
The Outrider

MAY 2005

The View from Above the Close

IN PRAISE OF DOUBT

The Sunday after Easter always brings us face-to-face with Thomas (John 20:19-31), the patron saint of "doubters". And we do not honor him enough or acknowledge the vital and profound role "doubt" plays in faith.

It seems to me that lots of religious folks have confused "certainty" with "faith". Certainty, at least in terms of knowing exactly what God wants from us or wills for us, is the exact opposite of "faith". Yet when people ask, "do you have faith?", what they usually mean is "do you know the truth?" Doubt - good, honest, marrow-deep doubt like Thomas' - isn't the opposite of faith: in fact, doubt is the possibility of faith. It is Thomas' doubt that leads him to faith...

Fundamentalists seem to be gaining strength and influence throughout the world and in all faiths. Hindu Fundamentalists in India set fire to churches and mosques; Jewish Fundamentalists are certain God wants them to continue to build homes in Palestinian land; Muslim Fundamentalists are certain Allah will reward them for acts of terror; and Christian Fundamentalists in this country and around the world narrow the Christian vision of life in ways that would be amusing if they weren't troubling. For example, Tim LeHay, co-author of the multimillion selling "Left Behind" series (that I think is based on a radical misreading of the Book of Revelation), was quoted as saying that for a Christian, the devastating tsunami that brought such stunning loss of life to the Pacific was not a bad thing.

(Having given you a moment to consider the total and horrifying absurdity of such a statement by anyone - much less a Christian - let me give Mr. LeHay his due. He explained that before the "end time" such natural disasters will increase, according to the Bible, and the tsunami only reassures us that Christ will be returning soon.)

I don't know about you, but the "certainty" of that observation makes my blood run cold. Give me hesitancy and confusion and doubt any day instead of such "certainty".

God is a mystery - "the mystery that burdens us all" - as R. Scott Bakker calls it in his novel, The Darkness That Comes Before Uncertainty. The proper response to Holy Mystery is not "certainty"...no, no...it is hesitancy and confusion and doubt. Those responses will lead us ever deeper into the unfathomable mystery and replaces it with rigid doctrine and uncompromising limitations.

Being "certain" about God, it seems to me at any rate, limits and domesticates God. God becomes the excuse we have to impose our prejudices and opinions as if they were sacred. And what is lost? What is lost is the vision and the journey and the wandering and the seeking and the being sought by God. Not a trade-off I'm willing to make.

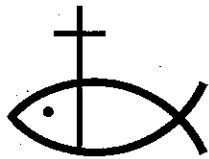
Some part of the church must reclaim the possibility of doubt, the holiness of ambiguity, the deep and profound mystery of God. Fear is what makes us long for certainty. Hope expands us, opens us to mystery, gives us room to wander about and to long and to seek to know the Lover of Souls.

The only cure to the plague of Fundamentalism and "certainty" is to hope and trust in God's mystery, God's eternal love, God's gracious kindness.

That's enough for me. While others proclaim "certainty", I will bathe myself in doubt and wonder and mystery and love - - oh, oh....most of all, God's love.

Shalom,

JIM



SO WHAT IS THE CHURCH ABOUT?

The 9 a.m. forum is a time to learn about the Episcopal Church, warts and all. It is **REQUIRED** for those who wish to be confirmed or received in June at the Deanery Service at St. John's. However, it will be a free-wheeling, no holds-barred, down and dirty conversation about the nature and future of the church that should be of interest to almost anyone.

The Deanery Service is Saturday, June 4—and we'll be wheeling and dealing about the ins and outs and even further outs and even deeper ins of the church until then. Join us....Join us....Join us....Please do....



BAPTISMS AT ST. JOHN'S

Sunday, May 15th is the next date for baptism. If you or your child desires the sacrament of baptism please contact one of the clergy as soon as possible. Classes for candidates and parents and god-parents will be May 14 at 10 a.m.



PRAYER SHAWL & KNITTING MINISTRY

The new Prayer Shawl and Knitting Ministry will commence at St. John's on Saturday, June 4th from 9 am - 12 noon in the Guild Hall. If you're interested, sign up on the hall table.



