

# Building Saint Patrick's

*Proclaim Christ's love to the world*

**November & December  
2009**

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## **A Sermon @ Saint Patrick's – Stewardship Sunday**

**November 8, 2009 – Preacher: Geoff Doolittle**

Proper 26, Year B, Revised Common Lectionary

Old Testament: I Kings 17:8-16

Epistle: Hebrews 9:24-28

Gospel: Mark 10:17-31

Psalm: 146:4-9

“As the Lord your God lives, I have nothing baked, only a handful of meal in a jar, and a little oil in a jug; I am now gathering a couple of sticks, so that I may go home and prepare it for myself and my son, that we may eat it and die.” Die as in ‘starve to death’, the widow and her son. That’s part of the response of the widow to Elijah when he asks her for some food and water in the reading from 1st Kings.

A poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, which are worth a penny. Then [Jesus] called his disciples and said to them, “Truly I tell you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For all of them have contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, all she had to live on.” That’s the response of Jesus in today’s reading from the Gospel of Mark upon seeing the poor widow put her last two copper coins into the temple treasury.

The stories of these two women are very similar. They’re the lowest of the low in social status because they are widows. They’re the lowest of the low in economic status because they’re both literally penniless. They’re the lowest of the low in power because they are women living in a world where adult males only have social, financial, and power status.

The lowest of the low gives her last handful of flour to help God keep the great prophet Elijah from starvation. The lowest of the low gives her last penny to help God provide for His church.

So what do these two women have in common besides their lack of social, financial, and power status? The world sees their gender and their status and is not impressed. God looks at these two women and sees incredible faith, and although we don’t know either of their names, these two faithful women will never be forgotten because of their love for God.

And so looking at these two women who literally gave the food from their mouths in the service of God, what else is there to say on Stewardship Sunday? What more could I possibly add to this message of faithful giving?

Nothing. End of sermon.

Ahhhh, you don’t get off that easy. There’s more here than meets the eye.

I used to hate stewardship Sunday. Stewardship Sunday was that time when scripture readings and the witness of others reminded me of how little time and talent I actually gave to the church. It was that Sunday when I usually felt guilty for the rest of the day... or week. By Monday I’d start thinking about what more I could do. I’d come up with some overly optimistic plan to do more and to give more, and then reality would sink in by Wednesday. There was no way I could give more time, talent, or money without eliminating other things that currently took up my time, talent, and money.

Then the excuses and rationalizations would start. I can’t give more time because as a husband, a father, and bread-winner my family and my job have to come first. I can’t give more of my talent because the things I’m good at aren’t really useful to the church anyway. I can’t give more of my treasure because I’m already in serious debt, and besides I can’t control the money once I’ve given it to the church so who knows what things it will be spent on... things I may not agree with or approve of.



I remember somewhere in the Bible it says that “God loves a cheerful giver”, so if I’m not cheerful about it God doesn’t want it anyway, right? I’ll keep things the way they are and I’ll think about doing more next year.

The thing that bothered me the most was the “T”-word... tithing. At stewardship time we talked about time, talent, and money, but I know what really mattered most was the annual budget, it was money. Give ten percent of my

income? Really? How do you give ten percent? We talked about giving money in my home parish but we would almost never use the “T”-word. There were detailed arguments about whether the 10% was before or after taxes, after certain basic expenses were taken out first, if it was based on straight salary or if bonuses were excluded. The more you argue the more you can avoid an issue, right?

Then there was my rector. He tithed on every penny he was given. Here was a guy with seven years of college making much less than the average college graduate with a bachelor’s degree’s starting salary; a guy raising four children and who’s wife worked part-time because she needed to raise their children but his income just wasn’t enough; a guy who worked more than 60 hours a week caring for and saving the very souls of everyone in our parish. It never mattered where his income came from, salary or gift; it never mattered what his expenses to raise his family were, even when he didn’t have enough; it never mattered how much he deserved what he received, or how much good it could have done him to keep it.

He never complained about money, or the lack of it. In fact the only time I saw him excited about money was when he and his wife were debating about which charity to give the tithe money from an unexpected gift to. They were ecstatic.

And so one day I just had to ask him, “Ralph, how do you do it? I know what you earn, I know how expensive it is to raise a family, how do you tithe with a smile on your face?”

Unfortunately he didn’t have some magical answer, no advice that would making tithing easy or painless or even possible. He smiled that ‘knowing, sage’ smile at me and said, “Geoff, it’s a discipline. You don’t just start doing it. Unless you’ve been doing it your whole life, it’s going to take time and it’s going to take a change in priorities. It’s a conscious choice, a change of heart. You have to learn faith; to put God first, and to trust that when you put God first everything else will take care of itself.”

I hated his answer. I hated it because it didn’t let me off the hook. I hated it because I have to sacrifice to make it happen. I hated it because he spoke the truth and I don’t think I wanted to hear it.

That talk with my rector happened seven years ago. Do I still struggle with what he told me? I do. Do I tithe of my time, my talent, and my treasure? I’ve got the time down, and I’m working hard on the talent part, but I’m not there in the treasure department... that’s the one I struggle the most with.

Last month I preached about the dangers of letting our possessions ‘possess’ us. I still fight that battle every day. I know I’m not alone.

But if I’ve learned anything over the last seven years it’s that being a Christian is not easy. It’s not

supposed to be easy; if it’s easy we’re doing it wrong. Trusting in God enough to give him your last piece of bread or your last penny is not an easy thing, and it doesn’t happen overnight. But it is what God calls us to consider doing.

The part that gives me faith is the witness of those who have given God their last piece of bread and their last penny. The two faithful women in our readings today would have been laughed at by the society we live in, but they live on in scripture as shining examples of extreme faithfulness to God.

So here’s what I’ve learned. Stewardship has nothing to do with time or talent or treasure. Stewardship is about faithfulness to God. Stewardship is about keeping promises we made and promises that were made for us at our baptism. Stewardship is about covenant, about responsibility, about accountability, about what our relationship with God calls us to do and to be.

Stewardship is about standing at the foot of the cross. Stewardship is about looking up into the eyes of Jesus, beaten and bloody, naked and humiliated, a criminal without a crime. Stewardship is about the Son of God pouring his very life out for our mistakes while calling out to the Father to ‘forgive us, for we know not what we do’. Jesus gave his life for a corrupt church and a sinful people.

Picture our savior suffering and dying on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins. Picture the love it takes to sacrifice yourself for another. Think about what our God has given us in Jesus Christ and you will always be a cheerful giver. Amen.

### **A Prayer For Use in the Evening**

O God, your unfailing providence sustains the world we live in and the life we live: Watch over those, both night and day, who work while others sleep, and grant that we may never forget that our common life depends upon each other’s toil; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (BCP, Page 134)

### **2010 Stewardship Drive at Saint Patrick’s**

During October, four of our parishioners spoke on what Saint Patrick’s meant to them. Here are the shortened versions of what they said:

*Le Cao*—What St Patrick’s is to me? Before telling you what St Patrick is to me, I would like to go back about 10 years. At that time, I was a Catholic. I went to St Leo’s Church in Fairfax, a very large Catholic Church where I was baptized in 1986. Because of the size of the congregation (5 masses on week-ends and all the 300 seats were mostly full); I felt some kind of lost. I did not know anybody and nobody paid attention to me. I just came and went as a visitor. I was not happy and I prayed many times that God gives me a church that I feel happy whenever I go there.

