

ST. PAUL'S EPISTLE

March 2007

Dear Friends,

The season of Lent as a time of preparation for Holy Week has been a tradition of the church since the fourth century. For seventeen hundred years Christians have observed a time before Holy Week to contemplate, pray, fast and offer alms to the poor. All this in order to prepare our hearts and minds for the journey of the last week of the life of Jesus.

I was once asked what our mind set should be as we approach the altar. That question comes to mind as we nurture a mind set as we approach Holy Week. What is it that we should be thinking? What is it that will help us nurture a mind set that will open our hearts to the loving gift of Jesus Christ? What can we do to bring our hearts and minds into an open and vulnerable place into which Jesus can pour his saving and eternal love? I'm not sure there is anything we can do to be truly prepared for such a gift as this.

However, we can have the sincere intention of being prepared. We can be certain that we want to be constantly ready for the love of Jesus to enter our hearts. We can, in our human nature, open our hearts and minds to God's love and that of God's Son. That's what we can be doing during these forty days. Having the intention will motivate us to act in ways that will respond to the hopes of the early church hopes that we are prepared for the gift of love given us in the commitment of Jesus to loving all humanity even to the death.

We hear the word *repent* over and over again during this season. The word has been used since the beginning of these observations. It makes me think that there is something in that word and its meaning that could be extremely important to our intention of capturing the right mind set for Holy Week. The word itself has several meanings. In the recent past the word has come to mean "contrition" more than anything else. But this was not the understanding of the early Christians. The Hebrew Bible used the word to mean "return from exile", and the Greek roots of word repent mean "to go beyond the mind that you have".

This last meaning comes to me now as one with profound significance for our time in the world, in the Church, and in our personal lives. The idea of it encourages us to question the status quo. It invites us to look at those things in the world that do not encourage and build up the love of God and to change them. Whenever people, in or out of the church, denigrate, deny, exclude or oppress any of the people of God we are called to repent: to return from that exile of self-righteousness. We are called to repent: to go beyond are own absolute truths to the truth of the love of Jesus Christ.

It is a hard discipline to constantly strive to see the world as others see it. It is a hard discipline to be sincerely open to the life experiences of others, especially our enemies. It is a hard discipline to question our own certain truths in favor of broader, more open and extravagantly inviting ways as Jesus has taught us to do. Perhaps these are ways to prepare, as best we can, for the power of the events of Holy Week. Perhaps these are the ways to open our hearts to Jesus.

Take some time each day during Lent, perhaps five or ten minutes, to think about the world from Jesus' point of view. Think about the people oppressed by war, those denied justice through laws of government and laws of the church. Think about the people who suffer and die unnecessarily for lack of simple medicines. Think about the lonely and dependent. And think about the love, hope and joy God has for you. These and other disciplines are some ways that can help us have a mind set of gratitude for the love of Jesus Christ.

CATECHESIS CORNER

Session III of Catechesis seems to have almost flown by with just a few weeks left! In the first half of the session the children heard various parables and talked about the land of Israel at the time of Jesus. We will discuss Lent and the time of waiting for the death and resurrection of Jesus. In preparation for that they created “Alleluias” and then talked about how the signs would be removed for Lent only to be returned to sight as we rejoice in the resurrection.

In the later weeks of the session we concentrate on a few of the gestures we all witness in church weekly – the preparation of the cruets and chalice and the sign of peace. As Easter approaches we present two of the larger presentations, the Last Supper and the City of Jerusalem, using wonderful wooden and clay models created by our own Louisa Saladino-Kuhl.

We continue to enjoy the time we spend with your children – what a gift. They are wondrous, thoughtful and insightful. Thank you to all of you who help out in our classrooms! Remember, stop by any time.

With blessing from the corner,

Ellen Ryan and Amanda Hubbard

St. Paul’s Elementary Sunday School Program

We have entered the Lenten season. The beautiful Alleluias the children created have been buried in a box and will return at Easter. Through the season of Lent the children will be hearing the stories of Jesus leading up to his death and glorious resurrection. This year Palm Sunday falls on April 1st. Instead of a family Sunday, the children will join the congregation for the procession with the Palms and then, while the Passion is read in the church, they will re-enact the passion with puppets in the parish hall.

We’ve been having a wonderful time singing before the start of Sunday school each week. Amanda Hubbard has brought in her guitar and led us in “He’s Got the Whole World in His Hands”. Thank you Amanda.

It’s hard to believe, but it’s time to start preparations for our last session of Sunday school. We will hold a planning meeting for session 4 on Thursday, March 8 at 7:30. All are welcome to attend.

Cathy Presti



Middle School Youth

We had a busy February! Early in the month, we met on a Tuesday afternoon after school to bake brownies to serve as dessert at the Bedford Community Table. They were a hit and parishioners even got to taste some of the extra brownies during coffee hour. On February 10th, we co-hosted a showing of the global warming documentary "An Inconvenient Truth". It was a good opportunity to discuss some of the ways that individuals and St. Paul's as a whole can help the environment.