YOUTH WORKER FOR HIRE

St. John's is seeking a youth worker 10-12 hours per week, working with teens of both the Anglo and Hispanic parish. Duties to include: planning program with input from the clergy and staff and Acolyte training and scheduling. Sunday mornings a must - other times are negotiable. Resumes are accepted by mail to the church office or by email:

stjohns@stjohnsonthegreen.org.



SPIRITUALITY AND SUPPORT FOR MOMS

Need a break? Are the kids running you ragged? Worried you'll do something stupid if there's one more snow day or delayed opening this year? Actually, even if you're not a desperate housewife, if you have young kids, this group is for you! Please join us on Sundays from 9-10:00 a.m.

Each week we'll read some short piece of poetry or prose by folks like Anne Lamott or Mary Oliver or Anna Quindlan, and then we'll spend some time enjoying grown-up conversation and spiritual companionship.

Let Malinda Johnson know if you're interested (203) 754-3116 or (203) 558-2557. FREE BABYSITTING PROVIDED.

ANNUAL ST. JOHN'S PICNIC



Well, spring is just around the corner (really!) and so is the annual picnic! The date for this year's picnic is June 12th. As the saying goes, many hands make light work. If you would like to volunteer for any prep work, cooking or cleaning, please contact me (Holly Hart) at (203) 596-7937 or by email at: hollish@hotmail.com. Please use the subject "Church Picnic" so I don't delete the message! I look forward to hearing from you!



SAVE THE DATE - ANNUAL TAG SALE RESCHEDULED TO JUNE 18TH

St. John's Tag Sale is Saturday, June 18th from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Now you can clean out and recycle those unwanted and unused things you have put off doing!! We can use donations and lots of help.

Volunteers are needed to bring up items that have been stored in the undercroft on Thursday, June 16th from 6-9:00 p.m., and on Friday, June 17th from 1:00 p.m. to possibly 9:00 p.m. Please call Donna Gervickas at (203) 574-2238 or see her after the 10:15 service on Sunday.



BOOK CLUB

The next meeting of the Book Club will be Wednesday, May 4th at 1:00 p.m. in the Library. We'll be discussing The Time Traveler's Wife by Audrey Niffenegger. Join us for discussion and bring a bag lunch!



ST. JOHN'S DRUM CIRCLE

I do believe we can finally kiss this winter goodbye! As we greet another spring I invite you all to join us for another season of drumming! All are welcomed and there are plenty of drums and other percussion instruments to share...You need only to mark your calendars for every second Tuesday of the month. Drumming is a great way to bring friends and family together for a couple of hours of pure fun! I would like to add that drumming can be a great workout as well! The next Drum Circle will be held on Tuesday, May 10th at 7:00 pm. *Michelle Carrano*

MEMORIAL CONCERT THANK YOU

Dear Friends at St. John's:

Thank you all so much for the wonderful Memorial Concert for Charles on April 3. I know it took a lot of work to get it together and just after Holy Week and Easter. It was a truly magnificent afternoon and I know Charles would be so pleased and humbled by the out-pouring of love and talent we all enjoyed. I had calls on Monday and Tuesday following it from friends across the nation, inquiring about the Concert and I was happy to report in glowing terms about its success. Again, thank you. *Judith McManis*





CHURCH SCHOOL

The Creative Church School meets Sunday morning from 9-10:00 a.m. on the third floor. New students are always welcome.

The Church School will be focusing on the Books of Acts and St. Paul's letter in May. We start the month still in the Easter Season and we end the month with the celebration of Pentecost. We remember how God's spirit pours out abundantly on the community of disciples. The Spirit renews the face of community with a diversity of person and gifts, included and given for the common good.

Beginning Sunday, May 1st, the Church School will launch "Heifer Project International". Formed in 1944, this project has enabled hungry families throughout the world to become SELF RELIANT with a source of food rather than short term relief.

