



THE GRRRAPEVINE

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

Number 52

28th Sunday in Ordinary Time

October 14, 2007

PRACTICE OF CHARITY

In Jesus' time, Samaritans were outsiders. Since their religious practices were not in keeping with the law, they were not accepted in Jewish society. Can you imagine the plight of a Samaritan plagued with leprosy? Twice condemned, he would be ostracized, even if cured of his disease.

Fortunately for the leper, Jesus does not see as we see. While others looked with disdain, Jesus saw a faith-filled heart. It was then that this man was healed.

There are "lepers" among us today. Homeless, hopeless, and in need, they long to be seen. They long for dignity and healing. We may not be able to cure their every ill, but not looking away from them is a good place to start.

This week, make a conscious effort to look into the face of someone who makes you uncomfortable. If we look closely enough, we might even see Jesus' face.

Jesus healed ten lepers in today's Gospel.

Only one (10%) came back to say thank you.

I, too, have received many blessings

from the Lord—indeed, all I am and all I have is gift!!

How and how often have I remembered to thank Him?

SOCIETY OF ST. VINCENT DE PAUL

Box 1617
Prince George, B.C.
V2L 4V6

Dear Fr. Richard, Parish Staff and Parishioners of St. Mary's:

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on the blessings that God gives us. We at St. Vincent de Paul feel truly thankful for the support, generosity and thoughtfulness that we receive from St. Mary's Parish.



The work that we are able to do for those challenged by poverty is only possible through the support and donations we receive. You are to be congratulated on your tremendous support we received over the past year. Your weekly donations of food, monthly collections and the well organized special projects i.e. Plant Sales, Food Drives and Christmas Hamper Collections, play a big part in helping those who seek our assistance.

At present we are serving approximately 9,000 meals, 125 - 130 family emergency food hampers and 300 fruit and veg hampers per month. Your kindness and generosity makes our community a more caring place and we are privileged to serve those in need on your behalf.

We are truly thankful to all of you for what you do for the Society.

With gratitude,

The Board of Directors
Society of St. Vincent de Paul

THEO-TIDBITS: LIMBO IN LIMBO

Our third Theo-Tidbits offering is coming up at the end of the month. It will be a one session event offered twice, once on Wednesday Oct 31 at 10 am and a second time on Thursday, November 1 at 7 pm. Both sessions will be held in the Parish Office Meeting Room.

As we move closer to November, the month during which we pray in a special way for all those who have gone before us, it is appropriate to take a closer look at an issue which causes much confusion among Catholics: Limbo.

In the fall of 2004, Pope John Paul II asked the International Theological Commission to study the issue of limbo and the fate of infants who die without being baptized. The result is a 32 page document published in January of this year and approved by Pope Benedict.

Come and get the Coles Notes version of the document and discover how limbo has been relegated to limbo!

REJOICING & REMEMBERING

We welcomed the following in the Sacrament of Baptism:



Kelsey Medeiros
Jersey Teichrob

PASTORAL TEAM

Richard: I've been to Cape Breton and back - there could be a song title there! Unfortunately, the fall colours were not yet out, so I saw a lot of green, with only a small splash of colour here and there. I spent an afternoon at Fortress Louisbourg - a French fortress built in 1713. I often forget that some of our ancestors were here in Canada so long ago (and even a hundred years before that in some places). The meetings were a great opportunity to gather with priests from across Canada and to reflect together on the needs of priests in our country and ways to respond to those needs. I am grateful for the fellowship that we share at these gatherings and for the wonderful input we had from several speakers. Now, back to work.

Giselle: This past week my Dad was visiting and this coming week my Mom is in town for a visit. Talk about busy!!! I had to make a long list of projects around the house to keep them busy. Wouldn't want them to get bored or anything! Here at the parish, our parables bible study is going quite well. The book discussion, "Make Room for God" has been postponed until after Christmas. RCIA is starting up again in a week or so and there is always Religious Education on the go as well. The week of Oct 22-26, Fr. Richard and I will be attending the "Returning to Spirit" workshop, part of a process to encourage reconciliation between the Church and residential school victims.



HOW FAR?

A psychotherapist once said that everyone wants to get better, but no one wants to get well. The readings today portray that same kind of attitude: people are willing to take half-measures that alleviate some of the pain, but do not get to the root.

With Naaman, the Syrian, he is reluctant at first to follow the prophet's instructions. He feels that the prophet should cure him by some 'magic' formula or words or touch; to have to go and immerse himself seven times in the Jordan is just a little too demeaning for him. After all, he is someone important. When finally convinced to follow the instructions, he is cured of his leprosy, but he has not yet come to the point of responding to God's love. It takes another step, the refusal of Elisha to take any payment, before Naaman chooses to worship God. Finally, he is healed and made whole. It means a new way of living for him - no longer does he worship the Syrian gods, now he is called to worship God alone.

