

WASHINGTON window

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The District of Columbia and the Maryland Counties of
Montgomery, Prince George's, Charles and St. Mary's

Diocesan Convention

114th annual gathering focuses on rising to meet recent challenges, making disciples

By Lucy Chumbley

Hard choices, silver linings, faith in adversity and finding new ways to be disciples in challenging times were some key themes of the 114th Diocesan Convention, held on a typically wintery weekend, Jan. 30-31.

Welcoming delegates to Washington National Cathedral, Dean Samuel T. Lloyd said while "it hasn't been an easy time for us in the cathedral community," there have been "silver linings" in the chance to refocus on the cathedral's core ministry.

"We need your prayers and we are so grateful for so many expressions of support from you during these times," he said, referring to the cathedral's \$9.6 million budget cut in fiscal year 2009. "We need to support each other as we move through this complex, critical time."

Describing 2009 as "a year of hard choices" for the diocese, Gerry Perez, outgoing moderator of the Diocesan Council, noted that "there is good work being done here and it's being done with ever tightening resources."

"We have been impacted by the financial downturn," said diocesan treasurer Paula Singleton. While the 2008 budget deficit, \$214,000, was "slightly better than the number that we had presented and forecasted," the diocese's assets declined by \$800,000 in 2008, she said, with the value of the Soper Trust dropping from \$31 million in 2007 to \$21 million as of Dec. 31, 2008.

The convention passed a \$4.55 million budget for 2009, presented by outgoing Finance Committee Chairman John Welch, which reflects a 1.7 percent decrease from 2008.

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Photo by Donovan Marks

School chaplains discuss religious curriculum

By Lucy Chumbley

School chaplains are hoping to establish a standard for religious education in kindergarten through eighth grade in the Diocese of Washington's Episcopal schools.

In recent years, a theme that has consistently surfaced during conversations with school heads and chaplains is a desire "to define Episcopal education and what's unique about it," said the Rev. Preston Hannibal, the diocese's canon for academic ministries. "There has been a call for some guid-

ance in what Episcopal education actually is."



Hannibal

The curriculum discussion emerged again last fall in the Chaplains Colleague Group, which pairs new chaplains (four this year) with veteran chaplains.

There are 17 school chaplains in the diocese, full and part-time, lay and ordained. They serve students and staff, faculty, families and alumni.

"The chaplains work with a very large community on a daily basis,"

Hannibal said. "One of the things that many people don't realize is that our schools are active worship communities."

High schools already have an established standard for religious education, he said, but there are no diocesan-wide guidelines in place for elementary and middle schools.

"There's really not a standard from the National Association of Episcopal Schools," he said. "There are various models that are comprehensive models. Different schools do different things - that's one of the interesting things about Episcopal schools. Some schools offer a comprehensive religious program, others don't. ... Our

Episcopal schools, while they don't need to be uniform in everything, they do each exist in their own little sphere."

Some of the 20 Episcopal schools in the diocese hold morning chapel, Hannibal said, and some don't. Some have a regular course of religious study, which includes Bible study and church history, while others offer a broader program of ethical education. Some even offer confirmation classes.

"There are a wide variety of ways our schools teach what it is to be a person of faith," he said. "One is not necessarily better than another, but it's important I think that we give all the

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inTHE window



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Episcopal bishop denied access to Gaza

On Feb. 4, the Right Rev. Suheil Dawani, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, was denied entry into the Gaza Strip at the Israeli-controlled Erez Crossing after two hours of waiting. The denial occurred just one day after his visit to the Diocese of Washington, where he spoke at our annual convention. Lutheran Bishop Mounib Younan was also denied entry.

Bishops Dawani and Younan were on a pastoral visit to Gaza to meet with their respective church members following the declaration of a ceasefire between Israeli Defense Forces and Hamas militants. Bishop Dawani was also scheduled to visit the Al Ahli Episcopal Hospital in Gaza. The bishops were part of a five-member delegation of heads of churches from Jerusalem. Two weeks prior to the visit, negotiations for permits were begun with the Israeli government, and all five Jerusalem church leaders had been informed that their request to enter Gaza had been approved.

The Israeli government's decision to deny Bishops Dawani and Younan entrance into Gaza after permission had initially been granted was apparently based on the fact that they are Palestinians, though both hold Jerusalem IDs, which are issued by

Israel. Those who were granted permission and entered Gaza were Archbishop Aris Shirvanian of the Armenian Patriarchate in Jerusalem, Ethiopian Archbishop Abba Matias, and Latin Church Patriarch Fouad Twal. None of these three is Palestinian.

Of great concern for Bishop Dawani was the welfare of the Episcopal Christians in Gaza and the staff and patients at Al Ahli Episcopal Hospital. They had been under great stress as a result of hostilities between Israel and Hamas militants. The hospital, working under extreme difficulty with limited medical supplies and fuel, cared for the wounded, injured and dying during hostilities. For both bishops, Dawani and Younan, the visit was a pastoral one.



Bishop John Bryson Chane

The Lutheran and Anglican presence in Gaza dates to 1841 and has been a cooperative venture between these two Christian denominations ever since. Although upset and highly disappointed, Bishop Dawani said; "Regardless of what happened at Erez border crossing, I will continue the work of peace and reconciliation during the difficult times that we face. And as I have always said, we must keep faith and hope alive against all odds as we work in earnest for a just peace and security for all Palestinians and Israelis alike. A solution that

brings betterment for all

of our communities in Israel and Palestine, to enjoy the blessings of a far better quality of life that they justly deserve with the attendant economic and social opportunities to build the foundation and fabric of an enduring equitable society."

In a letter to Israel's Ambassador to the United States, Sallai Meridor, dated Feb. 5, the head of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Bishop Mark Hanson, and the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church, the Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori, expressed their deep concern over the incident and asked specifically why both bishops had been denied entry into Gaza. "We are concerned that they were not allowed freedom of movement into Gaza to carry out their pastoral responsibilities. We believe that it is urgent that adequate humanitarian assistance reach the people of Gaza immediately, and we underscore Bishop's Dawani's statement that 'most certainly pastoral care is an important factor in such services.'"

At the outset of the Israel/Gaza conflict, I was in daily contact with the Israeli Embassy in Washington, requesting its help in moving humanitarian aid and medical supplies into Gaza for Al Ahli Hospital. The embassy and USAID were both very helpful. But when I wrote to the embassy about my outrage that a bishop of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem and the Middle East was denied pastoral access to his congregants and hospital simply because of his nationality, I received a response that the situation would be looked into. Since then there has been no

other communication from the embassy, even after I forwarded a second inquiry. Such silence is painful to me, since we have in the most recent past had a good relationship. The Israeli Embassy's unwillingness to respond is discourteous to me and disrespectful of the office that I hold as the Bishop of Washington.

It is possible that by the time you read this, some explanation has been offered, or some resolution of this vexing and painful incident has taken place. But what is still a major concern is the inhibiting of the movement of a bishop in the exercise of his ministry of pastoral care and the infringement on guarantees of religious freedom so cherished by any democratic state or nation that lives by the rule of law.

As I close I ask that you respond to the request of our Presiding Bishop to support the annual Good Friday Offering which supports the work of the Episcopal Church in Jerusalem. The offerings of every church in our diocese are forwarded to Church House. We then forward all offerings to the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem for the support of Al Ahli Hospital. Please make checks payable to the Diocese of Washington, C/O Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem. Offering materials, including a poster, bulletin shell and offering envelopes are available online, in English and Spanish, at www.episcopalchurch.org/gfo. Good Friday Offering materials also are available through Episcopal Books and Resources by calling 800/903-5544.

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Director of communications, Jim Naughton
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SHUT OUT

The Right Rev. Suheil Dawani, Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, and his Lutheran counterpart, Bishop Mounib Younan, sit on the street at the Israeli-controlled Erez Crossing on Feb. 4, where they were recently denied entry into the Gaza Strip for a pastoral visit.

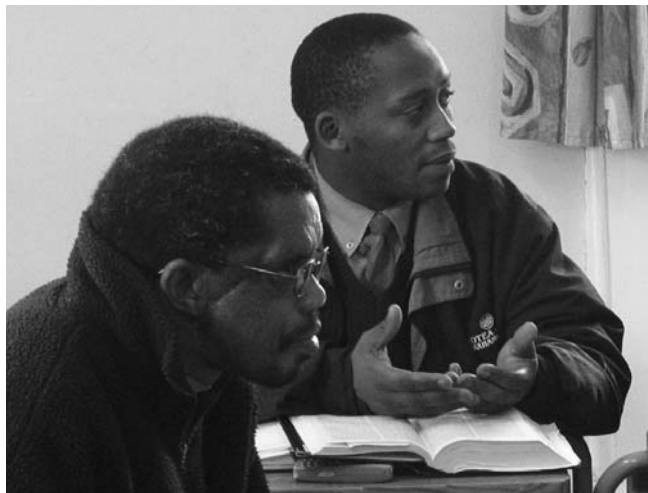
BISHOP'S visitations&engagements

March 1: St. Barnabas', Oxon Hill (visitation)

March 8: St. Thomas', D.C. (visitation)

March 12-18: Spring House of Bishops meeting in Kanuga, N.C.

Teaching and learning in Grahamstown



Students take part in a discussion during their studies at the College of the Transfiguration, a residential Anglican seminary in South Africa.

By Lucy Chumbley

St. Dunstan's parishioners Ray Donnelly and Sue Carroll returned from their second stint at the College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown, South Africa, in November.

The retired couple, who co-taught a Leadership and Management course during their semester-long stay, plan to go back to the residential Anglican seminary in July.

Three years ago, they said, the idea of living and working in South Africa had never entered their minds.

"You can blame Bishop Chane," Carroll said. In 2006, the Bishop described the financially strapped seminary's need for volunteers during a visit to St. Dunstan's. (The Diocese of Washington has a companion relationship with the Anglican Province of Southern Africa.)

"Ray came home from the Bishop Chane talk and bolted the door and

said, "We could go to Africa!" Carroll said. "Do you want to go to Africa?"

The couple explored the idea, sending their resumes to the college, which they said did an excellent job of matching their experience with suitable work.

Donnelly taught management at the University of Maryland and has leadership experience in the Episcopal Church, and Carroll, a graduate of Wesley Seminary, has years of experience with OSHA in strategic planning and fundraising.

The two claim they are retired from paid jobs, "Not from the world!" so in August 2006 they set out for Grahamstown for the first time. They paid their own way and were given accommodation on campus, where they also dined with the students.

"We were just met very warmly and it was very positive right from the start," Carroll said. The college was in a period of transition, between rectors, and the couple's teaching style - interactive dialogue and experiential learning - was both practical and appealing.

The seminary's 50 students come from all over South Africa, and spoke nine different languages, Donnelly said. Teaching in English was challenging as language proficiency ranged "from university level to sup-

plementing with charades."

The couple taught their classes together and spent hours adjusting and refining their lesson plans to match the needs and abilities of their students.

