

# THE MESSENGER

A monthly publication by and for the community of Saint Ann's  
to inform and involve them in its activities, programs and ministries.

Lent 2007

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Dear Friends:

The opening words to Lent invite our attention to holiness, which, summarily put, might be thought of as living vividly conscious of our connection with God. That is something easily lost in the usual business of the day. Tasks interfere. Individual concerns take precedence. God, of course, being timeless, can wait. And our holiness is dimmed to a good deed here or there.

One of the finest statements ever made about holiness, however, came shortly after the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington DC. Martin Marty wrote a short reflection that was printed in *The Christian Century*, and, having read it then, it has ever since never been far from my thoughts. It bears quoting at length – as a reminder of how holiness resides in the church and how it can be embraced as the “prosaic heroism” that is the church’s gift to all.

He wrote:

*Campus chaplains are reporting that special worship services have been filling their sanctuaries these days. Pews that often gather dust have been crowded with students who usually pass the churches by. They meditate, cry, pray. Meanwhile, public figures invoke the name of God and bless the nation...*

*Meanwhile, in innumerable broadcast interviews survivors and those who sought survivors told of their private prayers. If there are no atheists in fox-holes, there did not seem to be many in the stairwells, corridors and streets where panicked people cowered or ran.... America was at prayer.*

*It is trite but valid to compare September 11, 2001, to December 7, 1941, when churches half-full on Sunday morning filled that evening after news of Pearl Harbor came in. Or to November 22, 1963, when praying crowds flooded churches after the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Or January 28, 1986, when the space shuttle Challenger disintegrated, and campus chapels were again crowded by a new generation.*

*It would be easy to deride these acts of worship and prayer as superficial, ungrounded, unfocused, generic, "civilly religious" and more. These weeks, however, when we are gathered together benumbed and in need of each other are not the moments for critical analysis. Who has the credentials to measure the value of particular prayers when civilization is threatened?*

*Instead I want to point to the people whose year-in, year-out steadfastness tends to get overlooked by the postdisaster worshipping crowds. Does it occur to the crisis churchgoers that someone must be paying for the pews they occupy, the lights that are ready to be turned on, the doors that open, the buildings where the language of prayer takes on special meaning? Does it occur to them to become part of worshipping communities, to take*

# Worship

A happiness that is sought for ourselves alone can never be found: for a happiness that is diminished by being shared is not big enough to make us happy. There is no end to the sharing of love. Infinite sharing is the law of God's inner life.\*



But think of the usual loneliness of the church... a church quietly, patiently, prosaically heroic in prayer, worship and acts of love in times when there is not crisis.



The color of Lent is gray.

*part in this sustenance? Do they remember that such communities keep alive the vocabulary of prayer, the stories that give meaning? The state doesn't pay for the church--thank God!--and for-profit organizations cannot do much to support it. Who will?*

*Credit the heroic firemen, police and rescue workers; praise hospitable friends and comforters. But think of the usual loneliness of the church--on campus, downtown, in suburbs and in small towns--a church quietly, patiently, prosaically heroic in prayer, worship and acts of love in times when there is no crisis. That prosaic heroism in the face of neglect allows the church to welcome all who seek sanctuary in times of crisis.*

Heroism is not just association. It is the committed support that often lies hidden until need shows it to be what it truly is – giving something of your own life for the lives of others. And that, as God revealed in Jesus Christ, is holiness made real in us.

This “prosaic heroism” is most often talked about by means of a different term, more prosaic than heroic. It is called stewardship. For this season of Lent, however, I would encourage you to think about stewardship, that regular and seemingly mundane offering of talent and time and financial resource to the church, in much grander scale. It accomplishes more than we can measure.

This is especially important as we set out this year to substantially boost the ministry of this parish. Our programs for youth and family need more attention, care, and development than we can provide with our current staff. We can choose, either to allow this ministry to shrink away or, by means of increased commitment, to be inspired by stewardship that is and feels more heroic than plain or obligatory. A clearer holiness is very close to all of us, if Martin Marty’s provocative questions prompt us to a greater embrace of the very real sanctuary, hope, promise, and welcome we can provide for all – of every age.