Each Church School family will receive a small plastic ark for their donation with an HPI calendar. The ark should be brought back to church on May 22. Our first goal is to collect donations towards a flock of chicks which will be given to a needy family. As a visual aid, each class will have posted a "chick chart" and every dollar received collectively, a new chick will be added until a flock of 20 chicks is achieved. After this is accomplished, we can proceed to another animal.

We truly hope that this project will demonstrate the satisfaction of helping families themselves and in turn, others.

May 1st: The arks will go home. The children will start their fund drive with a cookie sale during coffee hour.

May 8th: The children will make and share egg salad sandwiches during coffee hour.

May 15th: Penny Pinch Sunday. Bring your jars of pennies to church. The winner will get a gift basket. The winners are hungry families you help. (Jars will be weighed to determine winners 1 adult and 1 child).

May 22nd: The Church School class will focus on how Heifer Project works with families through stories in the Bible. Return arks.

May 29th: The Church School will have Celebration Breakfast in the Guild Hall at 9:00 a.m. A report on funds collected will be given. The children will vote on how the remainder of the funds collected (after we donate the flock of chicks) should be disbursed.

THE SECOND COMPANY GOVERNOR'S FOOT GUARD SPRING CHARITY CONCERT SUNDAY, MAY 1ST AT 4:00 P.M.



The Second Company Governor's Foot Guard will perform a charity concert May 1 for the benefit of Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries' Soup Kitchen. The concert is set for 4:00 p.m. at St. John's. The price of admission will be any non-perishable food item or a monetary donation for the Soup Kitchen. Checks should be made payable to "GWIM" with the words "Soup Kitchen" written on the memo line.

The musical program will include patriotic music, Broadway, and light classics. Refreshments will be sold by St. John's Outreach Committee, with proceeds going to the shelter.

The GWIM Soup Kitchen serves one hot meal a day to the hungry and maintains an emergency food pantry for those in need.

The Second Company Band, based in New Haven, is one of the oldest military bands in the Northeast. The band is conducted by Staff Sgt. Ralph Sherman. The band previously performed at St. John's in December 2004.



**CELEBRATION OF JUBILEE MINISTRY IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
GREATER WATERBURY INTERFAITH MINISTRIES**

If you haven't yet reserved a seat at the Spring Charity Dinner hosted by Greater Waterbury Interfaith Ministries on **Saturday, May 14th at 5:00 p.m.**, please do so before it's too late. Tickets are \$35.00 per person (please make checks payable to GWIM). Appetizers, dinner, wine and soft drinks, and a dessert table featuring Sweet Maria's cakes and pastries will be offered to those attending this gala. The Taft School Jazz Band and our own wonderful Chorister Academy will be performing in the Sanctuary after dinner.

That evening, St. Johns' will be presented with an award recognizing Jubilee Ministry by The Rt. Rev. James Curry. Jubilee Ministry, within the Episcopal Church, recognizes those churches who actively "live, walk and talk the faith". The occasion will be marked and commented upon by Congresswoman Nancy Johnson, as well as local politicians and state legislators.

This will be a wonderful evening for both St. John's and GWIM. We will be able to highlight our unique position on The Green - this wonderful sacred space - and bring to the forefront the ministry which goes on here.

All proceeds for this dinner will benefit the Soup Kitchen and Resource Center. By June 30th of this year, the Soup Kitchen will serve 61,000 meals, the Pantry will give out at least 23,000 bags of groceries, and more than 1,500 clients will come through the Resource Center seeking counseling and referrals.

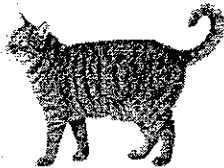
If your schedule permits, please join us. If you have any questions about Jubilee Ministry, the dinner, or would like to make a reservation, please call Sue Pronovost in the Church Office from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at (203) 754-3116 or afternoons at GWIM at (203) 756-7831 or sign up on the hall table.



AFTERNOON PIANO CONCERT - SUNDAY, MAY 15TH AT 4:00 P.M.

