

CHURCHWORK

A traditional religious painting of the Nativity scene. Mary is kneeling in the foreground, holding the infant Jesus in a manger. Joseph is seated to the left. Two angels are positioned above the manger, one on each side. The background shows a rocky landscape with a donkey and an ox. The overall style is reminiscent of Byzantine or Orthodox iconography.

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THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF LOUISIANA

WINTER 2011

**...BEING BORN IN
HUMAN LIKENESS.**

PHILIPPIANS 2:7

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Submissions

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Submissions should be sent by email to Rebecca Pitre at rpitre@edola.org. *We reserve the right to edit all material, and cannot guarantee that every submission will be published.*

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A MESSAGE FROM OUR BISHOP

One Sunday while distributing the bread at communion a little girl around the age of four came bouncing up the aisle and jumped up on the kneeler at the rail. Her head was barely above the wooden rail and I had to kneel to get on her level. She had curly brown hair and her smile was as wide as her face. Her eyes seemed as if they had glitter for they were filled with joy and expectation. Just looking at her made me smile. When I placed the consecrated bread in the palm of this little girl's hand she watched as if she was receiving a gift that was only meant for her and no one else. Indeed she was. She looked up at me and said with that infectious smile, "thank you". She paused and then skipped back to her seat with her family.

I continued my way down the rail repeating, "the body of Christ, the bread of heaven"...but the expressions on the faces of the adults were different. They were unlike that of the little girl. Some looked bored as if to say, "hurry up the Saints game starts in thirty minutes". Some faces looked angry. One had tears running down his cheeks. As I drove home I continued to see the faces of the people who came forward to receive the body and blood of our Lord. What a contrast between a joyful child and the frowns of adults. Joy and scowl, presence and absence, trusting and cynic.

In the seasons of Advent and Christmas we prepare for God's Great Gift to the world. The challenge for many will be how to enter this time of anticipation. We have choices to make, or we can allow the culture around us make them for us. Jesus said, "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 18:3) The look on the little girl's face was one of anticipation and joy to receive, which makes me wonder what we think we are doing when stretching out our adult hands to receive. Are we just going through the motions like Pavlov's experiments or are we truly expecting Christ to be placed in the palm of our souls? Some may wonder what difference does it make at all? It makes all the difference in the world. Fr. Richard Easterling reminded us in a sermon he preached at the funeral for Martha Craft that we are created in the image of God, therefore we are holy people. This image



of being a holy people has stayed with me for quite some time. To be sacred is to be of value. To see my neighbor as holy and sacred puts them in a perspective that can't be ignored nor dismissed. As a person who claims to follow Christ I am bound to honor the sacredness of others even if they do not. To live fully into our holiness is to recognize the gift given to us in the beginning, our creation. We were given the gift of life to be fully alive, living along side other holy people and holy environment.

Which brings me back to the little girl who taught me about joy and receiving. Let us take with us this season the image of God's gift to us formed in the likeness of Christ who saw all creation as blessed and holy and gave to us a new understanding of giving and receiving and then giving again. May we learn to give away completely all the love God has given us, that when we come to the rail to receive Christ's love it will be pure joy to be filled again for the service of giving Christ away. As you drive to work, or school or a game of golf, what do you see? Where can the gift you received on Sunday at the altar be given away? If you're not sure, ask a child. They will know.

Brave journey,

+ *Mou's*

FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

Bishop's Journal: September – November

September 1: Annual consultation with the Rev'd Drew Rolins in Baton Rouge office. Caught up on phone calls and paperwork, then drove back to New Orleans.

September 2: Vacation day.

September 3: No meetings today.

September 4: No visitation today.

September 5: Labor Day – office is closed.

September 6: Annual consultation with the Rev'd Canon Steven Roberts in New Orleans office then drove to Hammond for the Council of Deans luncheon hosted by the Very Rev'd Paul Bailey and Grace Memorial Church. Later, dined with Deacon Mark Hudson and stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

September 7: Updates from Baton Rouge staff in the morning. Working lunch with Ed Starns to discuss formation of a committee for work on Resolution R-4, which requested the Bishop and the Executive Board initiate the study of how the funding of the diocese might be improved and made more equitable. Dined with Hugh McIntosh, Head of Episcopal High School. Stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

September 8: Met with the Rev'd Lonell Wright and Marsha Wade, Vice Chancellor, about All Souls Church, New Orleans. Caught up on work in the Baton Rouge office then drove back to New Orleans.

September 9: Bishop's writing day – worked on a sermon in the morning and early afternoon. Met with the Council on Deacons in late afternoon.

September 10: Met with the Diocesan Executive Board via video conference between the Baton Rouge and New Orleans offices. Later, drove to Baton Rouge and stayed overnight.

September 11: Celebrated the Holy Eucharist and preached at St. Paul's/Holy Trinity in New Roads. We gave thanks to the firemen who attended the service and enjoyed a very nice reception. Drove back to New Orleans for Choral Evensong at Christ Church Cathedral to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the September 11th attacks.

September 12: Day off. Rebecca and I packed and prepared for travel for the next week.

September 13-21: Rebecca and I attended the Fall House of Bishops and Spouses conference in Quito, Ecuador. Took

some getting used to an altitude of over 9,000 ft. We arrived home safely but Rebecca's cell phone didn't. Unpacked, rested a bit, then prepared for an evening meeting with the leadership of the Church of the Annunciation, New Orleans.

September 22: No meetings this morning. Waited for repairmen to arrive at the bishop's residence for scheduled maintenance and repairs. Drove to Baton Rouge for an evening meeting with the Vestry of St. Luke's, then returned to New Orleans.

September 23: Writing day – wrote a sermon and caught up on paperwork. Working lunch with Chancellor Cove Geary.

September 24: Celebrated the Holy Eucharist with Integrity members in the Chapel at Trinity Church, New Orleans. Followed by a meeting and workshop with conversation about how Integrity can assist in the diocese to help implement the resolution passed at the 174th diocesan convention - having dialogue with LGBT Episcopalians in the various parishes and missions.

September 25: Celebrated, received, baptized and confirmed at the Church of the Annunciation and also blessed the new Communion table. Lovely reception followed.

September 26: Day off.

September 27: Calendared with Agatha. Caught up on paperwork and phone calls in the morning. Enjoyed a relaxing lunch with Bishop Brown. Met with the Rev'd Diane Estes about her duties as the newly appointed Chaplain for Diocesan Recovery Ministry. Meeting with Archdeacon Priscilla Maumus and Deacon Charmaine Kathmann.