"I could feel my brain sizzling and I can only assume that's healthy!" Carroll said.

The two were impressed with their students' sense of call to a ministry that in most cases will be self-supporting.

"There are a lot of them who recognize that they'll be so overworked, but there's such a sense of needing to be where there's hope," Carroll said. Many priests hold full-time jobs and then perform as many as seven funerals on Saturdays. "It's very grueling," she said.

"[Entering the priesthood] is a great act of faith," Donnelly said. "They are sent where the bishop sends them. Most have families. They don't know where they're going."

To prepare its students for life as priests, Transfiguration emphasizes ministry in context.

"The college is training priests, but it is also training community leaders," Donnelly said.

Priests serve as advocates of social justice and welfare, as organizers of

see *SOUTH AFRICA*, page 12

Perfect vision, thanks to a perfect stranger

By Lucy Chumbley

For St. Columba's parishioner Jane Winer, making the leap from "something should be done" to "I should do something" turned out to be an eye-opening experience.

Last summer, Winer travelled to Honduras with a group from the diocese led by Tom Cooke of the Honduras Coordinating Committee to consider projects for sponsorship.

While touring a successful sewing cooperative in the remote, mountainous village of Santa Cruz Arriba, she spotted a mother with two small, cross-eyed sons.

"I thought, that's something that can easily be taken care of," Winer said, remarking that in this country, the condition - strabismus - is usually corrected in early childhood.

She took a photograph of the boys; mentioned their situation to a number of people. But no one seemed particularly concerned, and Winer began to feel angry.

Back in Bethesda, she attended a meeting of her Benedictine cell group and finally realized what she needed to do.

"We read short passages that require that you think a lot," she said, explaining that she found herself reflecting on a passage about perseverance.

So she set to work, learning first that the boys were 6-year-old twins, Selvin Eduardo and Melvin Edgardo Flores Reconco (who are now 7). She contacted the Lions Club to ask for advice, and began to follow up on other leads.

In October, she contacted the LEAP Foundation, which offered to perform the necessary consultation and surgery in April 2009 at a hospital in Belize. But transporting the family of four to Belize and coordinating accommodation presented an enormous logistical and financial challenge.

While pondering this possibility, Winer learned from her contact at the LEAP Foundation that its team would not be traveling to Belize after all, due to construction at the hospital. But there might be a possibility of transporting the boys to Dallas.

"This task also seems overwhelming," Winer wrote to LEAP's director of missions. "But there are other trails to follow before we become discour-



Seven-year-old twins Selvin Eduardo and Melvin Edgardo Flores Reconco pose for a photograph on Feb. 21, the day after their corrective eye surgery.

aged."

Not knowing how to proceed, Winer typed "pediatric ophthalmology Honduras" into a Google search and turned up a U.S. Air Force medical mission in Honduras.

She e-mailed, then wrote another letter when no response came. And

finally reached the right person.

"Greetings!" came the response from Dr. Carlos A. Durón, Liaison Medical Officer of Joint Task Force-Bravo's Medical Element, Honduras. "Yes indeed! There are two upcoming ophthalmology missions that will focus

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BODY OF CHRIST



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No current rector;
Gary Hogue, Senior Warden

Body of Christ aims to introduce readers to a different parish in the church family of the Diocese of

Washington each month. This month, writer Diane Ney speaks with **Franklin A. Robinson, Jr.**, longtime parishioner and former senior warden of **St. Thomas', Croom**, to learn more about the life, history, plans and character of that congregation.

WW: St. Thomas' main church is in Upper Marlboro, and yet you support a chapel in Brandywine that is important to your ministry. How did that come about?

ROBINSON: In the early 20th century, there was a Sunday school in the Brandywine area, most of them women, actually, who wanted to build an Episcopal church. They did the fund raising, bought the property and eventually built the chapel.

Incarnation is our mission chapel, but it came from without, mainly due to the efforts of these women, rather than from within. (And may I add, having done quite a bit of Episcopal history, women don't get nearly their due for their support of the Episcopal Church.) Expanding and deepening the ministry of the chapel and the outreach plans based there is part of our vision statement.

WW: Tell us about some of those programs.

ROBINSON: Over the past 10 years, we have provided office space, free of charge, in the chapel for Community Support Systems, which provides job counseling, low-cost housing for seniors and a food pantry, among other services. We lease CSS a

senior house, at a reduced rate, for up to five individuals on fixed income. We are a host site (at the chapel) for the Leary School, which provides training to high school students in the building trades. We recently received historic property grants for much needed work on the chapel and church. We are also a teaching ministry through our organist program, wherein music students of one of our local music teachers are paid to play the pipe organ in the church and the piano in the chapel on Sundays. We sponsor a Boy Scout troop and a Girl Scout troop at the church, and we participate in the programs of the local fire department and Lions Club. A chapter of Alcoholics Anonymous meets at the chapel every week.

WW: For having relatively few members, St. Thomas' contributes quite a lot to the life of its community.

ROBINSON: We are small but mighty. Many of our parishioners are strongly rooted in southern Prince Georges County, reaching back many generations. We also have many new parishioners who have made a commitment to be part of the community. Our parish feels a real connection with this region and its wellbeing and there is a strong sense of giving back to one's community.

WW: Is the fact that you're a small parish making it difficult to find a rector? What opportunities, or possibilities, does St. Thomas offer to a rector?

ROBINSON: I always say if I were a priest looking for a job that encompasses pastoral care for a group of dedicated, diverse people in a beautiful setting, as well as reaching out to a growing community, this would be the place for me. We have found that those who come to worship and be a part of St. Thomas' and the chapel are looking for a small, welcoming, friendly parish experience.

WW: Does St. Thomas' have strong lay participation?

ROBINSON: We do. We have many programs, such as visiting our seniors and shut-ins, that draw a lot of support from our congregation. This goes back to our vision statement, where we state, very clearly, that we are seeking to create and strengthen programs that make St. Thomas' lay ministry a priority for the future. And I should add that our laity is generous financially, that enables us to maintain and move forward with our outreach programs.

WW: It does sound as if you are comfortable in your parish identity.

ROBINSON: We are. For a long time people were beating the growth drum, and then about two or three years ago we decided to simply be who we are. If we take care of the important things, if we live into the Great Commandment, people will come. We welcome whoever comes through our doors for however long they want to be with us on their faith journey.

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schools the tools to do the best possible job with the kids."

For a variety of reasons, students who attend the diocese's elementary and middle schools may not continue in Episcopal schools, Hannibal said. In their new schools, "they may not have the benefit of a chaplain, of an intentional community of faith. It is therefore incumbent on the schools to take that responsibility seriously. To fortify that student so that when they go out, that student knows that [Episcopal parishes and schools] are there for them to continue that important education, that important support."

The "Episcopal curriculum" topic is hot right now, Hannibal said. He recently returned from a conference in New York on that subject, which also was the theme of a recent conference of the Mid-Atlantic Episcopal Schools Association (held Feb. 19-20 at the Virginia Theological Seminary).

"Our schools are not the only schools that are wrestling with it," he said. "It's an issue all over the church. Part of the unspoken reality is if these schools are going to survive and thrive we need to look at what makes them unique."

The Diocese of Washington is well positioned to be a leader in this conversation, he said: "What we have that other dioceses

don't is a means to look at it in a comprehensive way through this office. ... I think the diocese is early to the game in the Episcopal Church. We may be a little ahead of the curve."

The diocese's chaplains began to meet with the heads of school in September, Hannibal said, and will meet with Bishop John Bryson Chane in March to continue the conversation. Hannibal also has been meeting with his counterpart in the Roman Catholic archdiocese.

The diocesan group is reviewing several models for early Episcopal education: a course of study from the Anglican Schools Commission of Australia and the curriculum offered by the Church of England. The group is also looking at the curriculum list-serv of the National Association of Episcopal Schools.

"It's the beginning of a process," Hannibal said. "To do it right is going to take a couple of years - it's not something that can be done immediately."

He stressed that any results will be presented as guidelines: "We cannot mandate a wholesale change in the schools. We can suggest and encourage."

Likewise, he has been encouraged by the vitality of the conversation.

"Episcopal education in the Diocese of Washington is thriving and alive and growing," he said. "Let's expand and grow."

Let the good deeds roll



Bishop John Bryson Chane and Christiana Carter, a parishioner at St. Paul's, Rock Creek, were honored for their commitment to Samaritan Ministry of Greater Washington at the Ministry's Mardi Gras Celebration on Feb. 6. Samaritan Ministry helps people who are homeless or facing difficult circumstances make changes in their lives, helping them set and achieve goals related to housing, jobs and healthcare. Chane was honored for his dedication and enthusiastic support of Samaritan Ministry, while Carter was honored for her long service: She is the longest serving partner parish representative, having served since 1989. SMGW's executive director, David Downes, offered his thanks to the duo from the Diocese of Washington -- along with a couple of fancy party hats.

Sacred Circles calls for love in action

By Anne Carson

Sacred Circles, the biennial women's spirituality conference, took place on Valentine's Day weekend this year, with the theme of Love in Action.

The more than 1,300 participants spilled over the cathedral grounds, sharing spiritual renewal with workshops such as The Soul Loves the Body and Rediscovering Ancient Paths of the Divine Feminine.

"The power of women's inner force of love is not a secret anymore. It is shaping our world!" said conference organizer Grace Ogden, opening the event on Friday evening.

As Sacred Circles is designed to celebrate all faiths, the plenary began with Jewish Renewal Movement leader Rabbi Phyllis Berman conducting an interfaith Shabbat in tandem with cantor Holly Taya Shere, whose "Holy, Holy, Holy" chant resonated throughout the cathedral's cavernous spaces. Ogden introduced Karen Armstrong, the evening's keynote speaker. A renowned religious historian and author, Armstrong is a former Catholic nun and the originator of a Global Charter of Compassion.

"I never, never intended to be a writer about religion," Armstrong confessed. "After I left the convent, I wanted nothing to do with God!" She startled the women even more when she said, "I thought I was allergic to God! My intention in life was to become a British Literature professor."

Armstrong explained how she began to find herself, all alone in a little house in the wilds of North London. She started to write her *History of God*, and the silence she found herself in changed her. She began to listen with an open, quiet attitude. As she began to get rid of the "clever self"

and to dethrone herself from the center of the world, she began to cultivate the science of compassion.

"It was the science of compassion that brought me back to what religion is all about," she said. "The center of religion is the Golden Rule, but you would never know it. Unless we learn to practice the Golden Rule globally, we are unlikely to have a viable world to pass on to the next generation. ... What we need in our world is a change of heart and mind, to allow compassion to penetrate our thinking."

The evening's second speaker, Afghan women's empowerment activist Sakena Yacoobi, explained how she is following the Golden Rule and changing thinking in her war-torn country. After graduating from a Christian school in the United States, Yacoobi returned to Afghanistan and recommitted to Islam. Now, she is serving more than 350,000 girls and women through the provision of education and health care, and empowering them with the same source used to oppress them—the Koran.