Connecticut Composer, Timothy Paul Beerbaum of Cheshire, along with Master Pianist, Sheng-Yuan Kuan, request your company for a change-of-pace afternoon of: The Great Masters (Rachmaninoff, Bach, Ravel), premier performances of Tim Beerbaum's latest compositions, and incredible, edge-of-your-seat virtuosity of Sheng-Yuan Kuan. This concert is free of charge. Reception to follow the concert. RSVP at your earliest

convenience to Tim at (203) 272-0836.



THE FAITHFUL

Kathy's cat never forgets her. In our living room he sits on the hassock, facing a table of family photographs. He looks left to right, right to left, then stares straight ahead at her photograph. He's in meditation for 5-10 minutes, then goes on his way. This happens several times a week. Animals keep the faith in concernment and love. *Sarah Haines*



AMERICARES VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

AmeriCares is in the 7th Year! Wow!!! This year we will renovate an elderly women's home in the Chase School area. We are looking for volunteers to do big jobs as well as little ones so please join us on May 7th at 8 am. Donna Deitch has a sign up list on the hall table. She will contact you with specifics. Ted and Pat Bojarski are accepting food donations. Call the church office to connect with them. A good time is always had by all, so please join us!

Another reason why I don't keep a gun in the house

The neighbors' dog will not stop barking.
He is barking the same high, rhythmic bark
that he barks every time they leave the house.
They must switch him on on their way out.

The neighbors' dog will not stop barking.
I close all the windows in the house
and put on a Beethoven symphony full blast
but I can still hear him muffled under the music,
barking, barking, barking,

and now I can see him sitting in the orchestra,
his head raised confidently as if Beethoven
had included a part for barking dog.

When the record finally ends he is still barking,
sitting there in the oboe section barking,
his eyes fixed on the conductor who is
entreating him with his baton

while the other musicians listen in respectful
silence to the famous barking dog solo,
that endless coda that first established
Beethoven as an innovative genius.

From *The Apple That Astonished Paris: Poems by Billy Collins* by Billy Collins, copyright ©1988 by Billy Collins - U.S. Poet Laureate 2001-2003.

"Billy Collins is an American phenomenon. No poet since Robert Frost has managed to combine high critical acclaim with such broad popular appeal. His work has appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Paris Review*, and *The American Scholar*, he is a Guggenheim fellow and a New York Public Library "Literary Lion." His last three collections of poems have broken sales records for poetry. His readings are usually SRO, and his audience - enlarged tremendously by his appearances in National Public Radio - includes people of all backgrounds and age groups." (From press release: Steven Barclay Agency)

Billy Collins is coming to St. John's, to Waterbury, April 4, 2006. Most of you have heard something about this visit and probably wonder what all the excitement is about. We believe his poetry speaks for him pretty well, so we will be putting poems by Billy Collins in the *Outrider* periodically. But the primary purpose of inviting Billy Collins to Waterbury is to expose Waterbury public school students to poetry. He will be reading to 400 students for an hour on April 4 at St. John's followed by a question and answer session for 30 selected students. Members of the committee (a sub-group of The Friends of St. John's) met with Superintendent Snead and other members of the school administration to work out the details and their support for the project was complete and enthusiastic.

A secondary motivation for inviting Billy Collins to St. John's is to promote St. John's and its role in the community of Waterbury. We are planning an additional reading and book signing (to which we will sell tickets) to follow the student reading. We hope the publicity surrounding both of these events will spread the word about St. John's and who we are. We also are excited about opportunities to develop partnerships with local organizations: caterer/site of reading/book signing; bookstores; funding sources; school system; library; local book clubs.