September 28: Meeting with Trevor Bryan II, Junior Warden of St. Luke's, New Orleans. Staff meeting at 9 a.m. then drove to the Baton Rouge office. Development meeting with Mr. John Noland in the afternoon, followed by a meeting with the Rev'd Ernie Saik. Attended a wonderful ECS 500 fundraising party at the home of Deacon and Mrs. Daniel Mark Hudson. Stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

September 29: Meetings with the Rev'd Canon Chad Jones and the Rev'd Patrick Edwards. Lunch with Nell Bolton about ECSLA grants. Met with Mrs. Mary Ann Armstrong about mission work. Meeting with the Rev'd Ralph Howe. Stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

September 30: Preached and celebrated at St. James Day School. Returned to New Orleans for a meeting with Dean

FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

David duPlantier. Afternoon meeting with the Rev'd Angela Ifill, Missioner for Black Ministries for the Episcopal Church, and the Rev'd Dr. Martini Shaw, Rector of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas, Philadelphia, PA, the first black Episcopal Church in the United States.

October 1: No meetings today. Enjoyed a special evening with daughter, Virginia, dining at Antoine's for our birthdays.

October 2: Celebrated at St. John's, Kenner. Very nice reception and acknowledgement of my birthday.

October 3: Day off.

October 4: Early morning scheduling with Agatha, followed by a meeting with Deacon Phil Wild. Get-acquainted meeting with Imam Rafeeq Nu'Man of Masjid-ur-Rahim (House of Prayer) in New Orleans. Later, Rebecca and I were treated by the Noland Center to a birthday luncheon of fried chicken, white beans and rice, macaroni and cheese, cornbread, cake, and ice cream. What a party! Many thanks to all. Met with Mr. Marshall Monford in the afternoon about the condition of Bishop Robert Sessums' gravesite and its cry for attention and grooming. Met with Amelia Arthur, Coordinator of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, for updates and guidance. Late afternoon phone call with Canon Stevenson for updates and planning.

October 5: Drove to Baton Rouge for a luncheon meeting with Ms. Nanette Noland at the City Club. Met with Mrs. Terry Koehler in the afternoon about her desire for the diocese to continue its mission work in Honduras after the Rev'd Brien Koehler's retirement at the end of this year. Stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

October 6: Exit interview lunch with Rebecca Pitre who has accepted a new position in Dallas, Texas. Met with the Standing Committee in early afternoon, then returned to New Orleans for the Board of Trustees' reception at St. Martin's School for Headmaster candidate.

October 7: Writing day – worked on a sermon, then met with the Rev'd Matthew Hyde, Maggie Charles, and others from Trinity Wall Street to discuss their relationship with the diocese. Drove to the conference center in the afternoon and stayed overnight.

October 8: Met with the Solomon Episcopal Conference Center Board, then drove to Baton Rouge and stayed overnight.

October 9: Celebrated and preached at the 9 a.m. service, then celebrated, preached, confirmed and received at the 11 a.m. service at St. James, Baton Rouge, followed by a lovely reception. Later, dined with clergy, wardens, ordina-

tion candidates & spouses at Capitol City Grill, Downtown. Afterwards, drove home to New Orleans.

October 10-12: Traveled to Sewanee for Board of Trustees' meeting. Met with seminarian, Joe Wallace, to discuss placement options upon his graduation next spring. Returned to New Orleans late Wednesday night.

October 13: No appointments. Scheduling session with Agatha in the morning, paperwork and errands in the afternoon.

October 14: Writing day - worked on a sermon in the morning then Rebecca and I drove to Baton Rouge and stayed overnight.

October 15: Rebecca and I enjoyed the day in St. Francisville. I played golf with George Newton while Rebecca and Ann Newton attended the Southern Garden Symposium. Drove home to New Orleans in the evening.

October 16: Celebrated, preached, confirmed and reaffirmed at St. Luke's, New Orleans. Danced with parishioners to the beat of the drums. Rebecca and I enjoyed sampling the variety of delicious foods at the annual international festival in honor of St. Luke. Enjoyed the afternoon with Rebecca, then dined with St. Martin's Search Committee and another Headmaster candidate.

October 17: Enjoyed a day off.

October 18: Meeting with the Rev'd Dr. Hill Riddle, followed by annual consultation with the Rev'd Jeff Millican. Meeting with Deacon Louis Ogle. In the afternoon, annual consultation with the Rev'd Jim Quigley, followed by a meeting with the Rev'd Dr. Walter Baer and an aspirant to the priesthood. Brief update meeting with Billie Barbier, Financial Manager.

October 19: Weekly staff meeting, then met with the Jericho Road Board of Trustees. Drove to Baton Rouge for annual consultation with the Rev'd John Miller, followed by an evening meeting with the leadership of the churches of St. Augustine and St. Michael and All Angels. Stayed overnight in Baton Rouge.

October 20: Annual consultations with the Rev'd Joe Hermerding and the Rev'd Dan Krutz. Phone call with the Rev'd Keith Johnson and Mr. Lee Crean to discuss the focus and plans of the Racial Reconciliation Committee between now and the next diocesan convention. Met with the diocesan Board of Trustees in the afternoon, then returned to New Orleans.

October 21: Met with Ms. Debbie Boudreaux, Chair of the Board, St. Paul's School, New Orleans. Later, met with another

FROM THE BISHOP'S OFFICE

er Headmaster finalist for St. Martin's School. Working lunch with the Rev'd Canon Mary Koppel, then quiet time and reflection in the afternoon. Rebecca and I had dinner with Amelia and Mike Arthur along with guest Margaret McLarty, President of National Verger Guild, speaker for the annual Acolyte Festival tomorrow.

October 22: Dialogue with nearly 50 acolytes, then celebrated at Christ Church Cathedral for the annual Acolyte Festival.

October 23: Celebrated, preached, baptized, confirmed and received at Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans. Rebecca and I enjoyed fellowship with parishioners over coffee hour. Later, Rebecca and I joined Deacon & Mrs. Mark Hudson (Debbie) for the Saints/Colts game. The Saints won!

October 24-26: Scheduling session with Agatha in the morning. Early afternoon telephone interview on Monday with a candidate for rector of Trinity, Baton Rouge, then drove to conference center for the fall College of Presbyters. Blessed and dedicated new classrooms at St. Michael's, Mandeville on Wednesday afternoon, then drove to Chatawa, MS for a personal overnight retreat.