"Every day there is danger, but I know God is with me," Yacoobi vowed, to thunderous applause.

Combining the conference theme of Love in Action with the importance of following the Golden Rule was Valentine Day's keynoter Elizabeth Lesser, the co-founder of the Omega Institute.

"We women have so little trust in the validity of the feminine, in the instinct to nurture, to heal," she said. "This imbalance is what is behind the inability to follow the Golden Rule."

Lesser had the women put their hands over their hearts before stating, "It is time to trust in the legitimacy of our hearts. ... Your tender heart, this is what is going to save our world. No



Photo by Donovan Marks

Author and religious historian Karen Armstrong gives the keynote address during the Sacred Circles conference on Feb. 13.

matter what you do in the world, you can make a difference with your heart. The inability to live up to love's simple calling: to live the Golden Rule is our greatest error."

The conference's final speaker was the Rev. Joan Brown Campbell. She served as presidential monitor for Nelson Mandela and had invited the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., to preach at her all-white church, but it had cost her a marriage.

"Love is risky," Campbell told the gathering. "Good choices must be made that move one beyond oneself. ... To be compassionate is a life's work. The beloved community may

not come in my time, but it is worth the struggle."

"We go forth collectively to live love in action," Ogden said at the weekend's end. Then, Esther de Waal, scholar of the Cistercian, Benedictine, and Celtic traditions, closed with a Celtic blessing from mother to daughter:

"All the vaults in the cathedral meeting the keystone remind us how we are members of one body built up in love," she said, as Holy Spirit streamers waved circles throughout the cathedral, enclosing the gathering as one.

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primarily in cataracts and pediatric strabismus surgery. The first team is coming out of Madigan Army Medical Center and will be operating in Hospital del Sur Choluteca, Honduras from 9-31 January 2009."

The Air Force team collected the boys and their parents from Santa Cruz Arriba and transported them to the Hospital del Sur Choluteca for screening. Both qualified for surgery, which was performed on Jan. 21 by pediatric ophthalmologist Dr. Frank Valentín. The boys were sent home, vision corrected, and were scheduled to have a follow up appointment with Dr. Durón on Feb. 28.

"When the news came about the boys I was just overwhelmed with gratitude," Winer said. She also

received this message of gratitude from an Air Force sergeant:

"Thank you so much for bringing Melvin and Selvin to our attention here at Joint Task Force-Bravo. So many times we see people who need help and only wish we could do something. An Internet search and the time to write a letter may seem like a small thing but so few of us ever do even that much. The fact that you took action is truly a wonderful thing and it has made a great difference for Selvin and Melvin."

"I never even met the boys," Winer said, stressing that this is not typical of the diocesan partnership experience, where "results are slow, friendships are formed over time."

But it has got her thinking, she said: "How do we trigger opportunity for

people? Do we have to see them, know them?"

"We want people when they go on these trips to see opportunities to form relationships with people and families," Cooke said. Many communities in Honduras have needs that are "very low budget by our lights, but they make an enormous difference in people's lives."

Projects the group looked at last summer included a proposal to set up a small convenience store to sell food staples and to drill a well and transport water to a hilltop community.

"In nearly every place there was a need in the homes for improved stoves," Cooke said. "All cooking is done with firewood, and most houses don't have chimneys. Women and children have respiratory problems."

Most homes also need improved latrines, he said, and many would benefit from new zinc roofs, cement floors or water storage.

"Most improvements are relatively inexpensive by our standards," Cooke said. "But for them it can cost a year's salary. This is the kind of improvement we can help them make to make a real difference in people's lives."

In the places where these improvements have been made, he said, there has been a documented decrease in illness caused by the environment.

Cooke will lead another group from the diocese to Honduras from July 26 to Aug 6. For further information, contact him at 202/686 0261 or thomasmcooke@hotmail.com.



Resource Fair for Older Adults and their Families

Saturday, March 28
10:00 a.m. - 1 p.m.

at
Friendship Terrace Retirement Community
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Learn more about resources to help you maintain your independence including:

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Exhibit and Pilgrimage

Margaret Adams Parker

Lament: The Stations and other Images of the Cross through Saturday, April 11

The Way of the Cross: A Lenten Pilgrimage Friday, March 13, 6-9 pm

Experience these stark and powerful woodcut images of the Stations and contemplate them in the context of the cross as witnessed today. An artist's introduction begins this evening of witness and response to a meditation for global justice and reconciliation. Fee: \$30, \$25; registration required; pilgrimages@cathedral.org or (202) 537-2373.



Divine Sanity: Thoughts on the Creative Life

Elizabeth Gilbert
March 27, 8 pm

Elizabeth Gilbert is the author of the best-selling memoir *Eat, Pray, Love*; the short-story collection *Pilgrims*, a

New York Times Most Notable Book; the novel *Stern Men*; and the nonfiction *The Last American Man*. With Susan Richards Shreve, moderator. Tickets: \$22, \$16. Co-presented by Folger's PEN/Faulkner Foundation.

Washington National Cathedral is a church for national purposes called to embody God's love and to welcome people of all faiths and none. A unique blend of the spiritual and the civic, this Episcopal cathedral is a voice for generous-spirited Christianity and a catalyst for reconciliation and interfaith dialogue to promote respect and understanding. We invite all people to share in our commitment to create a more hopeful and just world.



The Sunday Forum

CRITICAL ISSUES IN THE LIGHT OF FAITH

Conversations with Cathedral Dean Samuel T. Lloyd III. Sundays at 10:10 am in the Cathedral nave and streamed live on the Web. Free and open to the public

March 1
THE REV. DR. DAVID BECKMANN
Why We Must Reform Foreign Aid

March 8
DIANA BUTLER BASS
A People's History of Christianity

March 15
THE REV. JIM WALLIS
A Pastoral Response to the Economic Crisis

March 22
GUEST TO BE ANNOUNCED

March 29
DR. JOHN HAUGHT
Darwin and God: Exploring Evolution

To purchase tickets or see more upcoming events, visit www.nationalcathedral.org.

Bach's *St. John Passion*

Sunday, April 5, 4 pm

Join us for this Palm Sunday tradition as the Cathedral Choirs and Baroque Orchestra, directed by Michael McCarthy, perform *St. John Passion* by J. S. Bach, with soloists Elizabeth Weigle, soprano; Roger Isaacs, countertenor; Matthew Smith, tenor; Bobb Robinson, bass; Ole Haas, Evangelist; and James Shaffran, Christus. Tickets \$20-\$80—Get best seats early!



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IN BRIEF

Church House announces staff reductions

Four members of the diocesan staff have been laid off.

George McConnell, assistant deployment officer; Sharonda Myers, assistant to the bishop and property manager Robert Tomlinson concluded their work late last month. Eva Myking, director of administration, will remain in her job until early April while helping to reorganize the staff.

In an e-mail to diocesan leaders, Canon to the Ordinary Paul Cooney said that the diocese had been contemplating staff reductions since the fall.

"The severe and continuing deterioration in the general economy has resulted in both a reduction in the value of diocesan investments as well as reductions in financial commitments from congregations for 2009," he wrote. "Please know that we are dedicated to do our utmost to sustain Bishop Chane's commitment to our work in support of the congregations of this wonderful diocese - as well as to the other priority ministries he identified during his address to the Diocesan Convention last month."

In an e-mail to the diocesan staff, Cooney wrote:

"It is an understatement to say that we and the people we serve will miss the hard work and dedication that Eva, RT, Sharonda and George have brought to Diocesan service. At least equally, we'll miss their friendship and camaraderie."

Reusable bags help both the parish and the environment

The congregation of St. James, Potomac has found a new way to promote the parish while also helping the environment: reusable shopping bags.

"It's environmentally friendly and it gets our name out in the community so it serves more than one purpose," said Linda Knutsen, who serves on the Earth Stewardship Committee, which organized the effort with the parish's Membership Commission.

The bags are dark blue with white lettering that reads, "St. James Episcopal Church, Potomac: A Caring Community," and were given to each family in the parish. They are now being sold at cost: \$2 each.

The design was chosen because it is "simple and clear," Knutsen said.

The bags are proving popular with parishioners.

"There are lots of different ways we're finding that we use them," Knutsen said, explaining that the

parish's Prayer Shawl Ministry has been using them when it packages shawls for delivery. "We're doing everything we can to try to encourage people to use them."

Acquiring a reusable bag is just the first step toward a cleaner environment, committee members stress: Using it is the most important thing. Parishioners are encouraged to get into the habit of "refuse and remember" on shopping trips - remembering to bring a bag and refusing plastic.

To help people adjust to this lifestyle change, the parish has published a list of "top 10 reasons to use your shopping bag." These include, "doesn't mysteriously multiply in the back of your car," "less likely to end up in waterways" and the all-important "large enough to hold a turkey."

Knutsen said she is happy to share vendor information with other parishioners who might be interested in ordering reusable bags. She can be reached at the church at 301/762-8040.

Broad Creek knitters send scarves to Special Olympics

Thirty knitters from St. John's, Broad Creek and the surrounding community fashioned 41 blue-and-white scarves for the 2009 Special Olympics World Winter Games.

Participants in the games, which kicked off in Boise, Idaho on Feb. 6, wore the scarves in the opening procession and ceremonies. A contingent of athletes also wore the scarves when they walked in the Inaugural Parade in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 20.

St. John's parishioner Ruth Anne Cumberland recruited area knitters just before Thanksgiving after Marge Stevens saw the request in *Knit Simple* magazine and brought it to her attention.

The pattern provided specified the length, width, color and brand of yarn to be used for the scarves, but encouraged creativity within those parameters.

"You could do any design you wanted," Cumberland said. "You were free to use your imagination and your skills depending on what level you were, and we got quite a variety."

The group attached tags to the finished scarves with messages of support for the athletes, and the Rev. Marc Britt blessed them before they were shipped out, "so they went out with special blessings as well as good wishes."

"It was really rewarding," said Cumberland, who is now exploring the possibility of pulling together a knitting and fellowship group to work on other projects, such as knitting helmet liners for troops serving in Afghanistan. "It's a warm feeling, doing that."

Wade looks at Episcopal approaches to Scripture

The Rev. Frank Wade, retired rector of St. Alban's, D.C., has written a book titled *Transforming Scripture* for Church Publishing's *Transformations* series.

Series editor James Lemler asked Wade to examine the Episcopal Church's traditional approach to scripture and Bible study. The resulting book follows the same format as the others in the series, Wade said, with five chapters that discuss "problems and solutions." But there's one critical difference.

"The difference with this book, *Transforming Scripture*, is that transforming becomes an adjective rather than a verb," he explained: "It's about letting scripture transform *us*, rather than transforming scripture."

Wade examined 20 different Bible study methods currently in use around the Episcopal Church. During the course of his research, he spoke with a number of clergy in the Diocese of Washington, who are credited in the book.