On March 2nd, we went snow tubing at Nashoba Valley Ski Area in Westford - a great way to take advantage of the last few weeks of winter before spring officially begins! We are also participating in the bottle/can recycling effort along with the Sunday school youth that launched at the beginning of Lent.

-Carrie Mathews & Suzanne Johnson

High School Youth

Movie Night is here! On Sunday, March 25, at 5:30pm, we'll meet at the Mitchells' house for our annual movie night, complete with popcorn and pizza and a giant new TV. The feature is still (still!) to be decided: we are thinking about BRUCE ALMIGHTY or maybe THE DA VINCI CODE. If you have a preference, speak up!



-John & Emily Mitchell

News from St. Paul's Weekday Nursery School

We were able to visit the M.S.P.C.A. facility in Methuen on the Friday preceding Feb. school vacation. More than 7000 animals come through Nevins Farm in one year's time, so the children were able to see at once the need for all the food, toys, blankets and supplies that we collected for the barn and shelter. The adults present commented on the cleanliness there and kindness shown by all the workers at this resource in our community. The website is mthuen@mspca.org if you are curious to learn more about the animals and work done there.

Anyone who has signed up to have a portrait (s) done by the Silhouette Artist, Carol LeBeaux, will receive a reminder call or note a few days before their appointment. So far, there are a few spaces left on Tuesday and Thursday, March 13 & 15, mostly between 1:00 and 3:00 in the afternoon. We are adding a third day, Wednesday March 14 beginning at 3:00 P.M. and going into the evening. Please call or see Beth Taylor (781-275-1383) if you are interested in being added to the schedule.

Women's Group

Please join the women of St. Paul's Church

on Sunday, March 25, 2007 at Noon

for fellowship and brunch

at the home of Christine Anderson

31 Elmbrook Road, Bedford

(off Page Road, Rte. 62 - across from Page Place)

We will enjoy brunch and discuss future activities of the Women's Group.

All women of the parish are welcome at this annual event.

Sign up at church or RSVP to the Church Office at 781-275-8262.

Outreach News!

LINUS WOULD BE PROUD OF US!



Last Spring The Knitting Ministry delivered 39 handmade blankets to the Linus Project. Massachusetts General Hospital sent the following letter of thanks:

Dear Project Linus Blanketeer,

On behalf of the children and families at the Mass General Hospital for Children we thank you for continued hard work, creating such wonderful blankets! Each blanket, so unique and beautiful, enhances the environment to make it so much warmer and inviting for the children and families. It is such a joy to see the children smile, as they enter their hospital room and take notice of a special blanket just for them on their bed. Parents often comment on how having a special blanket in the room can make them feel so much closer to home. We truly appreciate all your effort and dedication to this wonderful cause.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Ashley Laliberte, CCLS
Child Life Department
Mass General Hospital

This spring St. Paul's will celebrate another blanket dedication, displaying the many colorful and creative blankets and quilts created this year by members of our parish.

Questions about Linus Blankets?
Contact Caroline Larson SAILSK8@aol.com 781-275-9338

Program on Diocesan Programs for Katrina Relief

Speaker – Eliza Ragsdale Trache, Co-chair of Task Force for Gulf Coast Partnerships

Monday, March 12th at 7:30 PM

Eliza Ragsdale Trache will speak about her experiences and the work of the Diocese in assisting victims of Hurricane Katrina on Monday, March 12th at 7:30 PM in the library. Eliza is a member of The Parish of the Epiphany in Winchester. She and her husband, the Reverend Robert Trache, rector at Epiphany, are the co-chairs of the Diocesan Task Force for Gulf Coast Partnerships which coordinates relief efforts and mission trips to the Gulf Coast. In conjunction with our efforts to raise funds for relief through the Gifts of the Heart program, this evening will give us first hand information about the work of the diocese and ways that we can help in this time of continuing and overwhelming need in Mississippi and Louisiana. This program is sponsored by the Women's Group and we urge all interested parishioners to attend and to bring guests. Please join us.



GIRL SCOUT SUNDAY March 11, 2007
Helping women in shelters

Girl Scouts®

Sunday March 11 is Girl Scout Sunday, celebrating Girl Scouting in houses of worship across the USA. Girl Scouts who are members of St. Paul's are collecting items for newly arrived women in a Women's Shelter. We already have soap, shampoo, conditioner and lotion. The following items have been requested:

- Disposable razors
- Toothbrushes
- Sample size toothpaste
- Combs
- Emery boards
- Sample size deodorant

Please bring your contributions on Sunday March 11.

And all Girl Scouts, past and present, remember to wear your Girl Scout pin on Girl Scout Sunday.

Stewardship Corner

BRING IN YOUR BOTTLES AND CANS

Last month the Stewardship Committee partnered with the Middle School Youth group to present a screening of the documentary AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH. Following up on the issues of conservation and stewardship of natural resources that the film raised, the children of St. Paul's are now embarking on a bottle and can drive throughout the season of Lent. Collection bins will be placed in the parish hall and at KnowFat! and D'Angelos restaurant on Great Road. Every week during Lent, a different family will bring the collected bottles and cans to a redemption center, and present the proceeds at the altar the following Sunday.