Paul, in his letter to Timothy, reminds us that to follow Jesus takes more than half measures - it requires an absolute commitment, even to the point of being imprisoned for the Gospel. Discipleship for Paul is an all or nothing endeavor. We know the story of Paul's conversion, how he turned from persecuting the Christians to being a faithful witness to Christ and a Christian missionary to the Greek and Roman world. Paul lives out what he proclaims in his letter to Timothy.

In the Gospel for this weekend, we have the story of the ten lepers. They all seek to be healed, but nine of them continue to remain on the outskirts, not willing to come into the community of God's love and be made whole. Only the one who returns to give thanks truly responds to the gift of life that was given, and he in turn chose to live that life fully. Although Jesus sends him on his way we recognize a disciple being born, one who will proclaim the wonder of God's love for him and for all people.

Jesus calls us to follow him, to be forgiven, healed, made whole, to be disciples and continue his mission of proclaiming the good news and building the kingdom. How far are we willing to go? Do we want just a little grace, and that's good enough, or do we truly want to be living, active members of Christ's Body?

MONTHLY FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Below is the synopsis of the September financial statement.

		INCOME		EXPENSES	
Bank Balance	32.77	Donations	12951.16	Administration	12464.28
DDF Balance	172256.85	Fees	350.00	Programs	820.51
<u>Accts Receivable</u>	<u>2198.67</u>	Programs	000.00	Operation/Maint.	3146.75
Total Assets	174488.29	Other	294.50	<u>Rental Operation</u>	<u>2297.10</u>
		<u>Rentals</u>	<u>3725.00</u>	Total Expense	18728.64
		Total Income	17959.11		
		Net Income	-769.53		

The major repair and maintenance work is behind us, although there are still some windows to replace in a couple of apartments, and some final tidying up to be done before the snow flies! That being said, we should start seeing more months when our net income for that month is looking healthier than it is this month. We have been working hard to cut some of our expenses, but there is not much fat in the expense side of the budget, so we need to keep on working at keeping the income at a sustainable level. Thank you to all for your continued generous support of the work and mission of the parish.

PRISON MINISTRY

Jesus told us that whenever we visit or care for those in prison, we are visiting or caring for him. While visiting prisoners may not be feasible for many people, there are ways in which we can still minister to those in prison.

Frank Jamin is the chaplain at the local correctional centre. He has expressed a need for bibles and other spiritual reading (e.g. prayer cards, booklets, Catholic Digest, etc). We have a basket on top of the Food Bank cabinet to collect material.

TABLE FOR TWO

Table for Two is an event that had great success last year. We welcome anyone who would like to share their talents for cooking, serving or cleaning.

There are usually 10-14 guests, and 4 or 5 people working, which means that one cooks for up to 20 people. The evenings are a lot of fun, and community is built in the kitchen and the dining room! Our next Table for Two is Fri Nov 16.

NEW TO THE PARISH??

Are you new to the parish? Have you filled out a parish registration form yet?

They're available on the bulletin boards at the entrances of the Church. Better

yet, introduce yourself to Fr. Richard or Giselle after Mass. We'd love to meet you and get the chance to know you.



HOW DO YOU PRAY??

How do you pray? Do you like to pray the Rosary? Or perhaps you reflect on scripture every morning? Do you find that praying with icons nourishes your spiritual life? Or maybe none of these really work for you, and you're still searching for a prayer form that engages you? You're not alone!

As children, we are taught to say our prayers, but often we are not taught to pray. For there is a difference between "saying prayers" and "praying". Prayer is much more than a one-sided conversation in which I recite my prayers and God listens. Prayer should be a dialogue in which we speak and we listen. Sometimes, we might think that if the Rosary isn't working for us, that there's something wrong with us, that we just need to try harder. The truth is, there are many different styles or forms of prayer. Maybe you just haven't found the style that fits you!

Each of us has a special way of interacting with the world. For some of us, the visual element is very important. For others, it is speaking or listening. For others it is musical. If you've ever taught a group of children, you know that children learn and interact with the world in different ways. Several years ago, a researcher coined the phrase "multiple intelligences" as a means of distinguishing the different ways in which people learn and interact with the world around them. Although primarily an educational tool, the idea of multiple intelligences has begun to be applied in the spiritual realm as well. If for example, you are what they call "musically smart", you might find that Gregorian Chant or Taize prayer nourishes your spiritual life!

People have been using multiple intelligences in prayer throughout history. Whether a composed poem of praise, a chant, or even a liturgical dance offered to God, each uses multiple intelligences. There is usually one particular intelligence through which we best learn and pray. The other intelligences are there to help us pray with our whole person and open the doors for other forms of communication with God. When we keep the doors open to using multiple intelligences, we are creating new opportunities to experience God in different ways. We become more aware of the many times and many ways God comes into our lives.