"The third chapter in the book is an analysis of different programs used in the Episcopal Church, and so I consulted many of my colleagues in the diocese about that," he said. The book's final chapter, *Stories from the Meeting Ground*, also includes personal accounts of transformation from members of the diocese.

"It was an exploration for me," Wade said. "I learned a lot in writing the book, and I had to think through a lot of things. There were a lot of discoveries for me in there and hopefully other people too."

The book is written primarily for church leaders who are trying to engage more with scripture, such as education planning or clergy colleague groups. But some chapters contain information that will be useful for confirmation classes.

"I think it might be valuable for people because there are so many people in our church that understand scrip-

ture differently that it might be helpful for them to agree on an approach," he said.

Wade is available to speak about his book and can be reached at 202/966-2774.

The Rev. Albert Scariato featured in Newsweek

The Rev. Albert Scariato, rector of St. John's, Georgetown was featured in an article titled, "The Quest for a Spiritual Home" in the January issue of *Newsweek*.

The article documents Scariato's journey from Judaism to the Episcopal priesthood, and can be found by typing "Albert Scariato" into the search box at www.newsweek.com.

Kostel named special counsel to the Presiding Bishop

St. Alban's parishioner Mary E. Kostel has been named special counsel to the Presiding Bishop for property litigation and discipline.

Kostel, who is also chancellor of the Diocese of Washington, has worked in similar areas of law in private practice and was previously a trial attorney for the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Division.

Absalom Jones Scholarships

Applications for the annual Absalom Jones Scholarships are now being accepted by St. Philip's, Laurel. The deadline for applications is April 3, and two scholarships honoring Absalom Jones, the first African American priest in the Episcopal Church, will be awarded in June.

Applicants must reside, work, attend school or be a member of an Episcopal parish in the Diocese of Washington.

For further information or an application form, contact the Absalom Jones Scholarship Fund Committee at 301/776-5151 ext. 15, absalomjonesfund@stphilipslaurel.org or visit www.stphilipslaurel.org.



A WARM FEELING Jeanne Ulrich, Ruth Anne Cumberland, Jane Bowman, Marge Stevens, Carol Hasack, Kathy Doyle and Lois Alexander of St. John's, Broad Creek, model the scarves they made for this year's Special Olympics.

CONVENTION, from page 1

"The good news," Welch said, "is that the diocese has set aside \$433,000 from past income from the Soper Fund for a rainy day. The bad news is, it's raining, and it's raining hard."

"These are serious economic times and all of us are living through them," he said. "Together we will work through them."

Special guests at this year's convention included Bishop Suheil Dawani of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem and the Middle East, Bishop Richard Graham of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Washington and Bishop Trevor Mwamba of the Diocese of Botswana.

Mwamba - who appears in the *No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency* series by Alexander McCall Smith, which features Mma. Precious Ramotswe, Botswana's first female private investigator - preached about Christian unity and the transformative power of the Eucharist at Friday night's service.

"Mma Ramotswe you will be delighted to hear is a very devoted Episcopalian," he proclaimed from the Canterbury pulpit. "In *In the Company of Cheerful Ladies* she comes to the cathedral where I am preaching, but Mma. is not concentrating. She is concentrating not on the sermon but rather on solving a crime involving a pumpkin. Being in the company of cheerful Episcopalians, I hope your minds will be clear of pumpkins."

Decrying divisions in the African church over issues of homosexuality, Mwamba reminded Anglicans to be generous, humble and to respect and love one another.

"All must learn to live together for in religion as in all else the same things do not appeal to everybody," he said. "Oneness does not imply sameness. Through unity of purpose we can learn together to accomplish great things. We find a place at the table of love. All are welcome."

"Each of us is a place in which the son of God is revealed," he said. "In the Eucharist we are spiritually joined first to Christ and then to each other. For although we are many, we all share in the one bread."

Bishop John Bryson Chane began his address to the convention with a challenge.

"I believe that as an Episcopal diocese we are being challenged to the very core to find new and exciting ways to do our ministry. Will we rise and grow in strength, or will we recoil in fear?"

With financial shortfalls and the "painful reality of facing staff and budget cuts," Chane said the diocese and its parishes are now "facing the realities of hard times."

But, he said, the diocese has many reasons to be proud of its recent work, citing in particular an expanded Latino ministry, invigorated youth and college ministries and parish partnerships and mission work in Honduras and Africa.

"The question remains: If not us, then who?" he asked. "Help us this day to remember that you have blessed us with great abundance even during these times when the world would tell us that we are now a people of scarcity."

Speaking passionately about his personal road to recovery after a car crash left him with the very real possibility that he would never walk again, Chane shared the insight that enabled him to turn the corner.

"I already had what I needed," he said. "I just needed to recover my faith in Christ. Healing journeys once begun are never over. But they are a reminder that with God, all things are possible. With God, we already have what we need to rise to the challenges... we already have the gift, and don't let us forget that."

Brian McLaren, renowned author and evangelist, echoed the idea that the Episcopal Church already has what it needs in his keynote address, "The Episcopal Moment."

Sometimes, he said, "it takes a challenge to wake us up and bring us back to life," stating his conviction that these times present "a window of opportunity for this church."

Pointing to a picture of a bridge in Honduras rendered useless after a hurricane diverted the course of a river, he warned: "If we don't rise to the kind of challenge the bishop shared for us, we could be like that. Our churches could be very well-built structures that take you no place."

The Episcopal Church, he explained, is in the process of a "paradigm shift." In these times of change, "I believe Episcopalians have a unique set of disadvantages and advantages."

Advantages include the church's via media (middle way) mindset and its openness to mysticism; its rich Celtic tradition; its diverse mindset that allows people space to differ; and its liturgical offerings, which McLaren described as being the spiritual equivalent of a trip to the health club: "You work out with the scriptures. You confess your sins. You get up out of your seats to have the Eucharist."

Disadvantages, he said, were an upper-class mindset, "an idea that we're the church of the educated and above-average compensated;" an institutional mindset (centralized control, change resistant); and a bipolar mentality characterized by the cold war between liberals and conservatives.

"What we need is a bring-them-in spirit," he said. "What we need is a

transcend-and-include spirit."

The Episcopal Church, he said, should strive first and foremost to connect people with God, "to be able to join God in the healing and transforming of the world."

That, he said, is what it means to be a disciple.

During business sessions, delegates passed resolutions that honored the 85th anniversary of Episcopal Senior Ministries; named the second Sunday in Lent as Episcopal Relief and Development Sunday in the Diocese of Washington; asked the Church Pension Fund to raise the pensions of the spouses of deceased clergy; and asked the General Convention of the Episcopal Church to re-affirm its conformity to the non-discrimination provisions of Canon III 1.2 when considering consents to Episcopal elections.

Deceased clergy members the Rt. Rev. Ronald H. Haines, the Revs. John Drummond Chamblin, Roy Riddell Coffin Jr., Thomas Dixon, Raymond Francis Turner, Jack Chapman White and the Very Rev. Francis Sayre Jr. were honored, and a memorial resolution was passed for Bishop David Beerge of the South African Diocese of Highveld.

Members of Redeemer, Bethesda; St. Bartholomew's, Laytonville and St. Mark's, Capitol Hill spoke of their ministries in Burundi, Kenya and Honduras in support of the Millennium Development Goals, and youth from the Bokamoso Life

Centre in South Africa gave a lively performance featuring traditional African songs.

Bishop Dawani brought greetings from the Diocese of Jerusalem and invited members of this diocese to visit the Holy Land and "experience our Christian witness in action."

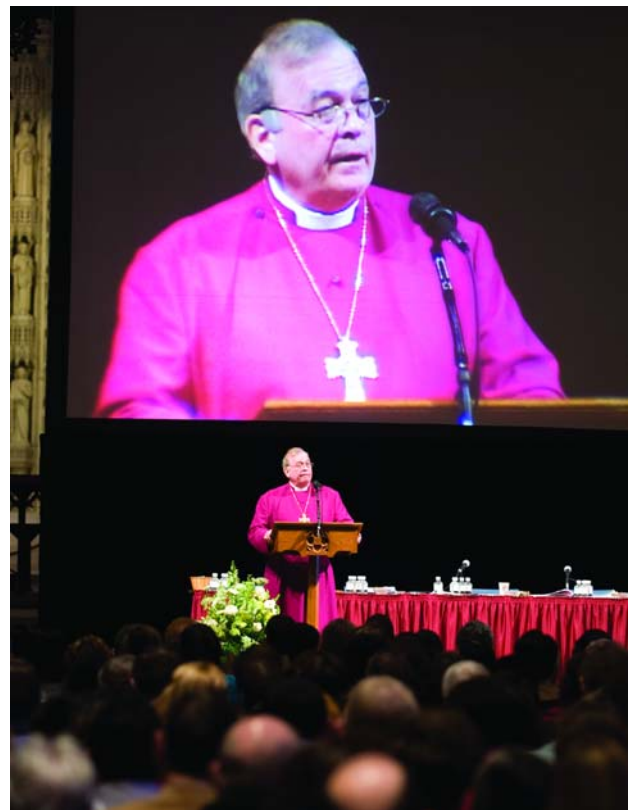
"You will find our hearts are open to you and to all our brothers and sisters in Christ," he said.

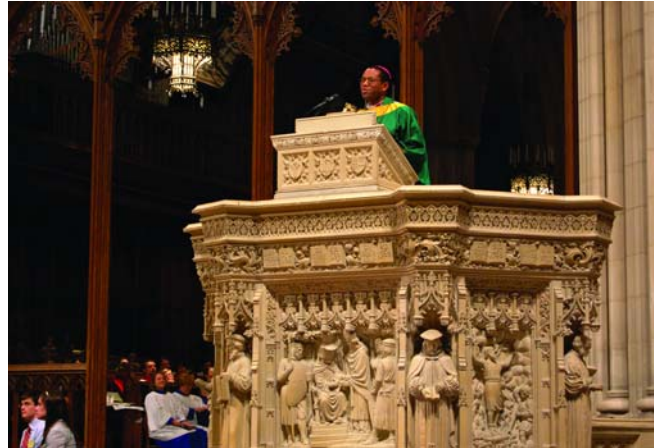
Dawani described his hopes for a planned partnership between the two dioceses and his vision for the Diocese of Jerusalem and its 37 hospitals and schools, which "emphasize moderation in a world where extremism is so dominant."

"Symbolically and physically Washington and Jerusalem are linked together," he said, as Washington National Cathedral uses the Jerusalem cross as its symbol, and the stone of its high altar was brought here from Solomon's Quarry in Jerusalem.