October 27: Met with Sr. Ruth, my spiritual director, in the morning, then drove to New Orleans in the afternoon.

October 28: Writing day – worked on a sermon and an article for Churchwork. No appointments.

October 29: Rebecca and I drove to St. Augustine's, Metairie, where she judged pumpkin recipes and decorated pumpkins for the pumpkin contest.

October 30: Celebrated, preached and confirmed at St. Philip's, New Orleans, followed by a very nice reception.

October 31: Spent the morning returning phone calls and writing letters.

November 1: Follow-up meeting with Marshall Monford. Phone call to Canon Stevenson for briefing and updates. Phone conversation with Slater Armstrong about fundraising on behalf of Bishop Andudu for relief efforts in the Sudan. Administrative work then met with Amelia Arthur for updates and guidance for Youth and Young Adult ministry. Met with the Rev'd Giulianna Gray and an aspirant to the priesthood.

November 2: Weekly staff meeting then met with the Uptown Deanery at Trinity Church, New Orleans. Telephone briefing, updates and planning with Canon Mark Stevenson, followed by a meeting with a clergyman.

November 3: I visited the Orleans Parish Marriage Office

and was licensed to perform weddings. Attended the special Board Meeting at St. Martin's School for the purpose of choosing the new Head of School. Later, dined with an old friend who was visiting New Orleans.

November 4: Writing day, worked on a sermon. Ran errands in the afternoon.

November 5: The Cathedral's Director of Music and Organist, Jarrett Follette, and I rode together to Napoleonville, where he played the music and I celebrated and preached the annual Holy Eucharist. We had a very nice time.

November 6: Spoke to the Adult Sunday School class at All Saints' Church, River Ridge, followed by celebration of the Holy Eucharist and reception of five adults. A nice reception afterwards. Later, drove to the conference center for Cursillo Closing. Drove to Ochsner Hospital to be with the Craft family. Very full but wonderful day.

November 7: Enjoyed a day off. Telephone interview with a candidate for rector of Trinity Church, Baton Rouge.

November 8: Met with the Reverends Jim and Jo Popham, visiting Canadian priests. Annual consultation with the Rev'd Dr. Jean Meade, followed by a meeting with the Rev'd Don Owens. Later, off to Mid City Rock "N" Bowl to videotape an invitation to the youth to attend the annual Bowl with the Bishop on December 17. Later, met with the Reverends Henry Hudson and Nelson Tennison for their annual consultations. Closed out the day by joining the young adults for God and Guinness at The Irish House in New Orleans.

November 9: Drove to the Baton Rouge office. Met with the Rev'd Ron Whitmer, canonically attached, retired priest who recently returned to our diocese. Annual consultation with the Rev'd Karen Gay. Working lunch with Canon Stevenson. Exit interview with the Rev'd Stewart Cage who is retiring at year's end. Annual consultation with the Rev'd Tim Heflin. Returned home to New Orleans in the evening.

November 10: Marine Corps birthday – Semper Fi! Met briefly with Agatha for scheduling. Later, officiated at the burial office and requiem for Martha Craft, wife of the Rev'd Stephen Craft, St. Philip's Church, New Orleans. Many clergy of the diocese vested and processed. Fr. Richard Easterling preached a fine sermon.

November 11: Veterans Day. Worked on a sermon, later participated in a conference call with other bishops. Celebrant at The Seamen's Church Institute's New Ministry on the Rivers and Gulf, and Installation of Chaplains, the Rev'd Winston Rice and the Rev'd Michael Nation at Trinity, New Orleans. The preacher was the Rev'd David R. Rider, Executive Direc-

tor of The Seamen's Church Institute of New York and New Jersey.

November 12: Met with the diocesan Executive Board via videoconference between New Orleans and Baton Rouge. Later, drove to Baton Rouge and stayed overnight.

November 13: Celebrated, preached, received and confirmed at St. Luke's, Baton Rouge. Congratulations to the Rev'd Brien Koehler on his 35th anniversary in the priesthood. Welcome home, Rebecca – it's good to have her home after a long trip.

November 14: Enjoyed a day off. Doctor visit. Telephone interview with another candidate for rector of Trinity, Baton Rouge.

November 15-18: Traveled to Hartford, Connecticut for a conference of the Standing Commission on Lifelong Christian Formation and Education.

November 19: Celebrated at the CCDP conference on evangelism at St. Michael's Church in Mandeville. Fr. Jay Angerer led the conference. His passion for evangelism is infectious.

November 20: Visited Grace Church, New Orleans to deliver the hard news that we will close the doors of the church at the end of the year with a service on January 5.

November 21: Enjoyed a day off.

November 22: Met with the Finance Committee in the morning followed by lunch with Skip Scoggin and Bill Rhodes to plan the Men's Retreat. Met with Dave Kinahan to discuss funding for Episcopal Ministry at Tulane Medical School. Drove to Bogalusa. Celebrated and preached for the Celebration of New Ministry of the Rev'd Nelson Tennison at St. Matthew's.

November 23: Wedding rehearsal in the morning. Caught up on paperwork in the afternoon then relaxed with my family.

November 24-25: Offices closed for Thanksgiving holiday.

November 26: Officiated at the beautiful wedding of the Very Rev'd David duPlantier and Karla Sikaffy in Christ Church Cathedral.

November 27: No visitation.

November 28: Enjoyed a day off.

November 29-30: Rebecca and I traveled to Memphis for the Province IV Bishops and Diocesan Administrators Conference.

The Bishop's Visitation Schedule

- **1/3:** Chapel of the Transfiguration, Angola
- **1/8:** St. George's, New Orleans
- **1/15:** Grace, St. Francisville
- **1/22:** St. Michael and All Angels, Baton Rouge
- **1/29:** Mt. Olivet, New Orleans
- **2/4:** Happening, SECC
- **2/5:** St. Andrew's, New Orleans
- **2/12:** Holy Communion, Plaquemine
- **2/22:** Christ Church Cathedral, New Orleans
- **2/26:** Trinity, Morgan City
- **3/11:** St. Patrick's, Zachary
- **3/25:** All Souls, New Orleans



Important Dates Around the Diocese

- **1/31 -2/3:** Clergy Silent Retreat
- **2/22:** Ash Wednesday
- **3/2-3:** Diocesan Convention, St. James, Baton Rouge
- **4/2:** Chrism Mass and Renewal of Vows, Cathedral
- **6/1-3:** Community of Deacons
- **8/5-6:** Commission on Ministry Conference
- **10/29-31:** College of Presbyters