## In Memoriam

**Mr. Samuel Joseph "Oluwole" Thomas**

Member of Saint Patrick's

October 1, 2009.

**Mr. Joseph Patrick Mills**

Brother of our Basil Mills

October 24, 2009

**Mrs. Lê Thị Sĩ**

Mother of our Huỳnh Kim Chon

(Mrs. Nguyễn Nguyễn)

in Vietnam, October 24, 2009

**Mrs. Dorothy Bush**

Former Member of St. Patrick's

October 2, 2009

“Grant to all who mourn a sure confidence in thy fatherly care, that, casting all their grief on thee, they may know the consolation of thy love. Amen.”

(BCP, Page 481)

One day, Suong Pham invited me to visit St Patrick on its Friendship Sunday. I came and I was attracted by the beautiful and peaceful surrounding of the church and the warm hospitality of the congregation. I continued to come. At that time, St Patrick was revising its mission. I was invited to participate in many Vestry meetings and served as a translator for the Vietnamese members. After that I realized that this was the church that God gave me, the church that I am happy to come every Sunday.

Now I tell you what I like about St Patrick. I like its size. It is a family church, everybody feels like a member of a large family. We know each other. Everybody has the chance to do something for the Church: acolyte, chalice bearer, lecturers, counters, ushers.... Nobody is left out. I have served as Vestry member, chalice bearer, I joined many groups and I participated in many activities and I enjoyed all of them. I think that God answered my prayer. Now I have MY CHURCH, a place that I feel really happy to come to worship God and I am grateful to God for that.

**Frankie Haan**—Why St. Patrick's Is Important to me. Church, Vietnamese Culture, Friends.

*Church.* Looked for a long time for a place where I was comfortable, as a recovering Catholic. Want the girls to learn about God and religion, but not have it be too overbearing or conservative. The atmosphere here is perfect!

*Vietnamese Culture.* First found this place when our Parents with Children from Vietnam group invited us to a bamboo star making, now about four years ago. Very important to me that MyChi be exposed to her birth culture in as natural a way as possible, and especially that she have some real friends who share that culture with her. St. Patrick's has provided that for us and more, we all get to hear the language on a weekly basis, participate in celebrating holidays, and most importantly, MyChi has probably the best Vietnamese role models in the world to look up to and admire - Doan, Father Tinh, her special friends among the kids and teenagers - everybody here really! For a while we had the best of both worlds when Rev. Ricky Tai was here - who MeiLi used to call the “Special China Guy.”

*Friends.* Maybe most important of all is all of the wonderful friends that we have made here. It makes us look forward to coming so much each week, because we get to see our friends - all three of us. The people we have met here are the best in the world! I asked the girls what they thought, so I'll end by telling you, in their own words, why St. Patrick's is important to them:

*MyChi-* We pray for God and listen to the reading and we like our family and friends and we are working on raising food for poor people. And because we do Children's Chapel to let kids know that God is important.

*MeiLi* - Because God is nice because he made us and because we're praying about Jesus and because God helps people. We have to say thank you to God of making us. We have to help poor people and we have to go put the food in the bank for they can get food if they don't have any.

**Vivian Benjamin**—“One thing have I desired of the Lord and that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in His temple”(Ps. 27:4)

Hariette and I grew up in very Christian homes back in Sierra Leone, Harriette with her Grandmother – an ardent church goer and member of many organizations within the church, and I with my father – a Diocesan lay reader and eventually a Priest in the Anglican diocese of Sierra Leone. We both very quickly became active in varied church work, from Sunday School to Youth Fellowship to Women Volunteers to the Parochial Church Committee (Vestry) and of course the Church Choir and choral singing generally, where – little wonder – I met my dear wife!

Long before we moved over here in the US, we learnt from Victoria Gunter – my mother-in-law – of the moral, financial and spiritual support she received from Rev. Tinh and the St. Patrick's family in getting her family over here, and how the church upheld us in prayer throughout the conflict in Sierra Leone. On our way to the United States, we spent two weeks in Dakar Senegal, during which time we happened upon a Baptist Church which we instantly fell in love with. We spent all our evenings at the church at Bible studies, prayer meetings, choir practices and Sunday worship services. The Pastor at the church gave us the address of another Baptist Church here, where we were supposed to continue in this our new-found Baptist denomination! However, upon our arrival, we visited Victoria's church of

St. Patrick's and it was "love at first sight"! Unlike the Baptist Church, that first service was very reminiscent of our traditional Anglican worship. We felt very much at home away from home. The welcome received that day was very warm, spontaneous and genuine and we immediately concluded that we were here to stay. In keeping with our tradition of "dwelling in the house of the Lord", we found ourselves making this weekly pilgrimage to and from St. Patrick's Sunday after Sunday, even from Manassas, a round trip of 50 miles!

We thank God for St. Patrick's. Looking back on the days just after our arrival, when we were struggling to get settled in, when we were job hunting and without our own means of transportation, we received valuable support from this family, a real show of love – the foundation on which the body of Christ should build. The members of St. Patrick's epitomize this love which pulsates with energy particularly when we share the peace before the offertory! St. Patrick's is particularly blest to have Rev. Tinh as its Rector. We feel very comfortable to talk to him about any and everything and he is always ready and willing to listen, advice and counsel when the need arises. Alexander our 8 year old son thinks Rev. Tinh cares about all the members of St. Patrick's. It is such a joy to sit and listen to Alex and Rev. Tinh when they engage in a chit chat, as contemporaries. Tinh has that very fine quality of relating to children, a very valuable tool in human psychology. Spiritually, we have learnt a lot from Tinh's sermons and expositions on the bible which are always very easy to understand as he would use practical examples to elaborate on otherwise very theological and complex issues. We have never experienced a dull moment sitting under his voice! Tinh's one on one contact with members is also very commendable – in joy or sorrow, sickness or health, he is always very present, making us feel very much a vital cog in the mechanism of St. Patrick's.

Our singing ministry also compels us to remain a part of this family, as we believe that we should give back something in return to St. Patrick's. For us, music is very much a part of our being, and we do appreciate the ministry in this Church. The organ, the Bell Choir, the trombones, the violins, the children's choir and of course the adult choir give so much meaning to worship and we do feel the presence of God in our worship services. I must recognize Mariko Hiller our Music Director and Catherine Dubas for their hard work!

In summary, "as for me and my house, we will continue to serve the Lord at St. Patrick's", which has in no small way – in spite of everything - helped us maintain our sanity and stay focussed, as "we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". *Philippians 3 vv 14*. May God bless us all as we strive together in His Service!



Field trip to FCS Food Pantry, October 4

viable and able to help the disadvantaged individuals and families in the Falls Church area. Every day, needy families in our community go without food, clothing, shelter and the basic comforts many of us take for granted. Your donation will allow us to help families and individuals look forward to a brighter future. Thank you for your commitment to our work and our community. Sincerely, Rev. Bill Hale, FCS Executive Director.