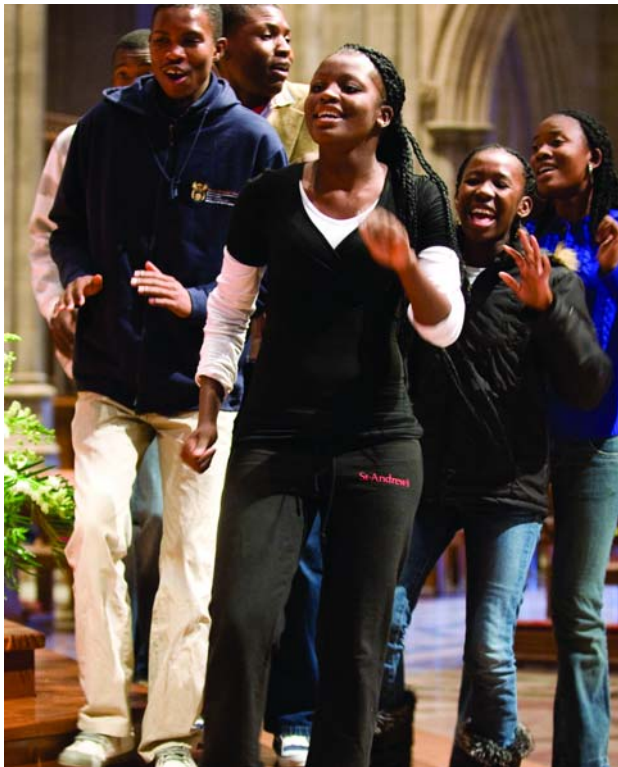
In closing, delegates honored the fruit of some previous hard choices: the decision last year to merge the Capitol Hill parishes of St. Monica's and St. James into one congregation to enable the survival of both.

"As the parish of St. Monica and St. James, we are blessed with challenges, but we are alive and we are well," said the Rev. Milton Williams, priest-in-charge of the new congregation. "We thank you, the Diocese of Washington, for laying the groundwork."





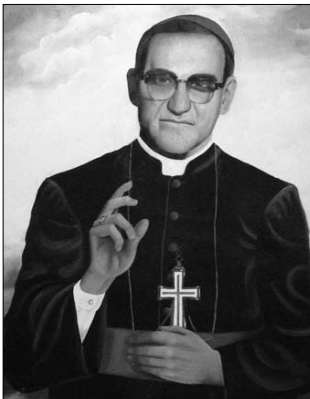
PHOTOS BY **DONOVAN MARKS**
and **LETA O'STEEN**



CHURCH FAMILY Bishop Suheil Dawani, of Jerusalem, was a guest at the 114th convention, top, and Bishop Trevor Mwamba of Botswana preached. Delegates took part in worship, elected nominees to church offices, debated resolutions and heard a presentation from evangelist Brian McLaren, center left, and songs from students from South Africa's Bokomosa Life Centre.



A SAINT FOR MARCH



Óscar Romero

Commemoration: March 24

Time and place: Born Aug. 15, 1917
in Ciudad Barrios, El Salvador;
died March 24 1980

Story in brief:

Óscar Arnulfo Romero y Galdámez, who was born into a poor family in a remote part of El Salvador, was ordained in the Roman Catholic Church in 1942 and became the fourth Archbishop of San Salvador in 1977. A quiet, unassuming man with a devotion to Our Lady of Peace, he protested to the president when military forces killed five people in his diocese while he was serving as Bishop of Santiago de María. He started a newspaper, *El Apóstol*, which campaigned for justice for those mistreated by the regime, drawing ire and harassment.

Government agents monitored him constantly and made false allegations against him in the press. Accused by his detractors of being a Marxist, Romero made it clear he had no political affiliation and was speaking out for simple Christian justice for those who had experienced human rights violations. In 1979, he travelled to Rome to visit the Pope, bringing with him information documenting the difficult conditions in El Salvador.

Later that year, a military coup plunged the country into chaos: priests were murdered and troublemakers were "disappeared." Romero continued to speak out. On March 24, 1980, while celebrating a funeral mass, he was shot through the heart as he stood at the altar by members of the Salvadoran death squads. Romero's death provoked an international outcry for reform in El Salvador, and his statue stands with those of other 20th century martyrs on the West front of Westminster Abbey.

Candlelight vigil for immigration reform



LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS On Feb. 21, more than 20 children bearing candles processed up the darkened aisles of St. Matthew's, Hyattsville, bringing light to the sanctuary. Their procession began a prayer vigil for comprehensive immigration reform, hosted by the six Latino congregations of the Diocese of Washington. Lay and clergy leaders from the six congregations offered reflections and prayers. Community leaders, including Gustavo Torres, executive director of CASA of Maryland, spoke of the challenges, opportunities and struggles ahead on the road to comprehensive immigration reform. The nearly 200 participants finished the night with fellowship and hot chocolate in the parish hall.



COMUNIÓN



Simón Bautista

Dios, Crisis Económica y Nosotros

Saludos en el nombre de Jesucristo, nuestro Señor resucitado. Paz en los hogares de cada uno de Ustedes. No se

sorprendan por el saludo, lo que pasa es que hoy más que nunca estoy convencido que un deseo de paz nunca cae en el vacío absoluto, y que un saludo en el nombre de Jesús nos recuerda donde encontramos nuestra fortaleza.

Hace aproximadamente siete años llevé a mis hijos a un parque que está sobre la University, cerca de la Universidad de Maryland. Caminaba mientras ellos se divertían montando sus bicicletas. De pronto alcancé a ver un zafacón, basurero dirían algunos, lleno de libros; me acerqué y comencé a sacarlos uno por uno separando aquellos cuyos títulos me parecían sugerentes, leyendo sus índices con cierta prisa. Entre ellos uno me interesó más que todos, era de color marrón, con el borde de sus páginas dorado; un libro que aparentaba ser poco menos de cien

páginas y que resultó teniendo trescientas treinta y cuatro. Título "Las promesas de Dios para cada una de tus necesidades". La intención del autor es proveernos con pasajes bíblicos que nos ayuden a encontrar fortaleza en los distintos momentos por los que atravesamos en nuestras vidas, por ejemplo, las crisis económicas. A ver, permítanme que les diga lo que dice sobre crisis económicas. Voy a usar como plataforma lo que acaba de ocurrir con respecto al plan de recuperación de esta nueva administración aquí en los Estados Unidos.

Como ustedes bien saben, el debate sobre el "Plan de Estímulo a la Economía" presentado por la administración del presidente Obama y discutido ampliamente tanto en la Casa de Representantes como en el Senado, mantuvo a todo el mundo en expectativas; a mí particularmente me sirvió para adentrarme más en una cultura que cada vez se seculariza más y cuyo discurso se empeña en alejar a Dios de las cosas humanas. Me pareció fascinante escuchar como en ambos extremos de la mesa el triunfo del lado opositor podría equivaler a una desgracia de efectos irreversibles. ¡Como si fuera la primera vez que esta nación se enfrenta a una crisis económica! ¡Como si fuera la primera vez que el mundo entero tiembla por el advenimiento de una tormenta financiera!

Después de escuchar tantos argu-

mentos terminé haciéndome estas preguntas: ¿Y qué de aquellos países donde la corrupción de sus sistemas ha hecho que las grandes mayorías vivan en recesión permanente, en una necesidad constante de "estímulos económicos"? ¿Qué hacen los pobres del mundo para sobrevivir a los oleajes de su déficit diario? ¿Qué hacen los hombres y mujeres de fe? ¿Qué hacemos los cristianos?

El libro nos sugiere que nuestra fe nos puede ayudar y que la palabra de Dios fortalece nuestra confianza, que las cosas van a cambiar y que todo será pasajero. Citas tales como "El Señor es mi pastor, nada me faltará" (Salmo 23:1). O "Bendita sea tu canasta y bendito el recipiente donde amasas tu pan. Bendito seas al entrar, bendito seas al salir" (Deuteronomio 28:5-6). O esta otra "Mi Dios colmará todas tus necesidades según su riqueza y generosidad por medio de Cristo Jesús" (Filipenses 4:19). También nos sugiere que compartir aun de lo poco que tengamos, nos puede favorecer "Den y se les dará: recibirán una medida generosa, apretada, sacudida y rebosante" (Lucas 6:38).

Que Dios les bendiga.
Padre Simón Bautista Betances
Latino Missioner, Diocese of Washington

Editor's note: This column, Communion, is available in English at www.edow.org/ministries/latino.

Speaking of open fields from dark forests

■ BEARINGS:



Martin L. Smith

Have you ever received a letter from a friend, only to discover that he or she was already dead by the time you opened it? It does sharpen the message to a fine point. I remember being so touched when I opened a package sent by Henri Nouwen containing a signed copy of his latest book. And then I learned he had died within hours of mailing it. His inscription made me think even more reverently of the craft of spiritual writing to which he was so dedicated, and to cherish powerful words he wrote about this vocation in his book *Reaching Out*. "Writing about the spiritual life is like taking prints from negatives... Maybe it is precisely the shocking confrontation with our hostile self that gives us words to speak about hospitality as a real option, and maybe we will never find the courage to speak about prayer as a human vocation without the disturbing discovery of our own illusions. Often it is the dark forest that makes us speak

about the open field. Frequently it is prison that makes us think about freedom, hunger helps us to appreciate food and war gives us words for peace."

"It is prison that makes us think about freedom." Henri was talking wisely about all kinds of spiritual constraints, but that wisdom is founded in real history too. Some of Paul's most liberating words are found in the letters smuggled out from his prison cell. The transcendent *Spiritual Canticle* of St John of the Cross was composed in a stifling jail cell in Toledo. And there is King's immortal *Letter from a Birmingham Jail* of April 16, 1963. The power of words of freedom that issue from captivity is the reason why hundreds of former prisons are now pilgrimage sites. We are on holy ground when we lean against the bars of Nelson Mandela's cell on Robben Island. Those who have always taken liberty for granted can never craft words about freedom that have anything like the ring of those voiced by imprisoned prophets.

Perhaps the mysterious providence that guided those who put the books of the New Testament in their present order really meant the book of Revelation to be the "last word" of God's Word, because it is the supreme example of the truth that those who have experienced the

despair of imprisonment have the most right to call us to the task of setting one another free in the Spirit of God. Last year I visited some of the sites of the tiny struggling Christian communities to which the prophet John sent his galvanic tract about resistance and hope from his exile on the isle of Patmos. Standing in the ramparts of the castle that juts out into the sea at Kusadasi, looking out towards the island, one can sense how near the churches he cared for must have seemed—just across the water—and yet how far. "I, John, your brother who share with you in Jesus the persecution and the kingdom and the patient endurance, was on the island called Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus."

This wasn't a supernatural vision revealing the plot of the so-called second coming. It was a summons to hope in the coded poetry of apocalypse, recasting the whole resplendent array of biblical imagery. It was an up-to-the minute appeal to contemporary churches, and paradoxically that's why it can strike us now with such force. Its core is the appeal: Expect God to surprise us. Jailed prophets specialize in reminding us that God is not merely the God who is, let alone the God who was. God is the one "who is to come, the Almighty." Conventional religion

looks to the past, but the passion of prophetic religion leans into the future of God. The God who is to come overturns our predictions and confounds plans. Divine innovation sets in play the unforeseen and makes human forecasting look ridiculous. Expect surprise, and let that expectation liberate you from all that oppresses you with a sense that power structures are immovable, custom set in stone, that history runs inexorably on rails of steel, and we are impotent to make an unprecedented future for humanity's wellbeing.