## **Assitant Rector The Rev. Patricia Davidson**

The color of Lent is gray. Not in our liturgical tradition, of course. In the church, during Lent, we drape the sanctuary in purple, connoting not sadness or mourning, as is commonly supposed, but rather royalty. Purple is the color associated with sovereignty, so we use it in Advent and Lent to signify the coming of our King – first as a new born child and then as the one who was crucified and rose from the dead - King of kings and Lord of lords. Other seasons of the liturgical year have other colors: white for Christmas, for example, green for the months after Pentecost and red (the color of blood and flame) for Passiontide, Pentecost and days celebrating the martyrs and saints.

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In our imaginations and in the secular world the liturgical colors don't always match the colors we associate with certain seasons. Very few people, if any I think, wrap their Christmas presents or decorate their yuletide houses in white (which would be liturgically correct). However, I've noticed a growing fashion to decorate trees and exteriors with white lights only. Nonetheless, red and green are the "politically correct" (regardless of your denomination or faith) colors of Christmas.

I've always thought of Lent as gray. Partly that's because so much of the world around us is gray at this time of year. Like today. At the moment of this writing, I am iced in. Yesterday's rain, which had turned into a lake on the hard packed ground around my house, froze over night so that my house now sits on something like a gray glacier. Beyond the porch, Whalebone Cove is a monochrome in shades of gray: stripes and swirls. Small congregations of gray ducks and geese huddle here and there. The bare branched oaks and even the hemlocks are gray against the gray sky. And to borrow a thought from Frederick Buechner even the wind seems gray.

But I also picture Lent in tones of gray, because, for me, gray best conveys the mood of Lent. I don't know if I can explain what I mean, but I will try. Our visual cortex is constantly bombarded by color in addition to the colors in nature (except in Lent). There's hardly anything these days that comes in black a white. Except for the occasional "art film," everything is in blazing colors, from roadside billboards (remember the old Burma-Shave ads: stark black letters on white backgrounds?) to TV's living Technicolor. (In contrast, the deeply moving black and white photos of Life Magazine in the '40s come to mind). I remember my disappointment when the New York Times first published a color photo on the front page! Vibrant, stimulating, exciting and even dazzling, color is everywhere. We do not seem to be able to get enough of it.

Color for the eyes has its counterpart in sound for the ears. It seems as though hardly anyone can bear to spend even a minute without the stimulation of sound. The other day a repair man came to my house. While I was trying to explain what was wrong with the machine he was listening to music by means of a gadget fastened onto one ear while at the same time he consulted his boss on his cell phone pressed to the other ear.

I wondered....If visual and auditory stimulation is epidemic, so is activity. And, oddly enough, "programs" seem to multiply in Lent. A couple of weeks ago I tried to make an appointment with a woman to look at some books I want to give away. She insisted that she would have to come in the next couple of days because: "Lent is coming and I have no free evenings".

The gray mood of Lent is the antithesis of Mardi Gras – which is of course, why that celebration is intentionally so flamboyant in its stimulation of every sense, including kinetic!

For me, Lent is the time to "gray down" all of these stimulations and, dare I say, distractions. It is a time for me to try to enter into an internal grayness, a wilderness where I can allow the grayness to envelope me and I can be silent and still. In this gray wilderness, there will be voices, but my Lenten effort will be to try to be attentive for God's voice, which will more than likely be silent as well.



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God may be silent in my Lenten grayness, but God will not be absent...

God may be silent in my Lenten grayness, but God will not be absent any more than God was absent in the gray (?) and dark void over which in the beginning God's Spirit brooded bringing order of chaos and light out of darkness. I think without this kind of silence and stillness in us, it is difficult, if not impossible for God's Spirit to work out –or for God's Word to speak into being – anything new. So I will try to stay in that gray zone (wilderness) for these few weeks and, pray that in that place God will work something new in me and that, at very least, I will be better prepared to respond fully to the brilliance of Jesus' resurrection at Easter.



After Ash Wednesday services, many people inquired about the quote on the cover. It appears below for you to read again.

*The heart of the matter is  
that the contrary to silence is not sound but noise.*

*Noise is egotistical.  
We make noise in order to keep other people quiet;  
we make noise in order to frighten off our enemies;  
we make a noise in order to drown out,  
by the din we make, the darkness and terror of our hearts.*

*Christianity should be a kind of school of silence,  
an academy of attentiveness.*

*Our task as Christians is  
to help each other acquire the courage to be still,  
to keep our eyes open in the dark.*

*Gethsemane would be the paradigm  
of the attentiveness we need.*

*In the garden, Christ remained attentive  
to the Father's silence – while the disciples,  
unfortunately, slept.*

*Nicholas Lash  
from Holiness, Speech & Silence*



Christianity should be a kind of school of silence...