There are eight different "smarts" or multiple intelligences:

1. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence -- well-developed verbal skills and sensitivity to the sounds, meanings and rhythms of words
2. Mathematical-Logical Intelligence -- ability to think conceptually and abstractly, and capacity to discern logical or numerical patterns
- 3 Musical Intelligence -- ability to produce and appreciate rhythm, pitch and timbre
- 4 Visual-Spatial Intelligence -- capacity to think in images and pictures, to visualize accurately and abstractly
- 5 Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence -- ability to control one's body movements and to handle objects skillfully
- 6 Interpersonal Intelligence -- capacity to detect and respond appropriately to the moods, motivations and desires of others.
- 7 Intrapersonal Intelligence -- capacity to be self-aware and in tune with inner feelings, values, beliefs and thinking processes
- 8 Naturalist Intelligence -- ability to recognize and categorize plants, animals and other objects in nature

We all possess these "smarts" to a certain degree although we will tend to be stronger in some areas than others. Each "smart" has corresponding styles of prayers. Do you know where your "smarts" lie? In the next Grapevine, we'll begin to examine some of the "smarts" and their corresponding prayer styles. To find out where your "smart" strengths are, check out the link on the main page of our website to take an inventory!

THE FOUND COIN

So, you're walking down the sidewalk, or maybe in the mall, and you see it lying on the ground... the lowly copper penny. Hmm... is it worth it to bend down and pick it up? What do you do with that single, solitary penny if you do pick it up? Perhaps you tuck it in your pocket, only to have it go through the laundry several times. Or maybe you have a coin dish/jar at home where you stash it. Or... could you do something else... We've all heard the parable of the woman and the lost coin. Today, maybe what we need is a parable of the found coin.

A certain parish had an outreach fund that was started from found coins. Two parishioners started it and others joined in. When they found change on the ground, it went into the outreach fund. They would collect their found coins during the year in a jar, and then put them in the Easter offering so that the found money could be used to serve people in need. People who participated got really excited about finding money. Sometimes the money was easily accessible: they saw a penny and picked it up. Sometimes one had to be a bit more adventurous. One parishioner reported riding a bicycle down a busy street and seeing a bright shiny quarter. A whole quarter for the jar! Should she stop in the middle of the road? In traffic? What risks should she take?

How could we help those in need if each of us started a Found Coin Jar at home? How much do you think you might collect in a year? \$5? \$50? \$500? Such a jar could include money from found bottles/cans or perhaps quarters from ownerless buggies in the Save-on-Foods parking lot. All you need is a jar, a keen eye and a generous heart.

WEBSITE

Check out our website! We have recently added an online parish calendar!

www.geocities.com/saintmaryspg

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Are you planning to get married in 2008? Check out the poster on the bulletin board for the different marriage preparation options offered in the Diocese.

VESPERS

Next Sunday, at 4:30 pm, we will be celebrating Vespers or Evening Prayer. The early Church consecrated the different times of the day by praying at various hours: morning, noon, evening, etc. Today, we call this form of prayer, the Liturgy of the Hours, a prayer that is offered to all in the church. The beauty of it is that on any given day, 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 599 and following. There, you will see abbreviated versions of morning and evening prayer. Vespers is a wonderful way to close our your day, to come and sit in silence, to pray with the community, and to offer praise and thanks to God. Come and join us next week!!

LIVING THE LITURGY AT HOME

#1 - Faith Talk

Discuss in your household or small group:

What is something you are thankful for? Why?

Do you think you are a thankful person? How do you show thanks to others?

Why can we be thankful to Jesus? How can we show him thanks?

#2 - Devotional Practices:

When Jesus healed ten lepers, only one returned to give him thanks (Luke 17:11-19). As God's people, we are called to count our blessings each day and give thanks to God. In your family devotion times this week, think together about people, events and experiences for which you can and should give thanks. Use this acrostic of the word THANKS to guide you. Finish your time of sharing by giving thanks in prayer.

*Thank God for ...
a Thing provided
a Help received*

*Another's company
an eNjoyable moment
a Kindness received
a Surprise enjoyed*

#3 - Rituals and Traditions:

Make family time this week to say thanks to one another. Focus on each person in turn and invite family members to thank them for what they have said and done and for what they bring to your family

#4 - Service:

Only one of the ten lepers healed returned to thank Jesus. There are many people who serve us in various ways in our communities - in schools, churches, community organizations, service industries - who receive little thanks for what they do. Prepare a thank you card or gift (e.g. a plate of cookies) to give to someone who regularly serves your family in some way (e.g. a postal delivery person, a policeman, a school teacher). Give thanks to God for them in your prayers this week.