New Orleans Wowed Them in 1925



By Harriet Murrell, Director of School for Ministry and Diocesan Archivist

Twice the Diocese of Louisiana has accepted the invitation to host the General Convention- in 1925 and in 1982, both times for New Orleans. Invitations have been extended since but have been declined in part because hurricane season seems an inopportune time to invite over two thousand guests to come visit for about three weeks. However in 1919, Bishop Sessums decided that it was time to have the General Convention participants travel farther south than Atlanta. It took him several years to convince the delegates to the diocesan convention that Episcopalians in the state of Louisiana were up to it. The invitation was extended and accepted for the Diocese of Louisiana (which then included the entire state) to host the forty eighth Convention and for the Women's Auxiliary to meet from October 7 through 24, 1925 in various locations throughout the city. These were the bishop's fervent words for the diocese and the nine congregations in New Orleans, "I am looking to the Diocese of Louisiana and particularly the people of New Orleans to justify in every way the fair reputation of hospitality which characterizes this State and Community". The diocese was given \$2,000 for anticipated hospitality expenses and the convention budgeted \$30,000 for all other convention expenses.

The major diocesan responsibilities were logistics and hosting. The thorough report from Warren Kearny, the general chairman, to the diocesan convention the following year indicated everything received stellar praise. Regretfully the weather did not earn praise. It was unusually warm for October and it rained a lot. It is also hinted that the mosquitoes were abundant. Mr. Kearney mentioned none of these unpleasanties but the magazine reporting on the convention did.

The Bienville Hotel was the convention hotel but many guests stayed in private homes. Meetings were held in the Jerusalem Temple, the Athenaeum, Christ Church Cathedral, Trinity Church, St. George Church and St. Paul's. The Girls Friendly Society met in an unnamed automobile show room. However the major wow feature was created by Audubon Park where the opening service and later events, such as the UTO tabulation (held in the evening) took place. The alley of oak trees, the Spanish moss, the shadows cast by the sun among the trees were mentioned many times in describing the setting. While there were about 800 attendees at the Convention, there were 10,000 at the opening service, transported there by boat, train and automobiles. The 120 bishops processed through the path among the trees and sat on risers to the left of the altar. On the right was a choir of 250 singers from various churches. Large horn speakers carried the voices from the dais.

The headline on the report of the legislative action was titled *The General Convention at New Orleans Makes History*. Among actions on significant legislation was the decision to elect the Presiding Bishop rather than have it be the person who by right of seniority held the position. John Gardiner Murray became the first elected Presiding Bishop. The subject of divorce was discussed but the issue was to be reheard in 1928 at the Convention in Washington, D.C. The very timely subjects of world peace and Christian healing were also tabled for further discussion. The motion to give women membership in the House of Deputies was defeated (although some women served on the convention committee). Deaconesses (the official name of these habited women) were given more official status (specifics not given).

Legislation to curtail missionary work was refused and many photographs in the convention booklet showed posed groups of priests, deaconesses, women in dresses, heels, hats and gloves, all identified as missionaries. Very few were indigenous people. There were six missionary bishops to parts of the western United States.

Women's participation was still classified as auxiliary work to the Missionary Society. Over four hundred attended the Triennial of Woman's Auxiliary. They met in several locations. Their official gathering was held at Trinity Church at 7:30 in the morning. It is reported that 1,500 women attended which exceeds the church's seating capacity. The UTO Ingathering held in the evening at Audubon Park became an evening of increasing excitement as the tally kept increasing. The total giving was \$904,514. The Louisiana giving was \$14,048.61. The birthday thank offering was \$21,339.46 given to schools in Liberia.

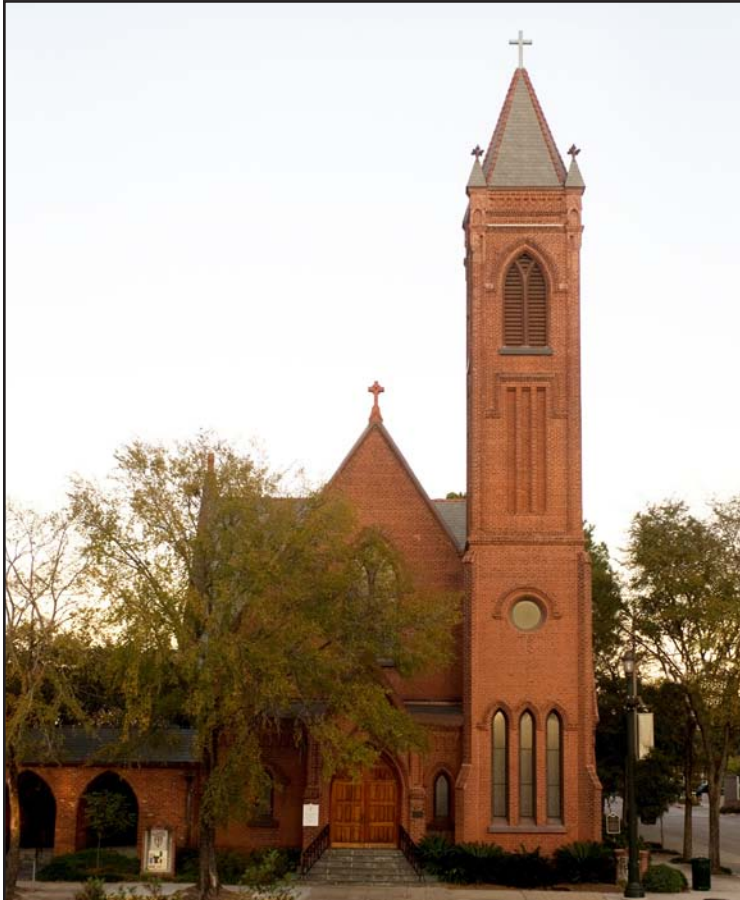
Excitement was created when Bishop Manning of New York rose on the floor of the House of Bishops to start an asking for funds to eliminate a six year indebtedness of the General Convention. He generated interest and dollars, eliminating over a million dollars of indebtedness and influencing the budgeting to include "deeper missionary interests".

The pastoral letter from the House of Bishops included concern about the following societal trends: racial conflict, European so-

cial disintegration, the United States' amassing of wealth without a sense of stewardship and obligation, lack of parental control and definite religious influence, the appalling growth of divorce and the advent of fuller freedom and self-expression.