# Communion

But if we live for others . . . we will see that we are human, like everyone else, that we all have weaknesses and deficiencies, and that these limitations play a most important part in all our lives. It is because of them that we need others and others need us.\*

## CHRISTIAN SERVICE AWARD RECIPIENTS – 2007

### Anne Haddad

The Bible makes very clear that those who look after the needs of the least are truly living out the Gospel of Christ. In this regard, Anne has shown remarkable dedication and has accomplished great things. She has been a church school teacher for many years, shepherding the youngest children in the program. This in itself is notable, but, even more, in a year when we have struggled to find a new director for the program, she has consistently stepped in to design and implement curriculum, cover our needs, guide the youth, and provide insightful suggestion and direction. In essence, beyond simply filling a volunteer slot, she has made the care of our children a personal mission, and she has done so with creativity, breadth of wisdom, and evident love.

In addition, Anne has been deeply involved in the layette program that provides important supplies for the parents of newborn children in the Dominican Republic. She has collected clothing and supplies, invited the participation of parishioners, and given over rooms in her home to the work of sorting, packing, and shipping these kits to people suffering extreme poverty in the Barrio Los Flores, San Pedro.

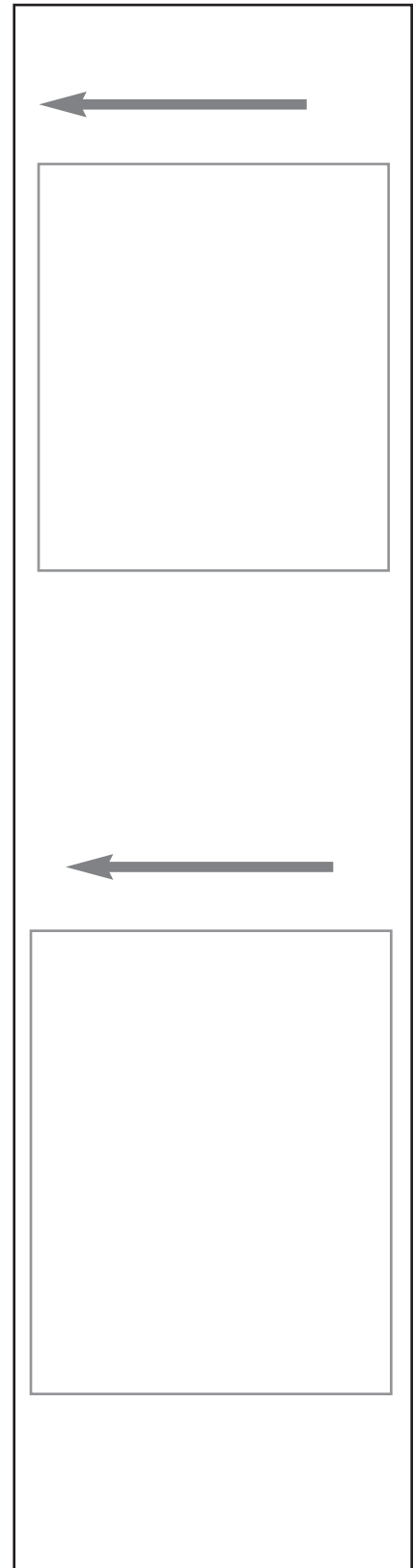
These are just two of the ways that Anne has given faith voice and hope reality. She has also been a valuable member of the vestry and the missions committee and a consistent presence wherever need arises within the parish. In her typical unassuming manner, in many serendipitous ways, she has shown the beauty of Christianity.

### Stu Clement:

There is a group of college classmates, Whiffenpoofs from Yale, who, well after 50 years get together each year to celebrate their friendships and, of course, sing together. They have also sung here at Saint Ann's when one of their own has died. They sang at services for Tee and Jackie Hemenway and Malu Wood, and the among the anthems they always include the great spiritual "Steal Away Home." After decades, long dispersed after college, they still gather to offer this moving tribute to their friendship, God's covenant, and the promise within which we live and within which we die. Ken Wood is one of these. Stu Clement is another. And although Stu might acknowledge that both his step and voice are not as strong as they once were, nonetheless, his dedication and love for music have not flagged at all. It's hard to be a tenor, but Stu has been and remains one of the most consistent voices in our choir. Almost always one of the first to arrive for rehearsal (no matter the weather), sometimes (if Chuck Gregory can't be there) soldiering on carrying the section himself, in every way Stu shows the unfading joy that music brings, as a performer and for those who listen. His life is song.