We are praying at this time as nation taken by surprise through its own flawed but magnificent democratic process. We thought it was just another election, but surprise!—the launching of the third stage of American history is upon us! We open our Bibles again, and return to a message forged by prophets who let captivity become the crucible for hope. Our hope is in a God of surprises, of resurrection, and we can awaken again to the fact that the one certainty we have to offer is that God will continually take the world by surprise.

Martin L. Smith is a well-known spiritual writer and priest. He is the senior associate rector at St. Columba's, D.C.

MONTHLY MEDITATION

Hard Times All Over seems to be the theme of 2009. But from difficult circumstances can come closeness to God, strengthening of spirit and a renewed opportunity to reconnect with the bedrock of faith which sustains us. This month, three of the Diocese of Washington's clergy share their thoughts and their faith:

The Flame Shall Not Consume You

By the Rev. Joseph Trigg, rector of Christ Church, Port Tobacco

My mother was 10 years old and my father was 12 when the stock market crashed in 1929. Just as I told my children about the Civil Rights Movement and the Cold War, my parents told me about the Great Depression and World War II. I heard about the grandfather who lost a farm because he co-signed a note for a less provident brother, the grandfather who kept a farm because a New Deal program enabled him to pay a mortgage note just in the nick of time, a once prosperous grandfather who managed to pay off all his depositors in his small town bank before dying a broken man, and

the year my father and his brother shared \$13 between them after sweating all spring and summer to bring 10 acres of tobacco to market. Many of you have heard or could tell similar stories.

In the accounts of the Great Depression I heard growing up, people sometimes spoke about feeling helpless. More often they spoke about finding capacities for self-discipline and inventiveness they did not know they had. They spoke about how they learned the value of money, but also how they learned the value of friendship and cooperation. They would never want to go through such a time again or wish it on anyone, but they cherished their memories of it.

Their story was a story we hear again and again in the Bible, the story of finding a way through hard times and finding a better life on the other side of them. It is the story of the Wilderness and the Babylonian exile in the Old Testament, and of the Passion of Christ in the New Testament. The Bible gives us no assurance of avoiding hard times, but multiple assurances that God will be

with us and help us through them. My favorite is Isaiah 43:2, echoed in the hymn *How Firm a Foundation*:

*When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
and through the rivers,
they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire
you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.*

I have no idea whether or not we face an economic collapse as serious as the one my parents went through in their teens. It is possible that we may have to learn lessons they learned the hard way. I hope not. Bitter experience is a terrible way to learn, even if it is the most effective way for many of us. If so, I am confident that one of those lessons will be that God is with us in hard times.

Thanksgiving in the Wilderness

By the Rev. Elizabeth Carpenter, rector of St. Anne's, Damascus

It is easy to be thankful when everything is going well—our important relationships are healthy and mutually satisfying, the job is rewarding and secure, the kids are

thriving, the economy is booming, nobody is sick or suffering any serious loss, the future looks rosy. But how to be thankful when things are not going so well? The company is on shaky ground and the job may disappear; the kids are going through a really rough time; the economy appears as unstable as it has been in many years; people we love are seriously ill or have died; the future is uncertain. What do we find to be thankful for under those circumstances? What can I say to those suffering, to you, about these things in your lives?

I will not offer the kind of trite encouragement intended to make one "look on the bright side" of every situation. That would be to trivialize the depth of your pain and suffering. I will not say, "God never sends us more than we can bear," because I think that is untrue on two accounts. First, some people do actually crack and break under the strain of their burdens; and, second, I don't believe God "sends" everything that happens in this world. Why try to cure illness if it comes as God's will? If God



FAMILY FILMS

The Pink Panther 2 (Rated PG)

Director Harald Zwart and writers Scott Neustadter and Michael Weber have given Inspector Clouseau a second life with this entertaining tale of the bumbling French police officer who seems to somehow always save the day. Steve Martin again plays the part of the great Inspector Clouseau, but this time the story is told in a much more entertaining manner than the Panther movie of 2006.

The plot revolves around an international thief, The Tornado, who has begun stealing the world's most valuable treasures, including France's Pink Panther Diamond. French Chief Inspector Dreyfus (dryly portrayed by John Cleese) assigns Clouseau to an international detective team charged with catching The Tornado and returning the artifacts to their countries.

Team members Vincenzo, a wealthy Italian investigator (Andy Garcia), Pepperidge, a detective from England (Alfred Molina), Kenji, a Japanese electronic specialist (Yuki Matsuzaki), and Sonia, the beautiful researcher from India (Aishwarya Rai Bachchan), all try hard to work with the silly, but well-intentioned, investigator from France, but Clouseau marches to his own syncopated beat. Ponton (Jean Reno), Clouseau's partner, and Nicole (again played by Emily Mortimer) add comedy and a bit of spice to the story. There are also unexpectedly funny parts played off characters created by Jeremy Irons and Lily Tomlin.

Much of the comedy is visual and slapstick, so children of all ages will enjoy the swinging from ropes, falling down chimneys and such, while teens will enjoy "knowing more than



Clouseau" when he finds himself in uncomfortable social situations. Everyone will find themselves laughing at much of the film and may be a bit surprised at the ending.

Paul Blart: Mall Cop (PG)

Paul Blart's (Kevin James) desire to help protect others has led him into the security guard business at a large mall which he patrols intently on his Segway. His desire to be in "a career" and not "just in a job" makes him appear very serious, but most shoppers seem to see him simply as a "rent-a-cop." This view changes during the Christmas season when a well-organized gang takes over the mall by force in hopes of attaining all the stores' charge card codes. Most of the shoppers exit in a panic, but Paul stays since it is "his mall" they are trying to rob and his friends who are being held hostage at the mall

employee's bank. His knowledge of the mall and his ability to communicate with the police make him a valuable inside-man. Since he doesn't carry a gun, he needs to come up with creative ways to defeat the invading force's members by using merchandise sold in the mall's stores.

The gang's members move about the mall in amazing ways, leaping and bouncing from one floor to the other. The skateboarding, gymnastic and bike tricks are the most outstanding part of the film.

Young viewers will enjoy Paul's rides on his Segway, his silliness while trying to act "cool," and his inventive ways of defeating "the bad guys." However, although this is supposed to be an entertaining tale of a security guard's brave moment, a great deal of the film seems to be about a sad, overweight, single parent. After viewing you may want to skip the popcorn and go for a jog.

Hotel for Dogs (Rated PG)

This seems to be the year for dog movies, and if you are a dog fancier who loves to leave all sense of reality, this fun movie may be for you. Jeff Lowell and Robert Schooley have created a heart-warming story about a couple of foster children who love animals and think they should *all* have love, attention, food, water, exercise and a safe place to live-the things they would love to have themselves. The tagline of the movie says it all: "No stray gets turned away."

There are outstanding performances by lots of young actors-Emma Roberts, Jake Austin and Troy Gentile to name a few. Lisa Kudrow puts in a performance with her trademark goofiness, but this time with a bit of a self-centered, mean streak as she portrays a rock-n-roll star want-to-be who for a time is a foster parent.

The highlights of the movie are the many, many creative inventions to

help stray animals, an elaborate "jail break" from the dog pound, and a massive dog chase. These parts of the movie were met with lots of laughter and cheering.

Predictable?-mostly; unbelievable?-yes for adults; entertaining for the whole family?-thoroughly. But watch out-after the film your family may be on the way to an animal shelter for a new pet.

Inkheart (Rated PG)

This lovely film from the novel by Cornelia Funke has had many changes and cuts to its storyline, but holds together even if it does seem to skim much of the book's action. This may help to motivate children to read so they can compare the two!

The story follows a man named Mo Folchart (Brendan Fraser) who is a "silvertongue," someone who can read literary characters into the real world where they can live good or evil lives until they are read back into their stories. But his gift has a serious downside: every time he reads a character "out" of a book, a real person is sucked in to fill the vacancy. This is how Mo's wife (Sienna Guillory) was lost to a story. Now Mo and his daughter, Meggie (Eliza Bennett), are in search for the rare book, Inkheart, so he can return the villains he released and get his wife back into the real world, with help from her eccentric great aunt Elinor (beautifully portrayed by Helen Mirren).

There are a few scary scenes in dark, stormy weather that may be mildly frightening to little ones, but perhaps this and some of the other recent films based on young people's literature will inspire children to read. As Elinor states, one can travel the world over without ever having to leave a library!

Judy Russell teaches music and performing arts at Beauvoir, the National Cathedral Elementary School.

SOUTH AFRICA, from page 3
community resources, and are instrumental in drawing government attention to problems like AIDS. In their Leadership and Management course, Carroll and Donnelly taught students a sheaf of practical skills, such as how to develop a budget, run a meeting, raise funds, recruit and develop volunteers and understand group dynamics and different leadership styles.

They also shared some success stories from this area, where organizations like Action in Montgomery, of which St. Dunstan's is a member, make partners across denominational lines. "Pieces of Washington are going there, intellectually, at least," Donnelly said.

While teaching at the seminary in Grahamstown, the couple also was able to serve as "agents of outreach" for St. Dunstan's, checking out various mission opportunities.

These included Grahamstown's Raphael Centre, which offers multifaceted AIDS-related programs. As a result of the couple's exploration, St. Dunstan's contributed \$2,000 to a week-long camp for 60 teenagers affected by the disease - half the camp's cost.

Campers got a chance to play, Donnelly said, as well as taking a trip to the beach, where they had never been. They received intensive training on coping skills and were put into teams where they worked on dramatic, dance and musical performances. "It clearly opened up a new world

and they responded with joy," said Donnelly, who judged the resulting talent contest. "But the idea was not just to produce entertainment, but to build groups that would sustain themselves in the community."

The couple also visited the Ici Bindi program - named after the Xhosa word for courage - which trains women to give support to child-headed households, where they act as helpers, advocates and encourage the children to stay in school.

As much as the couple gave during their time in Grahamstown, they are quick to point out how much they have gained from the experience, including the opportunity to explore Africa and to sit in on other classes at the college.

"This has been a source of adventure

for us," Carroll said, pointing out that the couple's decision is also a way to model what's possible in life for their nine grandchildren.

"It's not about golf," Donnelly said. For others considering doing something similar, the two have some words of advice.

"Explore it," Carroll said. "Find out what the needs are," Donnelly added.

"Don't expect to know how or what you're going to do right out of the box," Carroll said. "Take baby steps. Keep your sense of humor."

And to save time and energy, ask someone who's done it before. Carroll and Donnelly can be reached at 43raydon@gmail.com and grammasuecarroll@gmail.com.



WHAT'S COOKING?

Healthy Eating, Part I

By Patricia Quintero-Hall

Several months ago, the Trinity, Upper Marlboro vestry heard a presentation about ecology and the need the treat the environment with mindfulness and respect. After listening to this, I asked myself, "Why don't we treat our bodies in the same manner?"