(Note: Rev. Bill Hale is pastor of Knox Presbyterian Church on Route 50)

- Dear Father Tinh and St. Patrick's Church,

Just this morning a mother came to Westlawn. She and her two daughters returned from Bolivia to find their belongings on the street. Her husband deserted the family and fled from the United States. Fairfax Co. provided temporary housing and now the family is living in the basement of the husband's brother. They are expected to pay \$600.00 a month. The mother is applying for work at area grocery stores, but her English is limited. Thanks to your generosity. I gave her 2 Giant cards equaling \$50.00 and a \$20.00 Target card. You made a difference. Sincerely, Susan Lawrence

St. Pat's church.

yo soy la señora Isabel Vargas y me contenta,  
por la ayuda que me dio las tarjetas, para  
comprar algunos víveres para mi y para mi  
hija y nos hacia falta y estamos muy  
agradecidas mis hija y mi persona  
nunca nos olvidas

10/21/09 / *[Signature]*

Saint Pat's Church,  
I am Mrs Isabel Vargas  
and very happy for the  
help that you have given  
me and my daughter. I  
was able to buy some  
groceries with the cards,  
things that we were doing  
without. My daughter and  
I are very grateful. Don't  
ever forget us, Signed,  
Isabel Vargas.  
(Translation by Pat  
Ferrufino)

- Dear Fr. Tinh and my dearest friends at St. Patrick's, We would like to express our most sincere appreciation for all your prayers and support to my mother Tammy as she mourned the loss of her son and for your presence at the

## Thank You Notes...

- Dear Friends,  
On behalf of the Board of Directors of Falls Church Community Service Council and the clients we serve, I offer our sincere thanks to the leaders and members of St. Patrick's Episcopal Church for the generous donation of \$400.00. It is with this kind of support from our faith community members that FCS will remain

burial ceremony of my late brother last Sunday. My sister and I will forever remember your love and kindness. We are very sad that we couldn't be there to be with our mother. Thank you and may God bless you always, Tina and Lena Vanphung

- Fr. Tinh and Saint Patrick's Congregation, This note of thanks just can't convey the gratitude that's sent your way, but may these words somehow express thanks for all the care and thoughtfulness! Regards, the Thomas' – Milton, Cheryl, Ola & Rylton. Thank you! Thank you!

- Jean and I would like to thank everybody for your prayer and your kindness, and especially thank those who were kind enough to keep me well fed during the time Jean was hospitalized and Jean and me after she came home. Tom Wetrich



- Dear St. Patrick's Congregation, I attended your Falls Festival this morning. I am filled with joy for the camaraderie among generations represented – all working together – purchasing items, selling products, and serving the community to

further the work of the Lord. It was a fun filled and inspiring event! I also want to thank you for remembering me on your prayer list. I think your thoughts and prayers have made a difference. I'm on the way to maintaining my illness and having a successful school year. You have contributed in many ways to support needy families at Westlawn Elementary School. We thank you for that blessing. Sincerely, Susan R. Lawrence, School Counselor, Westlawn ES October 10, 2009.

- A thank you note to all of you who worked so hard to make this year's Bazaar a success. Many thanks to those who helped move the chairs and tables in the church for the event, who organized, helped, contributed, attended and did the clean-up. We made about \$2,000 at the Bazaar on Saturday, October 10, 2009

- The women of Saint Patrick's wish to thank all those who contributed to the bake sale at the Bazaar.

- Many thanks to Cheryl and Milton Thomas for the donation of a 5000-watt generator, to supply electricity to the church when a black-out happens.

### **Congratulations...**

- Congratulations to Jocelyn, Jon and Bennett Miller on the birth of **Tess Culley Miller**, 7 pounds 15 ounces, on Thursday, October 22, 2009!

- Congratulations to Pat Ferrufino on the wedding of her daughter **Stephani and Jason Hoy** on Saturday, October 31, 2009.

- Congratulations to Ann Nelson on the marriage of her daughter **Julie Nelson and James Bradley**, on July 30, 2009, in New York City.

### **Parish Notes...**

- **Angel Tree.** This year, in an effort to help the children of Westlawn Elementary School, we are trying to establish an Angel Tree. We are in the process of composing a letter to the classroom teachers and staff members of the school asking them to identify those children who would benefit from a little extra attention and joy this coming holiday season. After we receive the names of those referred, the two guidance counselors will contact the families to make sure it is all right for their children to participate in this program. They will then ask for one to three ideas of things the children need and/or want. After this information is gathered, we will create the tree from which names can be chosen and those desires fulfilled.

There is also need, again, for underwear and sweatpants for the school children experiencing bathroom accidents. They have a big need for sizes 5 through 10. We will have a basket or box in the narthex in which to put any donations.

- **Santa Sack for the Salvation Army.** Would you like to be one of Santa's helpers? Fill a "Santa sack" for the Salvation Army. Fill them with items designed to promote family activities and wellness (toiletries, school supplies, board/card, games, candy, books, or other kinds of treats). If you are interested, please contact Miriam Balding. She has the bags for the purpose. For years, Salvation Army used the stockings to deliver gifts to the children. This year they will use the 14"x 26" poly sacks, and gifts will be distributed to families.



*Prayer Quilt – Tying knots with prayers for the seriously ill. Oct. 2009*

- The Reverend Letha Wilson-Barnard was instituted as Vicar of Church of the Holy Apostles, Minneapolis, Minnesota, on November 8, 2009, at 3:00 PM. Letha was a seminarian at Saint Patrick's in 2007. She is now ministering to both Anglos and Hmong at her church.

- Tri Xuan Le and his friends of Boy Scout Troop 612 will rebuild the *tool shed* on our church parking lot. This will be Tri's project for the eagle scout award.

- On Sunday, October 4, 2009 **seventeen children and adults visited the Falls Church Community Service Council (FCS) Food Pantry**, housed at Knox Presbyterian Church on Arlington Blvd. What a great turnout! Linda Rice-Johnston, who helps with the Food Pantry and various FCS duties, introduced us to the work of the Food Pantry. She told us how the food pantry operates, including details about some of the families who receive assistance. Forty-four families currently are served each month, with requests for assistance having tripled since last year. The children brought many bags of groceries from St. Patrick's, collected over the last month, and had the privilege of shelving the items. Each type of food was sorted and stored so that filling bags for delivery will be a relatively easy and quick job. The food pantry is in need of more volunteer drivers. If you would like to explore this ministry, feel free to contact Linda at Knox: 703-560-5288 or [fcsweicare@aol.com](mailto:fcsweicare@aol.com). Catherine Dubas & Doan Huynh

- **Children's Choir Festival.** Mariko Hiller and Catherine Dubas are preparing for our Children's Choir (grades 3-6) to participate in **the Chorister's Guild Children's Choir Festival**, which is scheduled for March 14, 2010, in Gaithersburg, Maryland, and they hope to collaborate with music directors of other participating churches of our area in a couple of rehearsals prior to this one-day event. The Vicar has pledged his support for fees, costs of music and occasional snacks for the children, and maybe a light supper as well.

- Celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> season, the Odeon Chamber Music Series presented **the Falls Church Concert Choir** in a performance of **Schubert Mass In F major, D.105**, on Sunday, November 8, 2009. The members of the Choir were from St. Alban's, Saint Patrick's, St. Paul's Episcopal churches and guest singers from the larger community, accompanied by a chamber orchestra and conducted by Mr. Fred Binkholder, Music Director of St. Alban's Episcopal Church. The concert was held in remembrance of our loved ones and friends who have gone before us, on occasion of All Saints' Day.

- **How to participate in the Falls Church Community Service Thanksgiving Delivery Program, Saturday, Nov. 21, 2009.** Each year FCS deliver Thanksgiving "baskets" to over 100 families. Here's what you can do to help:

- Pray for those delivering and those receiving.
- Donate Food—Food may be dropped off at Knox Presbyterian Church, 7416 Arlington Blvd, Falls Church between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on weekdays. Pick up is available for large donations.
- Donate Money —\$25 will sponsor a Thanksgiving

basket for one family. You may send your check to Falls Church Community Service Council, Knox Presbyterian Church, 7416 Arlington Blvd., Falls Church, VA 22042

- Help Pack “Baskets”—Baskets will be packed Friday, November 20 at Knox Presbyterian Church.

- Help Deliver—Deliveries will be on made Saturday, November 21 beginning at 10:00 a.m. from Knox Presbyterian Church. All deliveries are in greater Falls Church. To volunteer with packing or delivery, please call Linda Rice-Johnston at 703-560-5288 or email [fcswe care@aol.com](mailto:fcswe care@aol.com)

- *The Right Reverend Shannon Sherwood Johnston, our 13<sup>th</sup> Diocesan Bishop.* Bishop Lee has retired, after serving for twenty-four years. Bishop Shannon is now the chief pastor the Diocese, which includes 180 churches, 6 church schools, 2 conference centers, 8 retirement communities, 450 clergy and 80,000 members. Bishop Shannon is assisted by Bishop Jones, our suffragan Bishop. Each year our church is visited by a bishop. Bishop Jones is scheduled to visit our church on June 6, 2010. When the Bishop comes, he will lay hands on and pray for those who wish to reaffirm their faith in our Lord or to be confirmed and become official members of the Episcopal Church.

*Tying the knot with a prayer for Mr. Tien Dang*

- **Stewardship Notes.** The stewardship letter and pledge card have been sent to all members of Saint Patrick’s Church. Please prayerfully consider your giving for next year, and promptly send your pledge cards to the church or put them in the alm basin on Sunday, so that the Vestry can establish our 2010 budget in time for the Annual Meeting, which will be held on December 6<sup>th</sup>. “All things come of thee O Lord, and of thine own have we given thee.” (IChronicles 29:14). We pledge our lives to God, and whatever we give to the ministry of the church is actually God’s.

- *The Handicap Restroom.* The church welcomes donations toward the costs of the handicap restroom. Total of expenses was \$23,200.00. Gifts are still coming for the purpose, and the total of offerings is currently at \$19,255.00. The balance has now come down to \$3,945.00. Checks may be made payable to Saint Patrick’s Church, earmarked “for Handicap Restroom, ” and mailed to Saint Patrick’s Episcopal Church, 3241 Brush Drive, Falls Church, Virginia 22042, or put in the alm basins during worship. Many thanks to all of you for your generosity.

- *Our Diocesan Prayer Cycle.* Each Sunday we pray



for

several churches in the Diocese of Virginia. Churches on the list for the day are those visited by either Bishop Shannon or Bishop Jones. We pray for the congregations, the Bishops, and those baptized, confirmed or received at the events. Bishop Jones will visit us on June 6, 2010, and on that day the other churches of the Diocese will pray for us.

- **Health Fair at Saint Patrick’s.** Eleventh-Grader Mai-Khanh Tran, member of the girl scout troupe that meets at Saint Patrick’s will organize a health fair at the church on the afternoon of Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>, From 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM, with the participation of several doctors, a dentist and a pharmacist. The event will be a project for Mai-Khanh’s Gold Award. Admittance will be free.

- **UTO Sunday at Saint Patrick’s, November 22.** The United Thank Offering is a personal devotional program of the Episcopal Church in which we acknowledge and give thanks for the many blessings we receive each day. Established in 1889, the UTO began as part of the missionary efforts of the women of the Episcopal Church. Today the UTO is a ministry of the entire Episcopal Church, which provides a way for all men, women and children to express their gratitude to God by setting aside small offerings of thanksgiving to be used to support worldwide ministries. For more than 100 years the UTO has grown and flourished, and annual offerings had grown to more than \$3 million, supporting 121 grants worldwide. The money we give is not a charitable donation or contribution, it is a thank offering to God. All gifts are sent to the Diocese of Virginia, and then to the United Thank Offering Committee of the Episcopal Church, USA. None of the money is used for administrative expenses.

- *Safety in our parking lot.* Recently there have been concerns about safety for our parishioners in the church parking lot on Sunday and during the week, especially for the very young and the elderly. Drivers please have your foot ready on the brake pedal upon entering the parking lot of the church, and please watch for little children who may suddenly appear running from between the parked vehicles. If you walk with your children in the parking lot please hold on to them and be alert. Drivers who park their cars at the church should always apply the parking brake, to prevent your car from rolling.

- The **Annual Meeting of Saint Patrick's** will be held on Sunday, December 6, 2009, after church. At this meeting we will hear reports and elect new Vestry members. To be elected and serve on the vestry, a member of Saint Patrick's should be a confirmed or received Episcopalian, known to the Treasurer and have been a communicant in good standing. Outgoing members of the Vestry are: Tien Dang, Tom Auld, Victoria Kennedy and Louise Gibney. We thank the members of our Vestry, the Treasurer and the Registrar for their wonderful work and commitment in their ministry.—

- **Christmas Stars.** On Sunday, November 22, after church, we will repair and renew the star lanterns that the late Hong Nguyen made for the church, to make them ready for our Christmas decoration. Participants may also make new stars for themselves at the event. What you will need to bring: A pair of scissors, a glue stick. The church will provide paper for the stars. We look forward to seeing you.

- **Bazaar at St. Alban's Episcopal Church.** Saturday, November 21, from 9:00 AM – 2:30 PM . There will be a wide variety of items for sale, including books, baked goods, handmades, artwork, high class white elephant, toys and games, pressed flower art, candy, jewelry and much more. Lunch items will be sold and "Santa Claus" will be visiting with the children! The church is located at 6800 Columbia Pike in Annandale. Questions? Call the church office at 703-256-2966.



Jack  
the Dog  
and  
Gisela  
at the

*Blessing of the Animals, October 2009*

- **Thanksgiving Day.** Our Thanksgiving Day service on November 26<sup>th</sup> will be held at 10:30 a.m. After the service there will be a **potluck meal** for all who wish to stay.

- **Basket of Thanksgiving.** There is a basket at the door in the narthex (the main entrance of the church) for non-perishable food donations. The food items will be delivered to the FCS food bank where they'll be bagged and delivered to those who qualify for assistance. All are welcome and encouraged to contribute items throughout the month, and the children will be pleased to recruit extra help toting the basket if this basket of thanksgiving is overflowing. In particular, the food pantry is in dire need of children's diapers, size 2, 3, 4, and 5. (Infant diapers are not needed.) Please give generously!