The bottle and can drive is a great example of stewardship in its broadest sense. We demonstrate stewardship of the earth by returning and recycling our cans and bottles, and we demonstrate stewardship of ourselves and our community in our use of the proceeds from the collection: part of the money will go toward a designated charity, with the remainder given to St. Paul's for our ongoing mission work.

This is a particularly good way for children to be involved in stewardship. The Sunday School classes have decorated the collection bins, and the Middle School Youth will be choosing a charity to receive a portion of the proceeds collected. Children should bring their family's returnable bottles and cans to church for collection, or volunteer with their parents to bring the collected cans to a redemption center. The children may also consider asking their extended family and friends to save their returnable bottles and cans for donation to this program.

Make this season of Lent a time for mindful reflection of one of God's greatest gifts: this fragile Earth, our island home.

PLEDGE DRIVE UPDATE

The Stewardship Committee and the vestry are gratified by the support again shown by the parish during this year's pledge drive. We are especially encouraged by the level of participation from our members: as of this writing, we have 79 pledging units (individuals and families), including several first-time pledgers. This is a great testament to the importance St. Paul's plays in all of our lives and our commitment to ensuring its future. Thank you!

FUNDRAISING

The Fundraising Committee met recently to plan events for the 2007 year.
Here is the proposed calendar:

APRIL - St. Paul's Revue (28/29)

MAY - Spring Bling (early in month)

JUNE - Plant Sale

AUGUST - Bulb Sale

SEPT. - Bedford Day & Flatbread Pizza Night NOV. - Simon Mall Night DEC. - Advent Fair & Silent Auction

If you have any ideas, suggestions, or would like to volunteer, please contact Sharon Healey, Fundraising Chairperson.

WHAT IS SPRING BLING, YOU ASK??

Spring Bling is St. Paul's version of a "trunk show," where various vendors are invited to purchase a table in our parish hall and sell their goods (i.e.: handmade scarves, purses, beaded jewelry, belts, pottery, candles, unique clothes, etc.). St. Paul's will receive a portion of their sales.

Do you know anyone who may be interested in showing/selling their fantastic goods/wares?? Would you like to help plan this event or volunteer the day of to ensure our day is a success?? The show will be in early May so shoppers can purchase gifts for Mother's Day, Graduation, Birthdays, Teacher Gifts and any other Spring celebration!

Please contact Sharon Healey, Fundraising Chairperson, or any committee member: Betsey Anderson, Lisa Hafer, Sue Marasa, Roberta Valday, and Sharon Witbeck.

Holy Week Worship Schedule April 1st – April 8th	
	<i>Palm Sunday</i> 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist
	<i>Monday</i> 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist
	<i>Tuesday</i> 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist
	<i>Wednesday</i> 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist
	<i>Maundy Thursday</i> 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist Foot washing and Stripping of the altar
	<i>Good Friday</i> 12:00 noon Way of the Cross 3:00 p.m. Children's Service 7:30 p.m. Good Friday Service
	<i>Saturday</i> 7:30 p.m. Easter Vigil
	<i>Easter Sunday</i> 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

The tappers are tapping, the singers are singing, and the whole parish is gearing up for ST. PAUL'S TONIGHT! 2007, which will be presented April 28 and 29 at the JGMS auditorium. If you'd still like to participate but haven't raised your hand yet, there's still time. Please see Sharon Witbeck or Chuck to find out how you can be a part of the old razzle-dazzle, either backstage or treading the boards.

Now is the time to start talking up the show to your friends and family! Please encourage everyone you know to attend. The revue is not only a great fellowship activity for St. Paul's -- it's also a great fundraising activity. The bigger the audience, the better!

Sunday Rehearsals- Full Cast Rehearsal

Tuesday & Wednesday Rehearsals
Cast for rehearsal will be announced on Sundays!

TAB TOPS!

Don't forget to save your tabs from soda cans. These tabs are sent to the Shriner's Burn Hospital in Boston, which are then extracted, and sold. The money raised enables families to stay in nearby hotels to be near their children during a very difficult time.

Daylight Saving March 10th

Remember to turn your clocks ahead 1 hour on Saturday, March 10th.

SAVE THE DATE!
Saturday, March 31st
Clean up Day



Time to Clean

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church
100 Pine Hill Road
Bedford, MA 01730**

Sunday Service of Holy Eucharist: 10:00 a.m.

Office hours: Tuesday-Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Telephone: 781 275-8262

Fax: 781 687-9070

E-mail: info@stpaulsbedford.org

Staff:

The Reverend Francis Fornaro, Rector

Tracy Lane, Parish Administrator

Joan Reddy, Music Director

Bob Godoy, Sexton

Officers:

Ron Presti, Senior Warden

Emily Mitchell, Junior Warden

Betsey Anderson, Treasurer

Carol Hokana, Clerk

Vestry:

Sharon Keane

Peter Ricci

Paul Kruger

Sue Runkle

John MacPhee

Carrie Mathews

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