It has been a little over a year since I began to make a conscious effort to eat only organic products. Even though I had never had an issue with my weight, I was always tired. Now at 50, I have never felt better and can attribute this to the change I made in my eating habits. I want to share some of the steps I have taken to maintain what I believe is a more healthy lifestyle as well as a recipe for a nutritious breakfast.

I try not to eat products that contain white flour, white sugar, preservatives or dyes. I was once told, "If you can't spell it or pronounce it, don't eat it." I buy

see *WHAT'S COOKING*, page 14



Our cartoon is drawn by Bob Erskine.

"Sure, I'm shooting par, but so is everyone else."

Opening ourselves up to the audacity of hope

■ FAMILY MATTERS:



Margaret M. Treadwell

When I was around 7 years old, I began praying every night for a baby sister whom I promised God would be named Hope Ann

McDonnell, with initials that would give her the nickname of HAM. Although I have no idea where I got that name and she never arrived, I realized as an adult that I stayed stuck in hope with no actualization.

Hope. Friends around the globe contacting me about the inauguration of President Barack Obama constantly use this inspiring word. How brilliantly I experienced it that day on the National Mall when our gold-embossed invitation with silver gate tickets only served to propel us into a crush of humanity. In trying to escape, we somehow landed in the Museum of the American Indian where, to our amazement, we witnessed the swearing in on a giant screen while sipping hospitably-offered hot chocolate. We and some 500 others crowded up the spiral staircase constituted a Mall micro-

cosm: Representing many nationalities, ethnic groups and states, we were united for that moment in the personification of hope and the ideal use of that special edifice. We took pictures of those around us happily holding up our official invitations, which never could equal our own celebration. Open to serendipity, our experience was far better than our original hopes for the day.

As the days have unfolded since my peak experience on Jan. 20, I've been wondering what we really mean by hope and how to keep it alive with the worsening world news. Our new president based his campaign on "the audacity of hope." Certainly we seem to be living the cliché "hoping against hope."

Webster's Dictionary defines hope as 1) the feeling that what is wanted can be had or that events will turn out for the best. 2) to look forward to with desire and reasonable confidence. 3) To believe, desire or trust. 4) A person or thing in which expectations are centered.

These definitions suggest that the focus of hope is outside of us - on events in the future, another person or thing. Much easier to seek there for salvation, yet here is President Obama insisting that our hope lies in forming a community to work with him and each other, a familiar refrain from clergy in dying churches and other

leaders in stuck organizations. Even though we know that no leader can be the Messiah, we human beings continue to behave like Jesus' disciples, who expect Him to fix things while they refuse to look at themselves or draw on their inner resources where real hope for change and a new life lies.

Hope begins at home in our families. Almost everyone who calls my office for the first time hopes to improve a relationship with a loved one. Usually they want to change another person to achieve their desires. One of the first steps in an assessment plan is to examine expectations of others and ourselves. Are expectations realistic or merely distractions from more important questions? Do we want to change in someone else a characteristic or habit we don't like in ourselves? Often if we work on the very thing we want our spouse, partner, child, parent, friend to change - voila! His or her change occurs while we looked away to work on changing ourselves. A person cannot stay the same if a motivated leader shifts his or her position in the family (or church or any institution).

I refer to this as the "as if theory," in which I coach clients to practice living as if hope for another is possible while refocusing on better defining themselves, as if their heart's desire were attainable. We talk about prac-

ticing "futuristic positivity," a term created by the neuropsychologist Angelo Bolea. He explains that the brain has both positive and negative neurons but the negative outweigh the positive by a two-to-one ratio. Why? Our ancestors needed to protect themselves by sensing the worst possible outcome in order to survive, a defense mechanism we can now outgrow to our benefit. Just watch your child function more maturely when you practice naming the positive strengths in him or her.

Futuristic positivity is practicing the "as if" vision without being locked in to an expected outcome. Sometimes this focus on hope is best conveyed by how we express our attitudes rather than by what we say. Sitting quietly. Standing tall. Looking someone in the eye. Listening. Breathing deeply. Kneeling to pray. Laughing out loud. Walking through the wind and rain with hope in our hearts though our dreams be tossed and blown.

"Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense regardless of how it turns out."

- Barbara Johnson

Margaret M. "Peggy" Treadwell, LICSW, is a family, individual and couples therapist and teacher in private practice. She can be contacted at PeggyMcDT@aol.com.

A Tribute to Our Friend



Bishop David Beetge has been a champion in building our partnership with the Anglican Church of Southern Africa since 2003. He died unexpectedly in September 2008.

Bishop Beetge was Dean of the Anglican Church of Southern Africa and Bishop of the Diocese of the Highveld, South Africa. He, his wife Carol, and all in his diocese are in our prayers.

We remember his charm, wit, and grace in sharing Christ's love. Bishop David, as he was known in his diocese, encouraged the Diocese of Washington and the Anglican Church of Southern Africa to work together to address the pressing issues of the new millennium, including poverty, HIV/AIDS, malaria, and violence against women. He regularly visited Washington — attending two Diocesan conventions — and welcomed many of us in South Africa, showing us a model of partnership that will long serve the Diocese of Washington.

Bishop David was deeply committed to clergy development as key to building a more compassionate church in Southern Africa. *Please join us in remembering Bishop David by contributing to a fund for clergy training established in his name in Southern Africa.*

Photo: ACNS/Rosenthal

Send checks payable to "Diocese of Washington," indicate they are for "Bishop Beetge Memorial Fund," and mail to: Cheryl Daves Wilburn, Episcopal Church House, Mt. St. Alban, Washington, DC 20016. Please visit the Southern Africa Partnership Committee web site: www.edow.org/sapc.

WHAT'S COOKING, from page 13 1 cup of brown rice
Sauté garlic in olive oil until almost brown, then add rice. Mix until the rice looks like it has browned a tiny bit. Add 2 ½ cups of water and some sea salt. When most of the water has evaporated cover the rice and lower the temperature. Continue cooking until all the water has been absorbed (about 20 minutes).

If you would like to make some small steps toward a healthier lifestyle, consider the following:
● Replace white sugar with Rapadura (dried sugarcane juice), local honey or 100 percent maple syrup
● Replace peanut butter with almond butter
● Switch to olive oil
● Buy organic eggs
● Say goodbye to sodas and drinks high in sugar (fructose) even if it says diet - read the ingredients!

Hall Breakfast: Rice & Beans Topped Off With An Egg

Brown rice:
1 large clove garlic
2 Tbsps olive oil

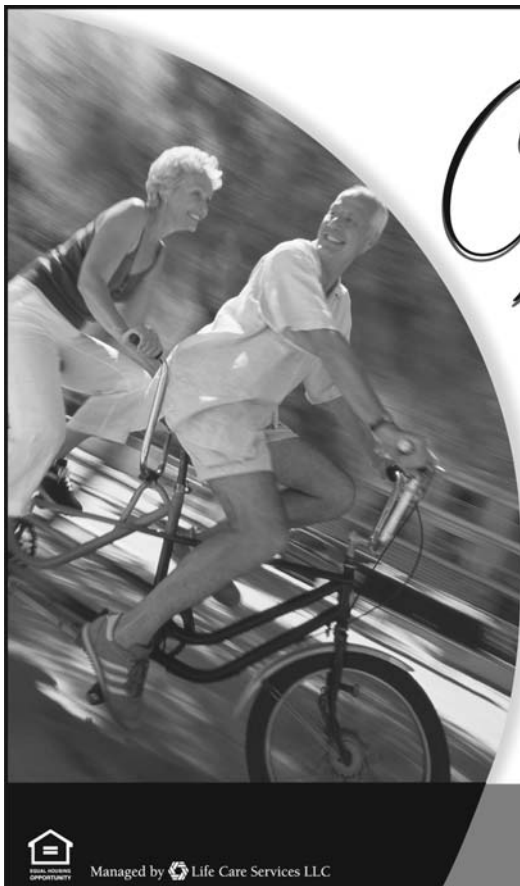
Beans (prepare day or night before):
Soak black or kidney beans for 4-8 hours. Put in crock pot overnight (set on low) or let boil until the beans are soft. When the beans are ready, sauté 3-4 chopped garlic cloves, a small onion (chopped) in about 2 Tbsps of olive oil and some sprigs of finely chopped cilantro. Add this to the beans along with salt and pepper and 1-2 Tbsps of cumin.

Serve topped with an egg of your choice.
Patricia Quintero-Hall serves on the vestry at Trinity, Upper Marlboro.

Celebrate Earth Day at The Pennyworth Thrift Shop

In honor of Earth Day, The Pennyworth Thrift Shop, a mission of Grace, Silver Spring, will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. on two Sundays in April: April 19 and April 26.

The Pennyworth Shop is located at 955 Bonifant Street in downtown Silver Spring. For more information, contact Lisa Summers at 301/587-0880 or Summers-Ryder@starpower.net



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Lessons in faith from Abraham Lincoln

VIEWPOINT:



John Graham

From Isaiah, chapter 55:
For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways

higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and do not return there until they have watered the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater, so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

With only a few exceptions (his children, possibly a few fellow lawyers), Abraham Lincoln loved at a distance. From the time he entered public life, he had an agenda for just about every conversation and every encounter. He saw clearly where people fit into a larger picture, and deployed them, with or without their knowledge and consent, to achieve his goals.

Lincoln's father uprooted the family frequently during Abraham's childhood and youth. And Abraham (fol-

lowing in the footsteps of his Biblical namesake?) uprooted himself from his family as soon as he could. He put lots of time and space between himself and what he thought of as his father's brutish insistence on the primacy of backbreaking manual labor. (Lincoln's allies used the "railsplitter" myth to his advantage, but Lincoln himself had long since found better ways to make a living.) Lincoln made himself a master of self-distancing in the bosom of the family.

Despite all of this, though, we don't remember Lincoln as a master manipulator, or as cold or remote in the manner of, say, George Washington. We think of him as "Father Abraham," kind, tender-hearted, staying up late at night to find reasons to pardon deserters. "With malice toward none, with charity for all" captures his legacy.

We can attribute this to three components of Lincoln's character that came into high relief during the blood and fire of the Civil War. First: his wit. Used earlier in his career to flay his opponents mercilessly, it became almost exclusively self-deprecatory during the nation's great trial.

Second: his patience. No one left Lincoln's presence thinking that his mind had been elsewhere during their conversation. He listened with great care, sometimes at great length, when the pressures of time and the demands of schedule must have felt overwhelming. He used almost every-

thing he heard for his own purposes, of course, but no one seemed to mind. Third: his flexibility. Within the boundaries of his core principles, Lincoln had no trouble ceding points he regarded as secondary - and he regarded a very broad range of issues as "secondary." He allowed no "litmus tests" to find their way into his small repertoire of primary concerns and principles.

Wit, patience, flexibility: these softened Lincoln's shrewdness, his calculating nature, and bequeathed us the image of a compassionate father we now cherish.