One of the most common admonitions in the Bible is to rejoice, and to do so unabashedly by allowing yourself to be an instrument of praise. Few have done this better than Stu.

**A final note: Anne is Stu's daughter.**



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## The Griswold Gallery

The new exhibit in the Griswold Room is by **Ashby Carlisle**. The dominant themes of inspiration for her work are nature: the source of life and growth and archeology: the remains and evidence of life. She is fascinated by repetition in nature: the habit for sameness which results in infinite variety even in the simplest form. A love for collecting, grouping and arranging similar found objects inspired her to make the fossil-like collections.

These collections are sculpted primarily in porcelain clay because the feel and appearance remind her of bones and shells drying for centuries in the desert or beach. The titles of Animal or Plant Fragments refer to the source of inspiration, but are intentionally left vague to encourage the viewer to create his or her own story about the objects.

The white fossil-like collections were fired to cone 04. Some collections were burnished to produce a matt sheen, some were waxed and others left raw. The frames were made of the same clay and also fired to cone 04. The frames were painted with glass/ceramic paint and baked. Belgium linen was mounted within the frame prior to attaching the collection.

The black fossil-like collections and frames were sculpted in stoneware clay, fired to cone 04 and raku fired. Handwoven black cotton was mounted within the frame prior to attaching the collection.

Please stop by and view this fascinating display.

## Outreach

**A long obedience in a single direction.**

### Dominican Update

The elementary school that Saint Ann's is supporting in the batay in the Dominican Republic is up and running. Late in the Spring, we hope to send a small group (3 or 4 people) to visit the school, meet with the Bishop and discuss our ongoing relationship. Our goal is to support another work team in 2008. Information will be going out soon to determine interest in participating. If you have any questions, please contact Beth Sullivan (434-7011), vestry representative for the Dominican Republic relationship.

### Love Baskets

It has been **more than 20 years** since Saint Ann's parishioners began assembling love baskets for shut-ins. On February 10th of this year **we assembled 107 baskets**. This would not have been possible if we did not have financial support and willing hands baking cookies and delivering the baskets. This bit of outreach gladdens the hearts of so many - **just knowing that someone cares** enough to stop by and drop off a few goodies. Thank you, one and all, for supporting this endeavor each and every year. May God bless each and everyone.



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## The Laity and "Brotherhood" by Onesimus

*"We know that we have passed from death to life  
because we love our brothers."*