(continued on next page)



In Memory Of:

Ralph Petrocione
Eunice A. Munger
Gannon Family
John Mancinone
Joseph & Austina Bokon
William & Anne Gervickas
William H. & Katherine H. Martin
Christian & Anna Schumacher
Sara & Robert Seystahl
Phoebe & Patrick Osborne
Ruth & Harold Peterson
Cameron Klobedanz
Albert Lange
The Loved One of Wade G. Cooper
Marjorie Ireland
Vibert Gray
Clara Townes
Noel & Henry Thomas
Bonnie-Jean Baranoski
William Dexter
Joyce Hainsworth
Mr. & Mrs. Joseph Klein & Family

Penelope M. Harris
Bojarski Family
Evelyn Conda
John Markowich
Francine Tartaglia
Jean Minkler
Genevieve Hamilton
Dorothy Seystahl
Charlotte Moran
Alice & Thomas Behan
Marvin Oonk
Florence Sperring
Frederic & Lucy Kellogg
Richard O. Clark, Jr.
James Hamilton
Ian Zachary Dwyer
Helen Strobel
Kristin Marchionna
Emily Dexter
Oral Pomeroy
Paul Totoritis

For the glory of God and for the blessings of life,
family and friends:

Ray & Lorraine Barker
Marvin & Charlene Knighton
Paulina Mendoza

Robert Cook
Evette & Jerry Lamy



MAY

- 5/2 Bill Payne
- 5/3 Jim Manners
- 5/3 Susanna Torres
- 5/4 Priscilla Munson
- 5/5 Sarah Haines
- 5/6 Mae Osborne
- 5/6 Luraccio Lugo
- 5/7 Thomas Santopietro
- 5/7 Andrew Gates
- 5/8 MacKenzie Bodor
- 5/8 Glenn Decarolis
- 5/8 Dakota Whidbee
- 5/8 Cheyenne Whidbee
- 5/10 Emily Brown
- 5/10 Genevieve Scott
- 5/10 Jeffrey Scott
- 5/10 Jill Stevenson
- 5/11 Olivia Quirici
- 5/11 Courtney Tani
- 5/12 Ted Bojarski
- 5/13 Marian Carroll
- 5/13 Paul Pernerewski, III
- 5/14 Kayleigh Blaszczyk
- 5/14 Melissa Perreault
- 5/14 Robert Worden
- 5/16 James Chilcoat
- 5/17 Monica Daniel
- 5/17 Dominic DiZinno
- 5/18 Casey Spinella
- 5/20 Tiffany Tellerday
- 5/21 Ethan Ward
- 5/25 Maria Coffin
- 5/27 Robert Cook
- 5/27 Heidi Payne
- 5/27 Gabriela Velazquez
- 5/29 Tiffany Sevas
- 5/29 Jeffrey Brown
- 5/29 Janet Gurniak
- 5/29 Maude Stevenson
- 5/29 Jennfier Asklar
- 5/30 Jason Lanoie
- 5/31 Gabrielle Benjamin

MAY ANNIVERSARIES

- 5/1 Ernest & Linnea Savoy
- 5/4 Joseph & Karyn DiTomaso
- 5/8 Ray & Lorraine Barker
- 5/15 Charles & Dawn Beaudoin
- 5/17 Eric & Franca Hahn
- 5/20 Rocco & Vicki Longo
- 5/24 Hector & Lisa Echeandia
- 5/25 Dan & Elizabeth Lafferty
- 5/30 Bill & Elaine Garretson
- 5/31 Vincent & Elena Viega
- 5/31 David Miller & Aida DaSilva

MAY PARISH PRAYER CYCLE

May 1: Christopher & Wendy LeBeau, Richard Lee & Tom Butcher, Peter & Bertha Anne Lenart, Bruce Levett & Kasheene Dasent, Wayne & Catherine Lewis, Cynthia Liburd, Anthony & Tracy Longo, Rocco & Vicki Longo, Frederick & Gina Loomis, and Dyann LoRusso.

May 8: Wayne & Alice Lowry, Melita and Michael Lucas & Family, Jeanne Luedke, Andrew and Karen Lyman & Family, George MacDonald, Michael & Debra MacDonald, Earle Major & Jennifer Asklar, Edward Maldonado & Evelyn Ferrar, Alan Mancinone & Family, and Alice Mancinone.