The House of Bishops complimented the Diocese of Louisiana's contribution to the Convention by writing that "the standard of generous, self-sacrificing effort will remain classic in the annals of the General Convention". Bishop Sessums congratulated Mr. Kearny and all those responsible for the glowing comment by saying, "With just pride, I recall the most admirable hospitality of our church people, and many others in the entertainment of the Convention".

A Welcome from St. James



Parish Host Committee co-chairs Nancy Jo Poirrier and Alice Nelson, along with over one hundred parish volunteers, are eager to welcome you to the 175th convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana, hosted by St. James in Baton Rouge on Friday, March 2nd and Saturday, March 3rd.

The convention schedule will be published in the Spring 2012 edition of *Churchwork* and online at edola.org, but in the meantime, plan for the Friday afternoon registration followed by a plenary session, Evensong and a social event in the Heidelberg Ballroom of the historic Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center hotel, two blocks west of the church.

Saturday's schedule will begin with a continental breakfast provided by the St. James Place retirement community, celebration of the Holy Eucharist, committee meetings and a plenary session. A picnic lunch provided by the St. James Holy Grillers and the St. James Place retirement community will precede the afternoon session. Vendors and exhibitors will be in the Parish Hall parlor both Friday and Saturday.

Baton Rouge will also be host to the 102nd Annual American Bowling Congress Championships Tournament from February 11 through July 9, filling almost 1,000 hotel rooms each night. If you will be a delegate or convention guest from out of town, you are encouraged to make your arrangements as soon as possible!

The Convention Hosting Committee has reserved a limited number of rooms at the rate of \$129 per night at the Hilton Baton Rouge Capitol Center, 201 Lafayette Street in Baton Rouge

(two blocks west of St. James Church) for convention attendees. You may contact the hotel directly at 225.906.5715 to make reservations. The rooms are being held until February 3, 2012.

More information will become available at the diocesan and church websites: edola.org and stjamesbr.org.



175th Convention of the Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana

March 2nd and 3rd, 2012

St. James, Baton Rouge

photo by Jeannie Frey Rhodes

Trinity, Baton Rouge Calls New Rector

by Randi Ellis, Senior Warden of Trinity

On behalf of the Vestry of Trinity Episcopal Church of Baton Rouge, I am pleased to announce that The Rev'd R. Kevin Kelly has been called as the seventh rector of Trinity Episcopal Church.

Fr. Kelly is 44 years old and is married to Christine Kelly. They have three children: Jack (age 12), Sam (age 9), and Kate (age 6). Fr. Kelly has a Master of Divinity degree from Virginia Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1994. He currently serves as Rector of Trinity Church in Huntington, West Virginia. He previously served at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Atlanta, Georgia and St. Luke's, Hawkinsville, Virginia.

According to Fr. Kelly: "My work is first about bringing people to see how God is present in the totality of our lives, from the truly special to the mundane, and then about inviting them to participate in God's ongoing work in the world. Our vocation as Christians is to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation — of bringing together again those things that have been torn apart, of healing what is wounded or broken, of proclaiming both by what we say and by what we do that the Kingdom of God has come near to each of us."

Fr. Kelly and his family are planning to join our Trinity family on January 8, 2012. I am thankful to everyone who participated in this rewarding search, especially the members of the Search Committee: Bill Silvia, Chair; Jenny Hastings, Sherrill Lane, Tom Newman, Amy Shoemaker, Victor Stater, and Kelly Viator; as well as Canon Stevenson and Bishop Thompson. This was a team effort and God guided us all through every step. We are excited for the arrival of the Kellys and the future of our church.

Rejoice and give thanks for this is very good news.

St. Martin's School Names Headmaster

St. Martin's Episcopal School proudly announces the appointment of its ninth Head of School. Mrs. Merry P. Sorrells, a resident of Jefferson Parish for thirty years and an administrator with experience as Head of School, Director of Admission and Director of Advancement at independent schools in the Greater New Orleans area, will assume leadership of St. Martin's on July 1, 2012. She will be the first female Head in the school's sixty-five year history.

States Board of Trustees Chair The Rev. Fred Devall, "Thanks to the open and transparent search process that garnered important input from the school community, we knew the qualities we were looking for in the next leader of our school. On paper, Merry was immediately a strong candidate. Through the interview process, we recognized her strength of character, strong work ethic, zeal for strong academics, and the creative ability to help us tell our story to the wider community. For example, it was Merry who suggested that we consider entering into partnerships with local science and medical institutions to help our students formulate an understanding of what will be required of them for 21st century employment. In this way she was articulating our mission- to prepare students for college and for life. Further, Merry clearly has earned the respect of her peers, as evidenced by several letters of support to the Search Committee from other local Heads."

Mrs. Sorrells has a Masters degree in Educational Administration from the University of New Orleans and a B.A. in International Relations with an emphasis in foreign languages, international political science and environmental science from Principia College in Elsah, IL. She is currently working on

her Ph. D in Educational Leadership from the University of New Orleans; her dissertation will focus on 21st Century Education. In 2006, she participated in a National Association of Independent Schools/E.E. Ford Fellowship for Aspiring Heads of School.

Professionally, Mrs. Sorrells served as the Head of School at St. Paul's Episcopal School in New Orleans from June 2007 until June 2011. Under her leadership, St. Paul's position was re-established in a community significantly weakened by the impact of Hurricane Katrina. The school saw significant increases in enrollment and annual giving as well as the establishment of dynamic new programs including a sustainability curriculum, garden and outdoor education program, afterschool program and a media lab/AV program.



Story continued on next page.

Prior to St. Paul's she served at Isidore Newman School in New Orleans as Director of Admission (July 1998-June 2006) and Director of Advancement (July 2006-May 2007). She served as Associate Director of Admission at Newman (January 1997-June 1998) and was an active Substitute Teacher and Parent Volunteer there (1992-1997). She also served as an Upper School Advisor at Newman for eight years. Most recently, until her appointment as the next Head of St. Martin's, Mrs. Sorrells has served as Associate Head of Admission and Marketing at Trinity Episcopal School in New Orleans (July 2011-June 2012).

In her thirteen years as an administrator at local independent schools, Mrs. Sorrells has demonstrated a strong talent for building a dynamic and collaborative faculty and administration; marketing; strong communication, both internally and externally; program building; and enrollment growth. Her experience at two Episcopal Schools and her philosophy that learning from loving teachers in a faith-based environment gives today's children the strength of character and intellect which are necessary for success in today's complex world, make her the superior choice to lead St. Martin's into the future.