- **Vestry Notes.** The Vestry of Saint Patrick's met on October 11, and heard that...

Steve Lebo repaired the chapel light.

the storage room window has been fixed.

the annual bazaar brought in about \$2,000 with the white elephant being the big money earner this year.

Tri Le, from Boy Scout Troop 612, presented his Eagle badge project entitled SHED REVIVAL.

- **Preaching Schedule**

- November 15: Tinh Huynh+
- November 22: Kathy Oliver
- November 29: Cate Johnson
- December 6: Nancy Burch
- December 13: Geoff Doolittle
- December 20: Tinh Huynh+
- December 24: Tinh Huynh+

#### - Looking ahead:

- Nov. 15<sup>th</sup>: Memoir Class.
- Nov. 22<sup>nd</sup> UTO Sunday, Xmas Star Repair
- Nov. 29<sup>th</sup>: Girl Scouts' Health Fair
- Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>: Annual Meeting; Christmas Carols Sunrise/Bluemont, Dec. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 ~ 3 PM
- Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>: Advent Quiet Day, 4 PM
- Dec. 20<sup>th</sup>: Greening of the church; Children's Advent Presentation "Soldier's Christmas," 5 PM
- **December 24, 2009**: Christmas Eve Service for Small Children, 6:30 PM. Christmas Service: 7:00 p.m. with prelude music, 7:30 p.m. service begins.
- Dec. 27<sup>th</sup>: Prepare food for the homeless/Hypothermia

#### - A Letter from Tyler Mills, VMI

Dear Tinh,

I was touched by the email you sent me. Emails from home really help out. It has been a rough week for my company, for my Brother Rats(classmates) and for the corps. Since Cadet Evans' death all of my friends and I have been wondering what our purpose is here. It took me a while to see that we need to live by Evans' example and never give up. I see God's love everyday here, whether it be an upperclassmen deciding to help me out, or when I see my Brother Rats comforting each other after hearing the news of our friends death. What happened to Evans was terrible and it would have been easy to point the blame, but all of us here at VMI must live as Evans did, and keep pushing ourselves. I doubt I had ever felt the way I felt when all of us Rats gathered around the courtyard and listened to Amazing Grace on the Bag Pipes in a brief ceremony. I have lost my Great Uncle [Joseph Mills], and a Brother Rat within two weeks, but I am more driven now and that is mostly thanks to the Lord. Whenever I am in a tough spot, whether I am afraid, in pain, or missing home I just repeat The Lords Prayer, and am given strength. I would like to thank you for all your support now and in the past, I look forward to returning to my home church.

Very Respectfully

Cadet Mills

- **Hypothermia Shelter Ministry.** Saint Patrick's will participate in the Hypothermia Shelter program this

winter, between December and March. We will be ready to provide shelter for the homeless, if requested. At this moment we are committed to provide food for four times, 50 meals each time. Schedule is as follows: December 28: 50 breakfasts; January 25<sup>th</sup>, 50 dinners; February 22: 50 breakfasts; March 22: 50 dinners. Volunteers and/or donations to the ministry are welcome. If you would like to volunteer and participate in the preparation of food for the homeless, please let Cate Johnson, Joe Hiller or Tinh know. Checks should be written to Saint Patrick's Church, earmarked "Hypothermia."

#### Birthdays

##### November

- 1 Bennett Miller
- 4 Brian Dubas
- 7 William Herbert
- 8 Katie Wright
- 9 Colby Leonard
- 10 Tom Auld
- 11 Anna Kirtland
- 12 Nhung Dang
- 18 Nam-Tran Mai
- 23 Maysia Castillo
- 23 David Smith
- 23 Geoff Doolittle
- 24 Thomas H. Wetrich



##### December

- 4 Irene Graham
- 5 Robert Aronstein
- 5 Jennifer Moya
- 6 Jean Pierre Chanu
- 7 Alice Blumer
- 10 Winnie Lebo
- 10 Julianne Smith
- 11 Graham Parvinkarimi
- 14 Hong Son Phan
- 14 Lois Cascella
- 15 Laurie Los
- 15 Moi Phan
- 16 Jean DuBro
- 18 Jackson DuBro
- 24 Jane Chapman
- 24 Michelle Wang
- 24 Brendon Smith
- 25 Amelia Nicholson
- 28 Paul Los
- 30 Patricia Phan
- 31 Trang Diep
- 31 Chon Kim Huynh



**6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Grade Weekend at Shrine Mont.** On November 13-15, three youth from Saint Patrick's will attend the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> Grade Weekend at Shrine Mont, and they are Bobby Dubas, Gisela Johnson-Harbers and Matthew Pizzola.

#### Một Bài Giảng Tại Saint Patrick's

Chúa Nhật Đông Hiến – 8 tháng 11, 2009  
Ông Geoff Doolittle

Kinh Văn: 1 Các Vua 17:8-16; Phúc Âm: Mác 10:17:31

“CÓ ĐỨC CHÚA, Thiên Chúa hằng sống của ông tôi thì là tôi không có chi để làm bánh. Tôi chỉ còn nắm bột trong hũ và chút dầu trong vò. Tôi đang đi lượm vài thanh củi, rồi về nhà nấu nướng cho tôi và con tôi. Chúng tôi sẽ ăn rồi chết.” Chết này là chết đói. Người góa phụ cùng con trai bà, số phận là như thế. Đó là lời đáp của góa phụ cho tiên tri Ê-li khi ông biểu bà mang nước và làm bánh mì cho ông, trong Sách Các Vua Thứ Nhất.

Một người đàn bà góa đến và đặt hai đồng xu vào hộp tiền dâng tại đền thờ. Thấy vậy, Đức Giêsu gọi các môn đệ và bảo rằng bà này đã dâng nhiều hơn ai hết, vì trong khi những người khác dâng món tiền thừa thì bà này hiến tất cả điều mình còn lại để nuôi sống. Đó là chuyện chúng ta đọc trong Phúc Âm Mác hôm nay.

Hai truyện tích về hai người góa phụ này tương đồng với nhau. Họ là giai cấp thấp hơn hết trong xã hội thời kinh-văn. Cả hai đều như là không có đồng xu dính túi. Họ nghèo xác xơ là vì họ sống trong một thế giới mà chỉ đàn ông có quyền về mọi mặt.

Người thấp hèn hơn ai hết đã lấy cả nắm bột cuối cùng để giúp Chúa cứu nhà tiên tri vĩ đại Ê-li khỏi chết đói. Người thấp hèn hơn ai hết tặng đồng xu cuối cùng để giúp Chúa cung cấp cho Hội Thánh của Chúa.

Ngoài cái nghèo khổ, hai người đàn bà góa này có điều tương đồng chi khác? Chúa thấy điểm tương đồng: đó là đức tin của họ.

Thế hôm nay ta học điều gì trong Ngày Chúa Nhật Dâng Hiến? Tôi có thể nói chi hơn ngoài điểm chính đã nói là đức tin?

Chẳng có chi để nói nữa. Chấm hết!