May 15: Laureen Mancinone & Family, Lisa Mancinone & Family, Jim & Beth Manners, Jon & Ann Mantzaris, Russell & Shirley Marcy, Alexandria Markowich, George & Donna Marlak, Tony & Jennifer Marques, Galo Marriott, and Michelle Mastropiero & Family.

May 22: Alex Matolesy & Claudia Medina, Jill & Vincent Matteis, Greg & Laurie Mattson, The May Family, Andrew & Sarah Mazzei, Michael & Sharon McDonald, Gerard McDonald & Janet Mitchell, Elaine McDonnell, Kathleen McManamy & Sandy Porteus, and David Miller & Aida DaSilva.

May 29: Steven and Karen Minkler & Family, The Misurelli Family, Marilyn Mitchell, Richard & Nancy Modeen, Marcia Monagan, Amy Moniello, Stephen & Cheryl Moody, Scott & Ana Moore, James Morgan, and Laurie Morgan & Family.

The members of the Billy Collins Committee are: Jay Anthony, Lillian Brown, Lorene Castle, Harriet Fotter, Charlie Monagan, Jill Stevenson, Mary Beth Thompson, and Courtland Young. We will need lots of help - now and nearer to the time of the readings. If you are interested in working with the schools and students; organizing the reading/book signing and reception; helping us to find the funds to cover the costs of Billy Collins, books for the students, expenses for St. John's, etc.; publicity; or coordinating volunteers for the event itself, please let any member of the committee know or call Harriet Fotter at St. John's 203-754-3116.

Harriet Fotter



Henri Nouwen & Thomas Merton

Since the library has acquired a number of Nouwen and Merton books, I thought it might be helpful to comment on these two beloved writers, in hope that St. John's readers will borrow a book or two to read.

Henri J.M. Nouwen was born in 1932 in the Netherlands and died unexpectedly of heart failure in 1996. A Roman Catholic priest for nearly forty years he taught at Notre Dame and at Harvard and Yale Divinity Schools. There was a time in Connecticut, that any church who had a Yale seminary graduate in the pulpit, could be guaranteed quotes from one or more of Nouwen's thirty books. Nouwen served as pastor of l'Arche Daybreak Community in Toronto, an interfaith residential community for the mentally disabled, where he found his home for the last 10 years of his life.

Nouwen went on pilgrimages to many countries to serve the poor, meet with people and share his inner life, his hunger and thirst for the spiritual truth. Nouwen spoke profoundly of the core elements of spiritual life: prayer, community and ministry. His books try to help "people see God's love and freedom—images like bread broken and shared, an empty church, open heart, clowning, circuses, mirrors, dancing and homecoming." (Carolyn Whitney-Brown).

One of his favorite parables, was "The Prodigal Son". I attended a lecture Nouwen gave in Hartford. He had just returned from the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, where he meditated for days on Rembrandt's painting of the subject. In front of a large reproduction of the work, Nouwen commanded the stage with life and fervor, as he took the part of each character in the painting. His book: *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Meditation on Fathers, Brothers, and Sons* (1992) fully explores this parable. Nouwen wanted us all to live life with this passion and conviction.

His writings have influenced "generations of Christians from seminary to the streets of Sarajevo and which will place him in the company of the most significant spiritual writers of the 20th century." (Bret Grainger).

Thomas Merton was born in France in 1915 and died in 1968 in Bangkok of accidental electrocution. Merton grew up in New York City, lost his parents at a young age, therefore, homeless and without family. He longed to find himself and a place to belong. After a decadent secular life style, he was baptized a Roman Catholic, earned a doctorate in English from Columbia and finally entered the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky when he was 26 years old. He became a Cistercian monk adhering to a strict monastic and hermitic routine. During this time he began his writings. His book, *Seven Storey Mountain* (1948) is an account of his life from chaos to peace. He published over 60 books, articles, journal, and letters. Merton became a spiritual guide, critic, poet, mystic and activist for social reform. He was always on a journey to find spiritual meaning and explored Asian cultures and religions. Merton "was a contemplative master of monumental fame and significance." (Kathleen Deignan)

Henri Nouwen met Merton once. Nouwen was familiar with Merton's writings and they became inspiration for him. "He has seen that for Merton the way to relevance was the way of prayer and contemplation." (John Bamberger: Abbot of the Genesee)

Marcia Holroyd, Librarian

Celebrations

By Lorene Castle, Senior Warden

I have just realized that I do not have sufficient time to tell you about everything I celebrate at St. John's before my term as Senior Warden term ends. That is good news. It means there is much happening at St. John's.

