



The Floister

Parish Newsletter of Saint Mary's Episcopal Church November 2009



From Fr. John:

My dear brothers and sisters

“There are no outcasts” (Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning).

The season is changing markedly. On Sunday 1st November the clocks “fall back”, as the leaves are falling – and producing 160 large bags of leaves at St Mary's! At any rate, and the trees look poignantly beautiful, recalling the summer that is past now.

Fortunately, the Yankees look hopeful for winning the World Series in baseball. Then, Tuesday 3rd, Election Day – and we hold the various new office holders in prayer as they carry out their responsibilities to the community.

OCTOBER

October was a busy and a joyous month. We had our Parish Annual Fair on Saturday 3rd; the “Blessing of the Animals” (St Francis' Day observance) on Saturday 10th; and also the autumn dinner on Saturday 17th. On Sunday 25th we had the blessing of the beautiful new front doors of the church, recognizing the generosity of the families Serena, Rizzo, Campbell, and Gundry. (Regarding bequests, please do remember to make your own intentions explicit – otherwise what you may want to leave to St Mary's could never reach the Parish.)

At the end of October, on Saturday 31st, fifty people from the Church Club visited St Mary's and had lunch here. For this visit, Rose Myslicki and Cara Barry prepared a guide booklet. All the above events took a good deal of preparation by a large number of people, and, in some cases, great personal generosity. Thank you to every one who helped to make each of these events the happy and successful occasions they were.

NOVEMBER

Ahead, in November, we have family commemorations during All Saints Sunday on 1st. The service included the baptism of aptly named Hope Maddix, along with the blessing of the new hand bells. We remember Veterans Day on 11th, while the Diocesan Convention is on Saturday 21st – where our representative is Sue Peterson. There will be a retirement celebration for the ministry of Fr Richard Markham at St Mary's on Sunday 22nd, which also marks the conclusion of the Liturgical Year (“Christ the King”). There will be a Parish Eucharist at 7 p.m. on Thanksgiving eve, Wednesday 25th, and then the new liturgical year begins on Advent 1, Sunday 29th. We have Advent booklets for your prayers and personal spiritual preparation for the year ahead.

This is also the period during which we consider the way we intend to renew our stewardship commitments to God and to the Parish. Please be as generous as you can be. Just as our parents and teachers gave more to us than we can possibly every repay, so it is true, that we

cannot be more generous to God than God has been to us. It is a noble person who knows how to be thankful and generous to others.

PEOPLE AND PLACES

At the personal and pastoral level, we heard great news of the impending arrival of Faith and Arthur Grannis' adopted grandchild. We continue to receive letters of thanks from those receiving prayer cards from our Friday morning prayer and third Wednesday evening healing groups. "Forward Day by Day" devotional booklets are available for those wishing to use these in their daily prayers.

OUTREACH

In his 29th Sonnet, Shakespeare wrote: "I all alone beweepe my outcast state, and trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries." Well to the contrary of that, our Parish outreach plans are going ahead. The plans include (amongst other things) a social group, church signage, and also seeking at least 12 participants for an after school program in 2010. (The latter appears to be something significant for a current debate on the matter of education budget cuts between our bishops and the Governor of NY.) Perhaps, by the grace of God, these various Parish outreach initiatives will succeed. If so, then they will represent a step forward for St Mary's in terms of a ministry to young people, to adults, to the elderly, and to the community. All are welcome to the next Outreach discussion group, on Tuesday 24th November.

Please wish Muslim brothers and sisters well with Eid, beginning on Fri 27th November.

With much love,
Fr John Stubbs

The Healing of Memories

Fr Michael Lapsley is a person who suffered the destruction of his hands and the blinding of one eye when he received a letter bomb. For many years following that, he has devoted himself to a ministry of "The Healing of Memories."

The principles of "The Healing of Memories", very simply stated, are these: All of us have painful memories from the past, and sometimes, from very early childhood. These painful memories can cripple us, when we simply 'nurse, rehearse and curse' the experiences and the people involved; and can continue to affect us negatively. This can apply to negative family events, to war injuries, to relational or marital breakdowns, business betrayals, and the various ways we or our loved ones suffer disease, accidents, or bodily harm. The effects can be continually destructive to our quality of life, to our careers, families, and communities.

The approach of the 'Healing of Memories' method is this: It is inevitable that we recall painful experiences from the past, just as one's tongue continually explores a painful tooth. When recalling such painful memories, try this as a deliberate habit: Consciously include not only yourself and the person who, or thing which so hurt you; rather, envision that same experience in a simple but different way: Yourself, the person who so hurt you, and also the living figure of Jesus Christ present in that scene. Jesus' living, healing presence is like powerful and penetrating medicine into the infection and disease of that painful memory. You will find, sooner or later, that that painful memory is transformed into something no longer harmful, and even, into something that mysteriously blesses, heals, and strengthens you and every person involved.

Would you like to hear more about this? Oddly enough, I have just heard that Fr Michael Lapsley will be visiting St. Paul's On the Hill on Sunday, November 15 at 7:30. The Priest there is Fr Stephen Holton. The address is 40 Ganung Drive Ossining, NY 10562 (914) 941-6627

Parish News

Retirement

Fr. Richard Markham is retiring from the ministry, but will remain at St. Mary's as a communicant. On Sunday, November 22 we will celebrate Fr. Markham's ministry with a lovely brunch held in the parish house following the 10:00 a.m. service. We hope you will join us as we gather together to say thank you for his many years of service.

Advent Evensong

On Sunday, December 6th, St. Mary's will be host to the Staten Island Council of Churches in a special **Advent Choral Evensong** at 4pm. This is the first time that our parish has invited this organization (which is made up of a wide range of churches and denominations on the Island), and by all accounts, they are much looking forward to coming to St. Mary's and to worship with us.

The Choir is hard at work preparing a full choral Evensong, and will be performing a number of works new to its repertoire including the *Preces & Responses* by William Byrd. The Psalm is set to Anglican Chant by Goss, and the Choir will sing the Advent plainchant setting of the *Magnificat* and the *Nunc dimittis* accompanied by our wonderful hand bells. Evensong will end with the powerful and haunting Evening Hymn by Balfour-Gardiner. This is a rare opportunity to open our doors to our church neighbors so that they might share in the beauty of our sanctuary and experience the stately, traditional Episcopalian liturgy for which St. Mary's is known.

We ask **all parishioners** to save the date of December 6th. Please be here to welcome our guests, to support our hard-working Choir, and to not miss what I promise will be a moving and joyous Advent service. Bring a friend, bring your family, and come with a thankful heart for the chance to share our beloved St. Mary's with others.

Mission

We are again collecting items for our troops. In the spirit of the holiday season we are asking you to donate gift items such as cards, music CDs, hand-held games, gum, snacks (no chocolate, please) and notes of encouragement. Please place your donations in the bucket in the back of the Church. Donations will be taken to Moravian Church for collection.

1982 Hymnals

The vestry has approved the purchase of 50 1982 Hymnals. The hymnals will be introduced after the new year. If you are interested in donating a Hymnal (cost \$21) as a memorial or thank offering, please contact Fr. John or Cara in the parish office.

Our Parish Family **Celebrate**