebody who's lived an absolutely horrible life has a death bed conversion and God accepts that??? That's not fair. The Book of Jonah reminds us that we don't always know God's ways, and that God's mercy is not just limited to Catholics or Christians or saints, but encompasses all people. That is a powerful message of hope for each and every one of us, because we all rely upon God's gracious gift of mercy. It is a gift that cannot be merited or earned, but is freely given. Why should we begrudge the gift to others that we ourselves receive??

**THIS WEEK AT ST. MARY'S**

Sun Apr 22	Mon Apr 23	Tues Apr 24	Wed Apr 25	Thurs Apr 26	Fri Apr 27	Sat Apr 28
9 am—Mass 11 am—Mass	7 am—Morning Prayer 7:20 am—Mass	7 am—Morning Prayer 7:20 am—Mass	7 am—Morning Prayer 7:20 am—Mass	7 am—Morning Prayer 7:20 am—Mass	7 am—Morning Prayer 7:20 am—Mass	
2:00 pm—Confirmation & First Communion		6:30 pm—Rel. Ed. 6:30 pm—Conf & 1st Comm Prep.	7 pm—Vespers 7:30 pm—TheoTidbits	7 pm—Pr. Group		7:00 pm—Mass