A favorite professor of mine used to say, "If the end doesn't justify the means, what does?" We cut some people a lot of slack in this regard, because we believe their hearts are in the right place. Even if they use us, we don't doubt their love for us. We might even be glad to play a part in a performance they're orchestrating. I've heard musicians of great talent say they think of themselves as empty vessels, through which the genius of a Bach or an Ellington can flow unimpeded. Lincoln's colleagues, looking back, felt like this about him. Being loved at a distance by Lincoln, seen as means to his ends, seemed superior to just about any other human love they had known.

In the last four or five years of his life, I believe, Lincoln came to regard God in the way many regarded Lincoln himself. He always used

impersonal terms to speak of God: "the Almighty," "Providence," "Divine Being." I don't recall ever reading of an instance in which the term "Father," or any more intimate invocation, crossed his lips. "The Almighty has His own purposes," he wrote in the Second Inaugural Address. In Lincoln's mind the Almighty loved him and the nation he served from a distance, using both as instruments for the realization of purposes higher than either could fully grasp.

Seen in this way, by an age that craves intimacy with God and isn't sure how to get it, Lincoln's religion seems unsatisfying. Still, we face a vast and baffling universe, and even the currents of economic life, let alone the larger forces of history, seem to have eluded our understanding and careened out of our control. Surely some part of us hopes God is not just with us, but far beyond us; that the Almighty has his own purposes, higher than ours. Love from a distance does not fill the void we all sense in our midst, but it offers its own satisfactions. Lincoln's melancholy may have come from the unfulfilled yearning for an intimacy that neither his father nor God, as he understood God, could offer. But his undoubted serenity surely derived from his conviction that human aspiration could not contain or control the Almighty. *The Rev. John Graham is rector of Grace, Georgetown.*

MEDITATIONS, from page 11

wanted people to be sick, Jesus would not have gone about healing the suffering. If everything that happened were the will of God, there would have been no need of the prophets to tell us to change our ways. Surely we don't think that the evils which human beings have perpetrated upon one another throughout history have been administered in accordance with the will of God. Human beings have free will and often act contrary to what Jesus and the prophets tell us is the will of God.

I also think, though I cannot prove it, that there is a degree of randomness in the universe, that just as God granted free will to human beings, the universe does sometimes "do its own thing." Or maybe we just cannot discern the level of determinism that may be operating; I don't know. I don't think God chooses one child to have cancer and another to be



born hopelessly deformed and another to be mentally deficient. Jesus said of the man born blind, "Don't try to figure out why this happened, but let's see how God might be glorified in healing him now." I will accept that admonition and not try to explain why evil exists in this world.

What can we count on? I believe that we can count on Jesus to be faithful, to be with us always, in our joy and in our sorrow. I believe we can count on the Holy Spirit to bring us the wisdom and comfort and strength we must have to get through times that truly try our souls. And I believe that God gives us into one another's care and keeping, to help us bear one another's burdens, to pour out our love and caring in ways that testify to the truth that we are truly members one of another. God's love is manifest in the love we share. I am deeply thankful for the love I see operating among us and for all the gifts of God that bind our hearts to him and to one another.

Hedge Funds Won't Get Us To Heaven

By the Rev. Stephanie Nagley, rector of St. Luke's, Bethesda

Jesus talked about money more than anything else - the love of money, the desire for money, the lack of money, the abundance of money. Money, he knew, challenges and changes us like nothing else. Money is powerful - so powerful that something that is supposed to be useful too often just leaves us feeling used.

We're smart people so we know what happened on Wall Street. We may not grasp all the complexities but we know what happened in the broad scheme. We know that a lot of other smart people got greedy, and the love of money took them on a magical mystery tour. The ride is over and all of us will pay the price.

Hedge funds won't get us to heaven or make heaven on earth. "Where your treasure is there your heart will be too." Giving to the church and organizations that believe, trust in and hope for heaven on earth says volumes about what we hope, believe

and trust. We aren't trying to buy our way to heaven for heaven can't be bought. But giving to heavenly causes brings us closer to our reason for being and helps further God's work in the world. That's our slice of heaven here and now.

As I watched the Dow drop and heard about credit markets freezing, I felt nervous like most everyone else. But I also sensed an opportunity, an opportunity to get my own house in order and to reallocate where I put my treasure.

The word *economy* is rooted in the Greek word *household*. Our churches are part of the household of God. A pledge is our way of living God's household, a household guided by the economy of abundance. Our participation matters - it matters not just to our individual churches, but to something greater. When we write a check or make a stock transfer, we're making an investment in the household of God. We're placing our money and our lives on the line for a dream. We are saying that we believe that the dream, the dream of God, can, must, shall come true.



Washington Window

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activities & events

Forum on Centering Prayer

March 1, 10 a.m. at St. John's, Lafayette Square. With the Rev. Thomas Ward, who will also preach at the 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. services.

Fish Dinners

March 6 and April 3, 5 to 7:30 p.m. at St. George's, Valley Lee. All you can eat Fish Dinner includes beer batter fried fish, St. George's potatoes, hush puppies, coleslaw, coffee, tea and lemonade. \$12/adults, \$6/children 6-12, no charge for children 5 and under. Desserts are extra. 301/994-0585, stgeorgesvalleylee.org

Lenten Silent Day of Prayer

March 7, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Stephen and the Incarnation. Theme: seeking renewal. Yoga sequences to song, meditation, and Taizé chant led by Carolyn Bluemle; Eucharist celebrated by the Rev. Frank Dunn, and vegetarian lunch catered by Chef Rachel Merga. No previous yoga experience necessary. \$45 includes lunch. Scholarships offered.

A Place of Healing

March 8, 4 to 5:30 p.m. at Epiphany, D.C. In conjunction with the 2009 Washington, D.C. celebration of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial, Epiphany offers a dramatic presentation, written and performed by members of the congregation, which traces Civil War Washington and the healing role the church played in the lives of many who surrounded Lincoln as well as the community at large. Free parking with validation at the PMI Garage next door.

Hatha Yoga

March 11, 18 and 25; April 8, 15, 22, 29; May 13. 6:30 p.m. at St. Augustine's, D.C. With registered yoga instructor Dale Ann McClelland. All levels welcome; participants will need to bring their own mats, straps and blocks. Participants should be at least 18 years old. Cost: \$100 for eight classes; \$60 for four;

\$20 to drop in. During the first session, bring cash or checks payable to Dale A. McClelland.

Fish Fry

March 13, 20, 27, 4 to 7 p.m. at Trinity, Upper Marlboro. The Men's Group will host a fish fry: fried Whiting, green beans, coleslaw, bread and beverage. Costs: \$8/person, \$7/seniors, \$5/children 12 years and younger. Desserts may be purchased for an additional \$2. Call 301/627-2636 with questions.

Interfaith Book Discussion Group

March 17, 6:30 p.m. at St. Augustine's, D.C. Free and includes light supper. Discuss the book: "If Grace is True: Why God Will Save Every Person" by Phillip Gulley and James Mulholland.

Diocesan Speaker's Series

March 19, 7 to 8:30 p.m. at NCS - Hearst Hall Auditorium. David Gornter, VTS, author of *Transforming Evangelism*

St. Margaret's Book Sale PLUS

March 21, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Margaret's, D.C. Free live music and inexpensive refreshments. New and gently used CDs, DVDs, computer games, VHS tapes and books. All proceeds go to St. Margaret's ministries, including Charlie's Place serving homeless men and women in D.C.

St. Patrick's Dinner and Auction

March 21, 5:30 to 9 p.m. at Christ, Capitol Hill. Wear green to the traditional St. Patrick's Day dinner and silent auction. Food, entertainment, sporting events and unique gift and clothing items during at the silent auction beginning at 5:30 p.m. Corn beef and cabbage dinner at 7 p.m.

arts & music

Open House for Prospective Boy Choristers

March 1, 4:45 to 7:15 p.m. at St. Paul's, K Street. Rehearsal, followed by Evensong and a reception and opportunity to meet the musicians

Newly ordained priests



Photo by Holly Foss

NEW PRIESTS Robin Gulick, David Dill, Susan Pinkerton and Frederick Walker were ordained to the sacred order of priests during a Jan. 24 service at Washington National Cathedral.

and choir parents. RSVP to Robert McCormick, 202/337-2020, ext. 14, or McCormick@stpauls-kst.com.

Choral Evensong and Organ Recital by Thomas Smith

March 1, 5 to 6:30 p.m. at Redeemer, Bethesda. A quintessentially Anglican service to mark the beginning of Lent, sung by Redeemer's Adult and Youth Choirs. Choral music includes works by Henry Balfour Gardiner, Herbert Howells and Philip Radcliffe. An organ recital follows. Free-will offering. Reception to follow.

Choral Evensong

March 1, 5 p.m. at Christ, Georgetown. Music of Herbert W. Sumson and Orlando Gibbons sung by the professional Choir of Christ Church. Free admission. 202/333-6677.

Taizé Service of Prayer and Meditation

March 2, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Redeemer, Bethesda. Informal, contemplative service with scripture, icons, incense, silence and chant accompanied by piano, guitar and other instruments, held on the first Monday of every month.

Choral Evensong

March 4, 5:30 to 6:15 p.m. at Redeemer, Bethesda. Sung prayer at the close of the day, led by Redeemer's treble choristers. Liturgy includes traditional settings of the responses, psalm, and canticles, as well as an anthem and a hymn. Held on the first Wednesday of every month.

Art & Spirit Coffeehouse Exhibit

March 4, 6:30 p.m. at St. Augustine's, D.C. Jennifer Sakai will present "Life and Landscape Viewed Through the Lens of a Fine Arts Photographer." Coffee and desserts, followed by a Q&A with the audi-

ence. Donations accepted. Contact rector@staugustinesdc.org, 202/554-3222 or www.staugustinesdc.org
Cathedral Choral Society Concert
March 8, 4 p.m. at Washington National Cathedral, with free pre-concert discussion at 2:30 p.m. *When Lilacs Last in the Door-yard Bloom'd*, by Paul Hindemith, an official event of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. J. Reilly Lewis, conductor, Sam Waterston, narrator, Marietta Simpson, mezzo-soprano, Christöphen Nomura, baritone. Program includes the American classic *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*, the American premiere of Charles Villiers Stanford's *Elegiac Ode*, the *Lincoln Portrait* by Aaron Copland and a reading of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address. Pre-concert discussion by Bruce D. McClung, associate professor of musicology at College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati, with opening remarks by Dr. Eileen R. Mackevich, executive director of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission.

Choral Evensong

March 15, 5 to 6 p.m. at Christ, Georgetown. Music of Richard Ayleward, Clifford Harker and William Boyce. Sung by the professional Choir of Christ Church, this series is free and open to the public. 202/333-6677.

services & worship

A Service of Healing and Holy Communion

March 16, 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Redeemer, Bethesda. A quiet, contemplative liturgy with prayers for healing, laying on of hands, and Holy Eucharist, held on the third Monday of every month.