Mrs. Sorrells has a strong history of community involvement in the Greater New Orleans area, including service on the Boards of the Homecoming Center (a post-Katrina outreach organization at St. Paul's) and Breakthrough New Orleans at Isidore Newman School. She has also served as a Committee Member for the Jefferson Parish Educational Smart Summit.

Mrs. Sorrells has been married to her husband Kim Walter Sorrells for thirty two years, and together they raised four children and have one grandchild.

States Mrs. Sorrells, "Over the many years that I have lived in the New Orleans area I have been impressed with the strength of spirit and community expressed at St. Martin's. It will be an honor and a privilege to serve as the head of St. Martin's Episcopal School. I am excited about joining the community and stepping forward together into a successful future."

The selection process for the St. Martin's Head of School was an intentional, inclusive and thorough process that took place over the past fifteen months and included candidates from across the nation. The process was directed by Mr. Stephen Diccio, President of Educational Directions Incorporated.

The St. Martin's Episcopal School Board of Trustees wishes to express its sincere thanks and appreciation to Mr. DiCicco, the Search Committee and The Rev. Dr. Walter J. Baer, who has ably and commendably led the school as Interim Headmaster since May 2010. He will continue in this role until June 30, 2012 at which point he intends to resume his duties at St. Martin's as Middle School Chaplain.

Evangelism Without Angst

by the Rev'd Sharon Alexander



The Clergy and Congregational Development Program (CCDP) held its third meeting on November 19th at St. Michael's in Mandeville. The congregations participating in the CCDP (St. Mary's in Franklin, Christ Church in Slidell, St. Margaret's in Baton Rouge and St. Michael's in Mandeville) come together four times per year for workshops on various topics helpful for congregational development.

Each congregation has a recently ordained priest-in-charge and is participating in the program to help give the new priest hands on leadership experience with a congregation and also so that the congregations can benefit from workshops and presentations on topics related to congregational development. Topics so far have been "Making a Fresh Start" and Stewardship, with the topic in Mandeville being Evangelism.

The Rev'd Jay Angerer of All Saints in River Ridge led a discussion of Jesus' Great Commission in Matthew 28 to "make disciples of all nations." Most congregations want to grow, and each of us is called to share the Good News, but many have negative preconceptions about evangelism. The New Testament describes at least six different ways of doing evangelism, and each of us falls into one or more of these types according to our spiritual gifts, just as we each have personality types. Knocking on doors is typically not an effective way to do evangelism for Episcopalians. We tend to do better by discerning our spiritual gifts and employing them to connect with others in a way consistent with our gifts. For example, for some people evangelism may come most naturally from engaging in outreach work while letting others know that we are following Jesus' example and command to help those in need. For others evangelism may flow naturally out of gifts for hospitality.

The keys to successful evangelism are (1) a sound front door ministry in which everyone who enters the church feels comfortable and welcome, (2) a simple and effective website and (3) a "back door" ministry in which the congregation can determine why people leave the congregation. Fr. Jay emphasized that, as important as all these measures are, the single most important step is that evangelism, like all other ministries, begin in prayer.

The Desecration of St. Anna's: The Rest

by the Rev'd Bill Terry, rector of St. Anna's

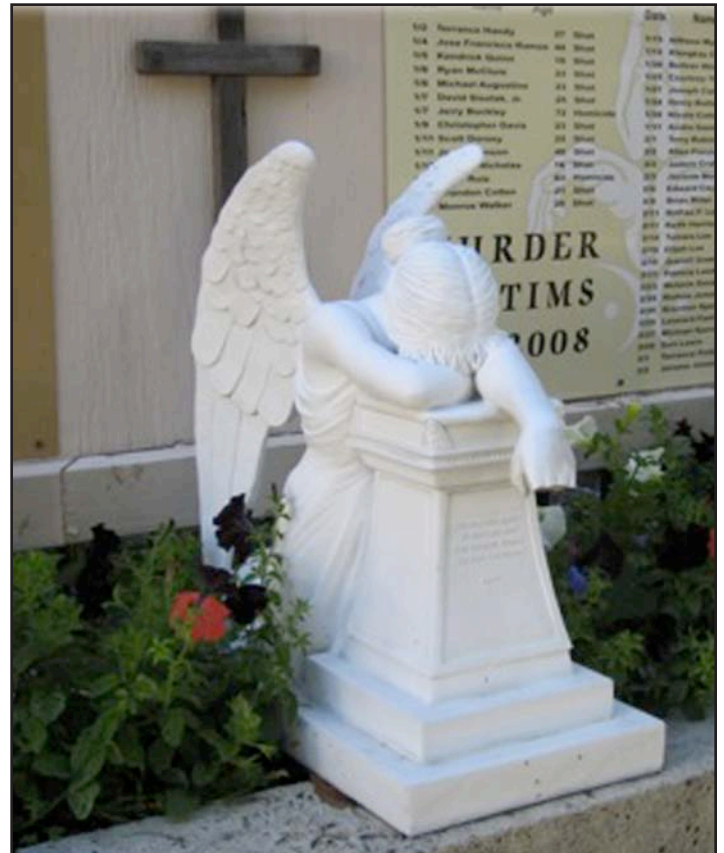
Is desecration too strong to say? It was only a few holy cards with swastikas, after all. It was only an inexpensive angel with four fingers missing and a symbol of hate marring her countenance. Why, within 24 hours the angel was cleaned and new holy cards ordered. So is desecration too strong a word?

As TV stations contacted the church regarding this act a passing thought played out, “a tempest in a teapot.” Yet when over a dozen police officers arrived during the day of discovery a new thought played out. This isn’t about what was damaged. It struck a much more central nerve. “Churches are supposed to be off limits for this kind of stuff!” the First District Commander said as police officers arrived and their anger began to show. Even then I remembered when St. Andrew’s was broken into several years ago and desecrated. Churches are supposed to be off limits to this kind of stuff. One reporter said that she was very disturbed because this was her neighborhood - how could this happen here? What was unfolding before my eyes was the visceral intuitive response that moved this from vandalism to desecration. The Holy was defiled and souls were touched in that singular act of hatred that reached deep into our hearts.