We had 750 people at our four Easter Services. That is a 30% increase from last year. We are well on our way to becoming the program sized church that Jim often talks about. I believe it is crucial that we find ways to know each other as we become bigger. I want to tell you three of the ways that I got to know some of you at St. John's.

1. I heard that St. John's chancel choir was going to sing an Evensong service a few weeks after I started coming to St. John's. I wanted to sing in that Evensong. I found a person in a red robe after church who introduced me to Bob Havery. I have been in the choir ever since. That is how I met the first people at St. John's. Judy and Charles McMannis were part of our choir then.

I did not think that anything could be better than Evensong. Last Sunday certainly came close to the Evensong experience. Last Sunday, April 3, I had the privilege of singing in a choir with folks from St. John's, First Lutheran, Yale Camerata, Everyman Guild, Judy McManis and listen to the outstanding organ performances by Bob Havery and Maria Coffin.

2. Several years ago, Mary Gates asked me to find volunteers for the AmeriCares project. That is the project where we make a home safe, warm, and dry for a low-income homeowner. That project was a bit scary for me since I only knew people in the choir at that point. Thankfully, several choir members also signed up for AmeriCares. In addition, seventy-five other people signed up for AmeriCares that year. I met Christine Stolfi, Sandy Allard and Jan Gurniak who are still committed to making our community safer and better the people in our parish community.

3. Then Bill Garretson, Jim Bradley, and Mary Gates started Discernment One. We come from many communities. The discernment groups provided an opportunity for us to know each other better. I met Ray Rosa in that group and have valued our connection ever since. I love looking down from the choir to see Ray, Nicky and Raquel knowing that I will always have that connection primarily because of Discernment 1.

I know absolutely that each of the three groups I mentioned would love to have you join. This is St. John's! You can volunteer at St. John's. You are welcome.

- The chancel choir practices on Thursday evenings at 7:30 P.M. We will even give you some extra help to learn your part if it has been a while since you have sung in a choir. Call me if you would like extra help (203) 756-1733. We sing through June 12, 2005.
- Our seventh AmeriCares Home Front project is Saturday May 7th. Donna Deitch will be signing people up for that project. This is a wonderful opportunity to see how much difference you can make in one day. Do not miss this one.
- Please talk to Bob Toffey about Discernment Two. You will never be sorry you did.

FOOD FOR THE JOURNEY

With all the stress and challenge that life may bring, there is some blessing in being able to enjoy some good food every now and then. With this in mind, I offer this contribution to the *Outrider* which will include a new recipe in every newsletter. I love to cook and I love to eat, and I truly believe that a good meal is an occasion for communion of sorts with friends and family. Good food feeds the soul.

During the winter months we have occasionally served loaves of unleavened communion bread at some of the services. I have been baking these loaves and I welcome this privilege. However, some people have asked if they might have the recipe and if they might also bake some of the bread to be used at communion. What a wonderful idea! In this way, the offering of bread truly becomes the offering of all of us to God, in some cases made by our own hands. So, if you would like to make the communion bread for Sunday, please let us know, and we will generate a list that manages the bread baking so that we don't end up with 120 loaves for one Sunday!

Here is the recipe for the communion bread. It is a hearty loaf that can be enjoyed at the altar or far from it. My children love to eat it fresh out of the oven. Making bread is an ancient tradition and a spiritual exercise. Enjoy!

Michael Spencer

Grace & Glory Communion Bread Recipe

Dry Ingredients:

Combine all dry ingredients and sift 3 times.