Ahhhh, chưa đâu quý vị. Có chuyện khác mà ta phải đối diện.

Tôi thường ghét Chúa Nhật Dâng Hiến. Hồi đó, Chúa Nhật Dâng Hiến là ngày người ta đọc Kinh Thánh rồi có người lên làm chứng và nhắc tôi là tôi đã chệnh mảng như thế nào trong việc hiến tặng thì giờ và khả năng cho công việc nhà thờ. Nghe giảng xong tôi ra về mang mặc cảm suốt ngày hoặc suốt tuần. Ngày thứ hai tôi bắt đầu nghĩ xem mình có thể giúp thêm chăng, nhưng đến thứ tư thì tôi lại quay về với thực tế. Không có cách chi tôi có thể dâng thêm thì giờ, tài năng hay tiền bạc ma không phải cắt giảm những chuyện khác cần thì giờ, khả năng và tiền bạc của tôi.

Rồi có những lý do và lý luận khác bắt đầu xuất hiện. Tôi không thể cho thêm thì giờ vì tôi là cha, là chồng, là người kiếm ăn cho gia đình, và công việc tôi phải là ưu tiên. Tôi không có thể cho thêm tài năng, là vì chuyện tôi làm được thì chắc là nhà thờ không cần. Tôi không thể dâng thêm tiền, là vì hiện tôi đã lún sâu vào nợ nần, và lý do nữa là một khi dâng thì tôi không còn quyền chi trên món tiền ấy, và không biết nhà thờ sẽ

tiêu nó vào việc gì... rất có thể họ tiêu vào những chuyện tôi không hoàn toàn đồng ý.



Tôi nhớ trong Kinh Thánh có câu Chúa yêu kẻ dâng hiến cách hoan hỉ, cho nên nếu tôi không vui lòng thì có dâng cũng vô ích thôi. Năm nay, tôi sẽ giữ nguyên trạng như năm ngoái, và có thể sang năm tới dâng hơn một chút.

Điều làm tôi khó lòng nhất là cái chữ “P,” tức là chuyện dâng Phần Mười. Vào mùa dâng hiến, người ta nói bao gồm thì giờ, công sức và tiền bạc, song thật sự là nói về ngân sách, tức là tiền.

Dâng một phần mười lợi tức? Thật sao? Làm sao dâng tới một phần mười? Tại nhà thờ của tôi người ta nói về dâng tiền song tránh chữ “phần mười.” Trong Hội Thánh có người lý luận về chuyện dâng 10% trước thuế hay sau khi trừ thuế, hoặc sau khi trừ hết các chi phí gia đình. Càng lý luận với nhau thì càng tránh nói về chuyện phần mười.

Song tôi để ý ông mục sư tôi. Ông dâng một phần mười cho tất cả mọi món tiền ông nhận được. Ông ta là người tốt nghiệp đại học; lương thì thấp hơn cả sinh viên mới có bằng cử nhân; gia đình có bốn đứa con, còn bà vợ làm việc part-time; ông ta làm việc 60 tiếng đồng hồ mỗi tuần để chăm sóc tinh thần cho mỗi một người trong Hội Thánh. Không cần biết tiền lương hay tiền quà đến từ đâu, chi phí gia đình như thế nào; không cần biết ông có xứng đáng nhận những điều ông đã nhận, hay là nếu ông giữ tiền ông lại thì có lợi hơn cho ông hay không, ông cứ dâng 10%.

Ông ta không bao giờ than vãn về tiền bạc, hay là than thiếu tiền. Thực ra, tôi chỉ thấy có một lần ông nói nhiều về tiền là lúc ông và bà vợ tính với nhau là một phần mười của món tiền ai đó tặng sẽ đi về việc từ thiện nào.

Thế nên, một hôm tôi hỏi ông mục sư, “Ông Ralph, làm thế nào ông dâng phần mười được? Tôi biết tiền lương của ông, tôi biết chuyện gia đình tốn kém tới mức nào, làm sao ông dâng một phần mười mà vẫn tươi cười?”

Rất tiếc là ông mục sư không có câu trả lời tức khắc giải toả thắc mắc. Ông chỉ cười và nói: “Này anh Geoff, dâng hiến là một kỷ luật. Không phải là anh cứ nhảy vào là dâng được đâu. Ngoại trừ là anh đã được huấn luyện từ bé, anh phải tập chuyên đôi thứ tự ưu tiên. Đây là một sự lựa chọn mà tự mình làm lấy, tức là một sự đổi lòng. Anh phải học đức tin: đặt Thiên Chúa lên hàng đầu, và tin chắc rằng khi anh đặt Chúa là trước hết thì mọi sự khác sẽ ra đâu vào đó.”

Tôi chẳng thích câu trả lời này. Tôi không thích nó vì nó không thả tôi ra khỏi vấn đề. Tôi ghét nó, vì nó buộc tôi phải hy sinh. Tôi ghét nó vì nó nói lên chân lý mà tôi không muốn nghe.

Chuyện trên có thật. Tôi hỏi ông mục sư tôi cách đây bảy năm. Câu trả lời của ông có còn làm tôi khó nghĩ chẳng? Vẫn còn. Tôi có dâng một phần mười về thì giờ, tài năng và tiền bạc chẳng? Thì giờ thì có, và đang cố gắng về chuyện dâng tài năng, nhưng tôi vẫn chưa đạt đến mức dâng tiền bạc. Dâng tiền là điều khó nhất.

Tháng trước tôi giảng về chuyện đùng đẽ của cái làm chủ mình. Tôi vẫn phải phấn đấu trong “cuộc chiến” ấy mỗi ngày. Tôi biết ai cũng thế.

Nhưng trong bảy năm qua tôi học được rằng làm môn đệ Đức Kitô không phải dễ. Đương nhiên, làm môn đệ Chúa không dễ. Tin Chúa tới mức hiến tặng cho Chúa miếng bánh mì cuối cùng hay đồng bạc cuối cùng không phải là chuyện dễ, và không phải là muốn làm thì làm ngay được. Nhưng đó lại chính là điều Chúa muốn chúng ta ao ước làm được.

Chính những người làm được điều trên mà tôi đã thấy, những người đó khiến tôi thêm lòng tin Chúa. Xã hội ngày nay có thể cười chê hai người đàn bà đầy lòng tin cậy trong kinh văn chúng ta đọc hôm nay. Nhưng truyện tích về họ lưu truyền mãi mãi, là gương không hề phai về đức tin trọn vẹn nơi Chúa.

Dâng hiến không phải là về thì giờ, tài năng hay tiền bạc. Dâng hiến là sự trung tín đối với Chúa. Dâng hiến là giữ lời mình hứa trong Báp Tem. Dâng hiến là giao ước, trách nhiệm, là mối liên hệ giữa chúng ta và Thiên Chúa, và là tiếng gọi cho chúng ta.

Dâng hiến là đứng tại chân thập tự của Đức Kitô, nhìn xem mắt Ngài, thân Ngài bị lột trần truồng, bị lãng nhục, một án tử hình cho người không hề phạm tội. Dâng hiến là về Con Thiên Chúa đã xả thân vì lỗi lầm của chúng ta, khi Ngài kêu lên xin Chúa tha cho chúng ta vì chúng ta không biết điều mình làm. Đức Giêsu đã hiến mình vì một hội thánh đầy sai lầm và một đoàn người tội lỗi.