Then, after the weekend, the full disclosure of the experience of this singular act began to unfold. Rabbi Cohen of Temple Sinai called and asked to visit. He brought a contribution to our church to help with any repairs and to rebuild and improve the Victims Memorial in front of St. Anna's. We talked for about 20 minutes; perhaps some of the most holy 20 minutes in my life. I was reminded by the Rabbi that it was during the nights of November 9 and 10 in 1938 wherein cities throughout Germany and Austria indulged in a desecration of humanity now known as Kristallnacht. During those nights ancient synagogues with holy Torah were burned and sacked; the stores of Jews were ransacked and the breaking of glass windows birthed the name for those most unholy nights. By November 11, 1938 German and Austrian Jews were required by law to wear yellow stars with the word “Jude” inscribed thereon. This spiritual and historical realization was a game changer. It was desecration. It was a horrific act that will not be quantified by a dollar amount, but by the hate promoted.

It is Advent and we still remember and relive a swastika on a holy card of St. Francis in St. Anna's. Advent is perhaps different from Lent in that we anticipate Incarnation versus Resurrection, and we consider corporate sin versus personal sin. It is the ideal time to remember. In Dachau, a cold granite monument says, “Forgive, Never Forget.” Have we forgotten, or are we so accustomed to violence and bigotry that we would betray our faith and hope? Perhaps not.

Since that Tuesday a Rabbi has called to offer support, and Deacon Jay Albert from St. Paul's stopped by to offer help. A notice of the desecration has been picked up by four or five social clubs and circulated to hundreds in the LGBT community who are outraged; the Bishop of Massachusetts offered prayers; we were discussed in as much media as one can imagine; and we are the recipients of literally hundreds of prayers and sentiments expressing support for St. Anna's. And most importantly, these sentiments and prayers have galvanized differing and diverse communities to stand with the grace of Christ Jesus and say, “we will not forget; we will not succumb to the darkness because we are the light of the world through Christ's Gospel of love and dignity.” Louie Crew sent his blessing and suggested that this act of hatred is a gift. It may be — it has shown the stuff that we are made of and we will never forget. We stand as a people that will not tolerate hate but who seek, as imperfect as we may be, the Gospel of eternal and abundant love. It is Advent and we have experienced Corporate Compassion. The Incarnation is at hand.



Insight: Living With Purpose

by Chris Musil, Living With Purpose Fellow '11-'12, All Souls Episcopal Church & Community Center Volunteer Coordinator

Every tutoring day a young first grader greets me in either one of two ways: he either scowls at me and says something about how I am making him angry, or he gives me puppy eyes, takes my pinky finger and asks me if I can get him “out of here” because he got in trouble and wants to leave. One day he asked me if I could help him get peace into his life, to which I responded that I was trying to work that out for myself first. He is the youngest of three brothers, all of whom attend All Souls Tutoring Program, and although all are bright he is by far the most interesting yet also the most angry. I have no idea how to deal with him — if I ever sit down with him to get his homework done, it always takes nearly five minutes to actually get started because he is too busy giving me a small cold shoulder or harassing his peers at the table. The boy is always angry, it’s just a matter of how much. Perhaps I am not dealing with him properly, but to be honest I’ve just started this whole tutoring thing.

When I found out I had been accepted to the Living With Purpose program, I was more ecstatic than I had been for anything else in my life. I was told to look at the list of different mission placements and put them in order of most interested to least interested. I immediately put placements that required hands-on or physical labor on the top of the list and the ones I wasn’t too sure about at the bottom, All Souls being number five out of seven. A month later I was told I was placed at All Souls Episcopal Church and Community Center, which was a minor disappointment that was quickly diminished by the fact that I would be soon living in the greatest city I had ever been to. I did not know what was in store for me at All Souls but I told myself to make the best of it and work hard.

When I first mentioned to my bosses Lonell Wright and Sarah Miller that I was not too keen on tutoring because I had never done it, they laughed and said not to worry about it, which I took to mean “you’re not going to tutor, don’t worry”. This soon turned into “you’ll have to tutor at least twice a week” which I was okay with. Nowadays I am tutoring every Monday through Thursday, some days for just an hour and some days for all four hours. I am quickly learning many things about children that I never knew, and now I know why people say teachers are underpaid. I am quite sleepy when I get home every day, as are the rest of my wonderful roommates.

I consider my six other roommates to be the loves of my life. We do a lot of things together and share a lot of similarities, both of which create excellent chemistry amongst all of us. We do many things together - festivals, music shows, spiritual practices, adventures around the city. We meet every Sunday night and plan the upcoming week right after we do “feeling checks” to tell everyone how the week was and what we are looking forward to in the upcoming week. We have a “staples” list of grocery foods that we all need (sandwich materials, breakfast things, cheap pasta, etc.) and a calendar where we write up different events such as “Jessie’s Birthday!” or “Caroline comes home!”. For me at least, our Irish Channel house is my home because my heart is here. Whenever I am in the house alone, which is rare, I feel lost, distant and sad, but this can be easily cured by going outside and going somewhere.

I know my roommates and I are making a difference in the community and our different site placements, even if sometimes it doesn’t seem like we are. I am very blessed to be apart of this program and to be able to say “I love you” with out a doubt in my mind to all of my roommates. I don’t feel God’s presence in my life too often, but every day I sense Him a little bit, like He’s in the corner of my eye smiling at me. I like to also think He laughs with me when a student does something funny at All Souls Tutoring or cheers me on when I help a student understand their homework, but always from the corner of my eye.

The troublesome angry first grader from All Souls Tutoring Program is not so difficult when he’s dancing. The little boy loves to dance — every now and then I’ll look up to the front of the sanctuary where Tutoring occurs and see him cartwheeling across the floor and spinning on his heels. I think this is the only time the boy is at peace with himself, which makes me happy to see. It gives me hope for him, his brothers, and the rest of the students at All Souls Tutoring Program that they will all become good students and go on to do great things. Seeing him dance also brings about a bit of peace in my own life although I’m not sure why. On those days when I manage to catch that angry little boy dancing I go home less tired than I normally would.

Fr. Cage To Retire from St. Michael's

By Kathryn Johnson

We live in a day and age when most people's dreams seldom come true. Who of us can imagine having two successful careers in one lifetime? How about three, with the third one fulfilling a childhood dream and a dream of your parents as well? That is what happened to the Rev'd Stewart Bernard Cage, Jr.

Fr. Cage is retiring as priest from St. Michael and All Angels Episcopal Church where he has served as vicar since 2004. He will formerly retire on Saturday, December 31, 2011. Becoming a priest had always been a childhood dream of Cage's. Having been brought up in the Episcopal faith by his parents, Cage was one of the first acolytes to serve at St. Michael's beginning when he was a child of nine or ten years old. Serving as an acolyte for the ordination of the first black priest ordained in the Diocese of Louisiana, the Rev'd Sidney Baynes Parker, undoubtedly made a lasting impression on the young Cage. Perhaps Cage wanted to go into the priesthood right after graduation from high school. However, he enlisted in the United States Air Force instead where he completed a 26 year career.