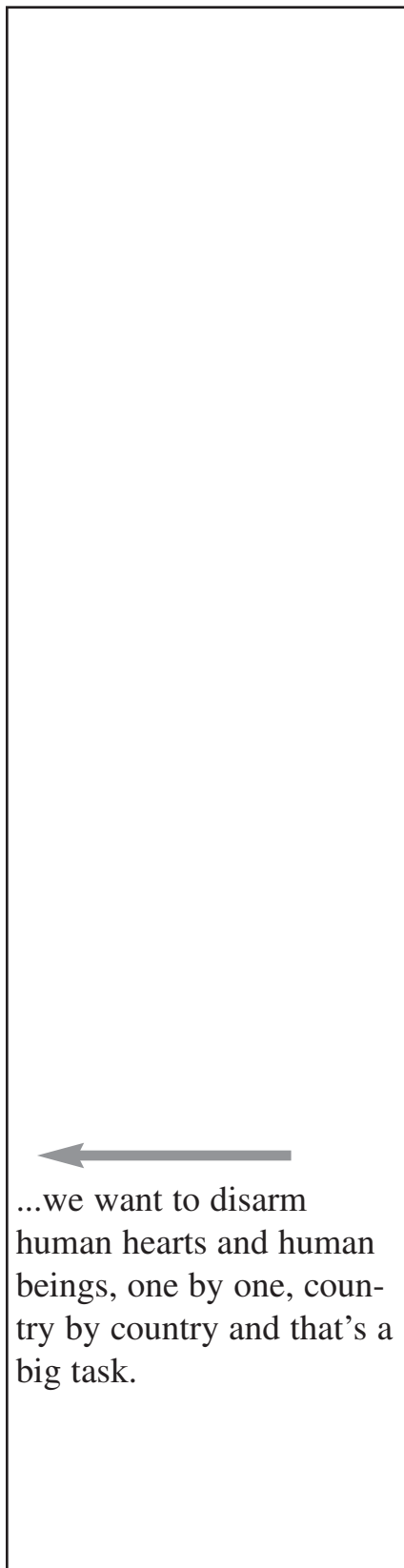
*1 John 3:14*

On the streets of Belfast, northern Ireland in early August 1976, an IRA terrorist, Danny Lennon, having perpetrated a punitive raid, jumped into a getaway car and roared down the city street. A pursuing volley from alerted British troops killed Lennon, whose car, out of control, jumped the curb and killed 3 young children and gravely injured their mother Anne McGuire. (She died in 1978.) Two young women, Betty Williams (herself a former IRA member) and Maureen Corrigan (aunt to the slain children), quickly decided to take direct action to end this senseless sectarian violence (which in recent years had claimed over 2000 lives) by forming the non-violent Community for Peace People initiative. Going door to door, they engineered weekly protest meetings and eventually rallies where as many as 30,000, mainly women, marched through the streets of Belfast. Not only did they seek to support victims of the conflict but also hold accountable Catholic and Protestant factions as well as the IRA and British, both their military and highly restrictive governing bodies.

So impressive, so potent was this Irish non-violence outpouring that Williams and Corrigan were promptly awarded the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize.

While the Peace People Movement gradually lost cohesiveness (accused of being too narrowly focused) offshoots still flourish, built around the notion that violence flourishes where people do not know one another. Both Williams and Corrigan have gone on to give voice to mankind's dire need for a common people, peace based, approach. Maureen Corrigan puts it this way:

*"...we reject the way the world is at the moment and we don't accept nuclear weapons, we don't accept the fact that we train men and women to kill each other--we think this is immoral--and we want to disarm human hearts and human beings, one by one, country by country and that's a big task. It's going to take all of my lifetime and several more generations of young people. It's going to take your generation too, to build a world -- a nonviolent world -- where people refuse to kill each other and human life is the ultimate value in our society and that's a vision. I do believe that it is something that is in the hearts of men and women and we've just got to get it out there into our politics in the world and change it that way. Everyday there are people in the world who do absolutely amazing things. People of all ages are very capable of doing tremendous, courageous things in spite of their fear."*



←  
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No activity such as that enunciated by Ms. Corrigan could be more responsive to our Christian imperative to love one another. None of us are exempted from this love requirement at every level of life. It means abandoning our cozy niche mentality, abandoning our too common "we and them" judgmentalism for active welcoming and acceptance of all whom we meet, making our voice heard wherever discrimination and injustice threaten the commonwealth.

Our Christian practice must marry our private and public prayer or action to be whole and transforming. We do well to ponder and actively reflect the words of John in his first letter, "For anyone who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And he gives us this command, Whoever loves God must also love his brother."

Today's cynical, blatant lust for power, greed and revenge can never prevail against the linked arms of those whose love of neighbor joins with those two young Irish women who said enough.

*"My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you."*

*John 14:13*

There is one particular day in Western history about which neither historical record nor myth nor Scripture make report. It is a Saturday. And it has become the longest of days. We know of that good Friday which Christianity holds to have been that of the Cross. But the non-Christian, the atheist, knows of it as well. This is to say that he knows of the injustice, of the interminable suffering, of the waste, of the brute enigma of ending, which so largely make up not only the historical dimension of the human condition, but the everyday fabric of our personal lives. We know, ineluctably, of the pain, of the failure of love, of the solitude which are our history and private fate. We know also about Sunday. To the Christian, that day signifies an intimation, both assured and precarious, both evident and beyond comprehension, of resurrection, of a justice and a love that have conquered death. If we are non-Christians or non-believers, we know of that Sunday in precisely analogous terms. We conceive of it as the day of liberation from inhumanity and servitude. We look to resolutions, be they therapeutic or political, be they social or messianic. The lineaments of that Sunday carry the name of hope (there is not word less deconstructible).

But ours is the long day's journey of the Saturday. Between suffering, aloneness, unutterable waste on the one hand and the dream of liberation, of rebirth on the other.

from Real Presence by George Steiner