Hãy nhìn xem Crucifixus chúng ta đã hy sinh trên thập tự để chúng ta được tha thứ khỏi tội lỗi. Tình thương của Chúa lớn đến nỗi phó sự sống mình cho người khác. Suy nghĩ về điều Thiên Chúa đã ban cho chúng ta thì tôi và quý vị sẽ thành người luôn luôn hoan hỉ hiến dâng. Amen.

## Tin Tức Sinh Hoạt

- Nhà thờ Thánh Patrick đã bắt đầu lại chương trình dạy kèm miễn phí cho các học sinh, do ông Joe Hiller hướng dẫn. Nếu quý vị hoặc thân hữu của quý vị có thể giúp lớp dạy kèm về toán hoặc viết Anh Ngữ, hoặc có con em muốn xin học, xin cho Mục Sư Tỉnh biết. Ông Hiller hiện đang giúp các học sinh về toán và lý-hóa.

- UTO Sunday. Chúa Nhật, ngày 22 tháng 11 là ngày dâng hiến cho chương trình “Đồng Thanh Cảm Tạ

Dâng Hiến” của Nhà Thờ Episcopal. Nhà thờ sẽ phát cho tín hữu các phong bì và hộp đựng tiền dâng trước một tuần. Chương trình này bắt đầu khoảng hơn một trăm năm trước đây, do các phụ nữ của Hội Thánh khởi xướng để hỗ trợ cho các mục vụ trên



thế giới, đồng thời tạo dịp tiện cho mọi người, người lớn cũng như trẻ em được cơ hội tỏ lòng biết ơn Chúa, dâng một món tiền nhỏ. Hiện thời, chương trình này hàng năm thu khoảng 3 triệu đồng, hỗ trợ 121 mục vụ trên thế giới. Đây không phải là một công tác từ thiện, mà là một cử lễ tạ ơn. Tiền thu vào sẽ được gởi lên Giáo Hội Trung Ương, và không phần nào trong tiền này được sử dụng để trả phí tôn hành chánh.

- Chữa Lồng Đèn Ngôi Sao. Vào ngày Chúa Nhật, 22 tháng 11, chúng ta sẽ tân trang các lồng đèn ngôi sao do Ông Nguyễn Văn Hồng làm lúc còn sống, để trang hoàng Giáng Sinh cho nhà thờ năm nay. Sau giờ lễ xin quý anh chị em ở lại để tham dự sinh hoạt này.

- Lễ Cảm Tạ sẽ được cử hành lúc 10 giờ 30 sáng, ngày thứ năm, 26 tháng 11, 2009. Sau đó chúng ta sẽ có một bữa ăn potluck như mọi năm. Kính mời quý anh chị em tham dự thờ phượng và ở lại dùng bữa. Đây là dịp tốt chúng ta mời thân hữu và gia quyến đến thờ phượng và chung vui. Ngày Cảm Tạ là một truyền thống Hoa Kỳ, để nhắc lại những ơn lành Thiên Chúa ban cho cha ông họ khi mới đến vùng đất lạ và đối diện với nhiều thách thức kinh khủng. Đối với người Việt trong Hội Thánh chúng ta, đây là dịp để chúng ta nhắc

lại ơn lành Chúa ban khi mình mới đến định cư tại nơi này, và cảm tạ Chúa.

- **“Rỗ Tạ Ơn.”** Tại cửa vào nhà thờ (trong phòng narthex) có một cái rỗ lớn đựng thức ăn khô và đồ hộp. Quý tín hữu trong Hội Thánh thường mang những thứ gom lại để giúp người túng thiếu. Các món tặng được phân loại và cho vào bao để phân phối cho người thực sự cần giúp đỡ. Theo lời bà Catherine Dubas là người mang những món quà nói trên đến trung tâm tại nhà thờ Knox Presbyterian ở đường 50, người ta yêu cầu quý ân nhân *tặng tã cho các em nhỏ*, vừa cho các em từ 2 tới 4 tuổi (không cần tã cho trẻ sơ sinh). Nhà thờ hoan nghênh sự đóng góp của quý vị. Chúng ta khuyến khích lẫn nhau trong việc thiện này.

- **Những Lời Cảm Ơn Trong Số Báo Này.** Trong phần Anh Ngữ ở những trang đầu có nhiều lời cảm ơn. Đáng lưu ý nhất là những lời cảm ơn của đại diện trường tiểu học Westlawn và Giám Đốc Cơ Quan từ thiện FCS về những món quà và tiền bạc giúp người nghèo do Nhà Thờ chúng ta gởi đến họ. Nhà Thờ cũng cảm ơn các quý vị đã giúp trong kỳ chợ Bazaar hồi tháng 10, và cảm ơn ông bà Milton Thomas đã tặng một chiếc máy phát điện 5000 Watts để phòng khi bị cúp điện. Anh Lộc Phan, chuyên về điện, sẽ giúp thiết kế để máy sẵn sàng được sử dụng khi cần.

- **Mùa Dâng Hiến.** Tháng 11 là tháng nhà thờ chúng ta nói về vấn đề dâng hiến. Suốt tháng 10, vào mỗi Chúa Nhật sau lễ, có bốn thành viên nhà thờ chia sẻ điều họ nghĩ về Nhà Thờ Thánh Patrick, gồm có Giáo Sư Cao Thị Lễ, Cô Claire Dubas, Bà Frankie Haan và Ông Vivian Benjamin. Bài nói chuyện của họ bằng Anh Ngữ được đăng ở trang đầu tờ báo này. Thông thường chúng ta không nghĩ đến chuyện tại sao mình gia nhập và lưu lại trong Nhà Thờ mình. Lời chia sẻ của quý vị nói trên khơi động trong tâm tư điều ấy. Nhà thờ tồn tại được là do sự dâng hiến của tín hữu và quà tặng của thân hữu. Dâng hiến không phải chỉ là một sự đóng góp từ thiện. Đối với người tín hữu, dâng hiến có tính cách thiêng liêng. Đối với người môn đệ Đức Kitô, dâng hiến là lối sống, vì tất cả mọi sự trên đời và cuộc đời của mình là từ Chúa mà đến.

- **An Toàn Trên Bãi Đậu Xe Nhà Thờ.** Khi đến nhà thờ xin anh chị em cẩn thận vấn đề xe cộ trên bãi đậu. Người lái và người đi bộ cần nhìn cẩn thận để tránh bị tai nạn. Quý vị có em nhỏ nên trông chừng để các em đừng chạy, và nhất là để ý các cụ lái xe – nhìn người lái để xem họ có thấy mình không. Nếu quý vị lái xe thì nên để sẵn chân trên thắng, và canh chừng xem có ai không thấy xe mình chẳng.