- ☞ 2 ½ Cups Whole Wheat flour
- ☞ 2 ½ Cups White All Purpose flour
- ☞ 1 Tablespoon Baking Powder
- ☞ 2 Teaspoons Salt

Wet Ingredients:

In another bowl, combine well wet ingredients:

- ☞ 2 Tablespoons olive oil
- ☞ 3 Tablespoons honey
- ☞ 3 Tablespoons Mild Molasses
- ☞ 2 Cups hot tap water

Mix together wet and dry ingredients stirring to moisten, turn out onto floured board. Knead 3-4 times to form dough.

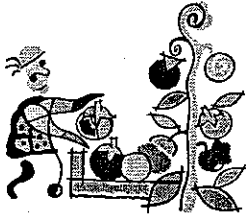
Tip: *If dough sticks, lightly oil your hands*

Pinch off a piece about the size of a tennis ball. Pat and roll into a circle the thickness of ¼ TO ½ Inches.

Using a knife, score a cross into the center of each circle. Carefully transfer to a greased cookie sheet. Bake in a 375° oven for 15-17 minutes. Remove and lightly paint with oil.

Return to oven for another 8-10 minutes. Do not over bake. Cool on wire rack.

Loaves freeze well for up to 3-4 weeks in Zip Lock bags. Yield is 11-12 loaves, 24 pieces/loaf, max. 288 pieces.



SHARON GARDEN PROJECT

Spring is here and it's time to think about how we can help with the Sharon Garden Project. For those of you who are not familiar with this project, this is what it's all about:

Dan and Mary Gates generously donate the use of their land in Sharon to grow produce that is distributed to the Jubilee Harvest of Waterbury Baptist Ministries and to the GWIM Soup Kitchen at St. John's. This ambitious project provides fresh veggies to those who would otherwise not have it.

This doesn't happen without the help of a lot of folks who contribute their time and talents. Help is always needed throughout the planting season and this can be arranged to meet an individual's schedule. However, on these dates we need help for specific projects:

5/28/05	Planting of summer vegetables
6/11/05	General clean-up, weeding and planting

Workdays are generally from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

The following items can be donated at any time:

Seeds

Carrots
Yellow Squash or Zucchini
Pole Beans (early riser)
Lettuce, any kind especially Mesculin
Collard Greens
Spinach or Swiss Chard
Snow Peas
Potato Eyes, Yukon Gold
Onion Bulbs and Shallot Sets
Radishes
Herbs, Basil, Dill, and Rosemary

Plants

Marigolds
Cosmos
Black Eyed Susans
Four O'Clocks

We also need folks who are willing to pick up produce on Friday mornings during the growing season for delivery to Waterbury.

If you are interested in participating in this ministry, please contact me (860) 274-1501 or Dan Gates at (860) 672-6773.

Lorraine Barker



St. John's Flower Ministry has modified the way altar flowers are dedicated on each Sunday. Altar flower offerings of nature's beauty are acts of worship that enhance the liturgical seasons, provide beauty to God's altar, and expresses our love of God's creation in all seasons.

The Flower Ministry has issued an "open call", if you will, for anyone to have altar flowers donated in memory of a loved one, regardless of the amount donated.

Attached to this Outrider are two forms to fill out: one form if you just want to make a general donation to the altar flower fund and a second form for those who wish their loved one(s) to be remembered in the Prayers of the People.



I wish to make a donation to the flower fund:

Name: _____

Address _____

Amount Donated: _____

I/We wish to have:

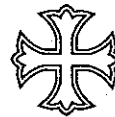
Name(s): _____

Remembered in the Prayers of the People

on Sunday, _____

Name _____

Address _____



FOR THE MONTH OF MAY, WE HAVE BEEN ASKED TO GIVE THANKSGIVING FOR THE LIVES OF THE FOLLOWING:

May 8: Lillian Andrus, Wanda Audietis, Phoebe & Patrick Osborne, Alice & Thomas Behan, Ruth & Harold Peterson, and May Morin.

May 22: Margaret & William J. Briggs, Sr., William J. Briggs, Jr., and Howard Hughes.