- **Nhà Thờ Thánh Patrick và Vấn Đề Kỳ Thị.** Nhà Thờ chúng ta chống lại sự kỳ thị về mọi phương diện. Đây là quan điểm của mọi người trong cộng đoàn kể từ ngày thành lập Hội Thánh. Sự kỳ thị đến từ ý nghĩ cho rằng mình tốt hơn người khác, và đi ngược lại đối với lời dạy của Đức Giêsu. Sự kỳ thị có thể là về màu da, tôn giáo, phái tính, trình độ học thức hay hoàn cảnh kinh tế. Sự kỳ thị bắt nguồn từ sự sợ hãi: sợ người khác mình. Sự kỳ thị phản ảnh tình trạng ấu trĩ, và nó tiêm ần, ăn sâu trong tâm thức mọi người.

Sự kỳ thị biểu lộ trong những chữ ta dùng cho người khác mình. Chúng ta kỳ thị người Tàu, người thượng du, người có nước da ngăm đen. Người Việt sợ người da đen. Người Mỹ ngày nay rất cẩn thận khi dùng các chữ để nói về người khác chủng tộc; người mình vẫn còn dùng các chữ như “tụi đen,” “tụi xì,” thậm chí có khi ví họ như súc vật. Lời nói thoát ra từ miệng không phải chỉ là ra ngoài, nhưng nó lại giam hãm chính người nói.

Người làm môn đệ Đức Kitô phải tập để thoát khỏi tính kỳ thị. Làm thế nào bỏ tính kỳ thị? Thứ nhất, chúng ta nhớ rằng mình đã học rất nhiều chữ do thế hệ trước hay bạn bè truyền cho khi còn nhỏ. Chúng ta có một số danh từ để sử dụng lúc vui, buồn hay tức giận – những chữ đó nằm trong cuốn tự điển trong đầu chúng ta. Điều phải làm là loại bỏ những từ ngữ mình không muốn dùng ra khỏi “cuốn tự điển” ấy. Chúng ta phải tập dùng một số chữ mới để nói về người khác.

Thứ hai, ta phải kiểm soát tư tưởng. Kiểm soát tư tưởng bằng cách nào? Kiểm soát bằng cách đứng lại! Dừng! Mỗi khi có ý nghĩ kỳ thị đến, ta dừng lại và tự chất vấn. Là Kitô-hữu, ta tự hỏi ta có nên có ý như vậy không? Chúa nghĩ thế nào về tư tưởng ấy? Một phương pháp hữu hiệu là tập tịnh khẩu và tĩnh tâm.

Đang sung sướng với những tư tưởng và ngôn ngữ làm cho mình “đã” thì dừng lại không dễ. Người Mỹ trong nhà thờ chúng ta phán đoán rất nặng nề đối với bất cứ ai buột miệng dùng các chữ có tính cách kỳ thị. Có khi lỡ nói bằng tiếng Anh chữ mình quen dùng để chỉ về người khác màu da, ta có thể mất bạn Mỹ. Vì cộng đoàn ta chống lại sự kỳ thị, ta tập sửa đổi tư tưởng và lời nói. Đức Giêsu chống lại sự kỳ thị.

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### **We remember in our prayer:**

Bob Aronstein, Irene Bell, Bill Benson, Kari Boeskov, Mary Anne Bogie, Bob Brown, Pat Brown, Dorothy Bush, Mary Carper, Al Cockrell, Hai Dang Do, Jane Chapman, Tim Clary, Dorothy Connelly, Tien Dang, Donald DeVaughn, Loretta Dougherty, Archie Ellis, Mary Farmer, Nance Finegan, Nic Franca, Luis Garay, Lura Jean Gardner, The Gillies Family, Peggy Gleason, Anne Goodwin, Jean

Graham, Roberta Jean Gobel, Canedo Guillermo, Katherine Hafele, Bill and Betty Henderson, Harry Henderson, Sheila Henderson, Alek Hensley, Robert Herron, Mercy Hiller, Michael Horn, Virginia Hughes, Dianna & Michelle-Marie Iungerich, Terry Irwin, Jill, Jamie Kaplon, Jeffrey King, Sareana, Erin, and Alex Kelly, Quinn Kimball, Daniel Kontess, Wayne Langley, Susan Lawrence, Bau Le, Phan Le, Marie Lewis, Lisa, Colleen Mavrikas, Ann Olson, Que Nguyen, Keslie Nolan, Edward Oliver, Carolyn Patterson, Irene Pierce, Faith Poole, Michael Price, Robert Roy, Nora Searle, Bill Sitler, Irene Skowron, Brian Smith, Candi Stewart, Kara Stryker, Jamie Stryko, Ruby Stryko, Heather Sweeney, Steven Talbert, Geroge Thomas, Clara Torres, George Torres, Eugene Urbaniak, Michael Weekes, Mark and Heather Westfall, Jean Wetrich, Paula Wiech, Meredith Wiech, Frances Williams, Donna Wolff, Will Zapf, Rudy Zimpel.

**We pray especially for**

**Tien Dang, Al Cockrell and Mercy Hiller**

# November 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 All Saints' Day 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II	2	3	4  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	5  8:00 PM: Choir	6  6:00 PM: Scouts	7  10:30 AM: Dress Rehearsal – Schubert Mass
8 Stewardship Sunday 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II 4:00 PM Schubert Mass	9	10  Commissions, 6:30 PM Vestry, 7:30 PM	11  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	12  12:30 PM: Vicar/Seminarian Meeting	13  6:00 PM: Scouts	14 10:00 AM: Vicar to CCM Meeting, Ivy, VA 10:30 AM: Bell Choir 2:00 PM: Scouts
15 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II UTO envelopes distributed Lector Training, 12:00 PM Memoir Class after	16	17	18  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	19 9:00 PM: Vicar to Field Ed Training/VTS 12:30 PM: Vicar/Seminarian Meeting	20  6:00 PM: Scouts	21  10:30 AM: Bell Choir
22 UTO Sunday 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II Christmas star Repair after church	23	24	25  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	26  Thanksgiving Service, 10:30 AM Potluck, 11:30 AM	27  6:00 PM: Scouts	28
29 Advent 1 UTO Sunday 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II Girl Scout Health Fair, 1-5 PM	30					

# December 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	3  12:30 PM: Vicar/Seminarian Meeting	4	5  Bell Choir, 10:30 AM
6 2 ADVENT 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II Annual Meeting after church 1:30 PM ~ 3 PM: Carols at Camping / Placement	7	8  6:30 PM: Commissions 7:30 PM: Vestry	9  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	10  12:30 PM: Vicar/Seminarian Meeting	11	12  Bell Choir, 10:30 AM
13 3 ADVENT 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II Seminarian Committee meets after church 4:00 PM: Quiet Day	14	15	16  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	17 9:00 PM: Vicar to Field Ed Training/VTS 12:30 PM: Vicar/Seminarian Meeting	18	19  Bell Choir, <b>10:00 AM</b>
20 4 ADVENT 8:00 AM HE I 9:30 AM Sunday School 10:30 AM HE II 12:00 PM Greening of the church 5 PM: Children's Advent Presentation	21	22	23	24  6:30 PM: Xmas service for small children 7:00 XMas Music 7:30 Xmas Eve Service	25	26  No Bell Choir
27 1 CHRISTMAS	28	29	30  9:30 AM: HE in Vietnamese	31		