After completing his military career, he worked in the Baton Rouge City Constable's office, retiring from that field of work in January 1999 to study for the priesthood. On his way to the priesthood Cage was ordained a deacon on September 29, 2000. While the journey from deacon to priest took about a year, the journey from acolyte to priest took almost a lifetime. True to his promise in 2001, when Cage said "God has enabled me to complete two careers, and I believe it is time to fulfill the work he has planned for me," Cage has done what he said he would do and has chosen to step down as priest at this time.

Cage holds the distinction of being the first black person from Baton Rouge and only the third black person from Louisiana to be ordained an Episcopal priest in the Diocese of Louisiana. The Rev'd Floyd Leonard Knox, who served as Priest-in-Charge at St. Michael's from 1997 to 1999 was the first known Louisiana-born black person to be ordained a priest in the Diocese of Louisiana. Knox is from North Louisiana.

Since becoming Vicar at St. Michael's, Cage has seen to it that the church has held steady to its mission of serving the community through outreach, fellowship and shared faith. He has preached the gospel of Jesus Christ to countless parishioners, serving two churches in Baton Rouge, St. Augustine and St. Michael's. He has administered a well-established day school at St. Michael's which continues to serve the Scotlandville community. He is assisted by six Lay Eucharistic Ministers, one of which is his younger brother, Edgar Cage; and a retired priest, Fr. Knox, who is called upon on special occasions.

St. Michael's is the third oldest Episcopal church in Baton Rouge and the only predominately black Episcopal congregation in the city. St. Michael's was formally recognized as a Mission on January 17, 1942.

Cage says one of his most rewarding experiences as a priest is baptizing some of his family members and officiating at the marriage of one of his daughters. It has been a special treat for him to serve in the church in which he grew up.

Cage is married to the former Diane Thomas and they have four children, Sandra, Stewart III, Chris and Tonya.

Inaugural ECW Get Away Retreat

by Janie Rainey

Have you longed for a day to do handwork or read a book? Would you enjoy sitting by a fire with a cup of hot chocolate? Join us for the first Episcopal Church Women Get Away Retreat — an opportunity to come together and enjoy handwork and fellowship. The event was originally conceived as a knitting retreat but we decided it should be a time to do whatever you want. This event is for all women — bring a friend if you'd like.

The retreat will be held at the Solomon Episcopal Conference Center, January 23rd and 24th, 2012.

Registration begins at 9:30 am on January 23rd. The cost is \$89 per person (double occupancy.) It includes: lodging, four meals, and a special treat on Monday evening.

Register online at solomoncenter.org or by calling 985.748.6634.

The event number is #E01496.

If you wish to learn to knit at the retreat, call Nancy Welford at 225.293.2521



A Snowball's Chance

Story and photos by Susan E. Nelson, St. Alban's Parishoner



With the myriad of clutter that dominates the modern-day college life, St. Alban's Chapel and Episcopal Student Center at LSU offers a simple lunch to students with some time to reflect on the simpler forces that can drive humanity.

"C.S. Lewis wanted us to think of Christianity as a snowball at its core," Chaplain Drew Rollins began his talk. "Some of you might know what I'm talking about when I say a snowball," he continued to somewhat knowing nods of the students, mostly from South Louisiana. Rollins went on to explain that C.S. Lewis wanted people to focus on the pure core of clean snow at the center of a snowball before it rolls down a hill to grow and be polluted by the leaves, sticks and dirt humans try to interject into Christianity.

The college environment has changed dramatically over the years. Assignments are no longer handed out in class, but posted to websites and professor pages. Interaction doesn't happen in the dorm lobby or at the Student Union, it happens over Tweets and text messages. Amid the calls to "inbox me" or "Facebook me," interaction with religion can also

take on a less human presence as the challenges of college life take over a student's semester.

For the over 100 students who gather for Lunch with C.S. Lewis every Wednesday, though, they can put down their smart-phones, unplug their iPods and listen to the thoughts of a great Christian scholar whose ideas seem to transcend the modern static. Rollins pulls his content from *Mere Christianity* during the Fall semester, a book he gives freely to any student for them to read and use to participate in the discussion.

There's a catch, though — the students have to come ask for the book. Rollins tells the group at each lunch that the books are freely available, but he wants them to invest in their ownership by making the interaction effort to ask for the book, rather than anonymously taking them from a pile on a table. Rollins does this to get to know each of the students personally and to give them a sense of belonging to the Episcopal Student Center, regardless of their religious beliefs.

At the lunch, provided by volunteers and through donation appeals that have netted the support of close to 30 churches and individuals, Rollins takes the time to sit with the students and talk with them about their college life. Often times his wife Jeanie joins the lunches with their younger children who are not in school, giving the students the connection to a family life for which many may be homesick. A small army of St. Alban's non-student parishioners arrives each Wednesday to ensure the lunch distribution goes smoothly and to provide clean up after the students leave.

In just over an hour each week, the students are fed and given their own clean snowball for reflection, free from modern-day technological noise. The reaction of the students is evident. When Rollins described the conditions under which C.S. Lewis made his *Mere Christianity* talks on the radio in England during World War II, the students could be seen equating the message to focusing on the basis of Christianity in their own hectic college lives of today.

Rollins welcomes support for Lunch with C.S. Lewis from any church or individual in the Diocese, and can be reached at LSUChaplain@stalban.org for more information on how to support this outreach to the LSU student community.



Capital Punishment in Louisiana

by Deacon Elaine Clements

The Rev'd William Barnwell, other Episcopalians and I are founding members of a newly formed organization, Louisiana Coalition Against the Death Penalty, which meets monthly in New Orleans to develop strategies for legislative action to abolish capital punishment and for educating the public about the issue as well as reaching out to the families of the murdered.

With the help of Sister Helen Prejean's organization which advocates for a moratorium on the imposition of capital punishment as well as for victims' rights, Loyola University's Jesuit Social Research Institute and their Catholics Against the Death Penalty, and the Louisiana Capital Appeals Project, the group began early in 2010 and is composed of staffers from the Capital Appeals Project, the Innocence Project, a broad range of denominations, and former death row inmates. The group meets monthly at the home of Fr. Barnwell in Uptown New Orleans.

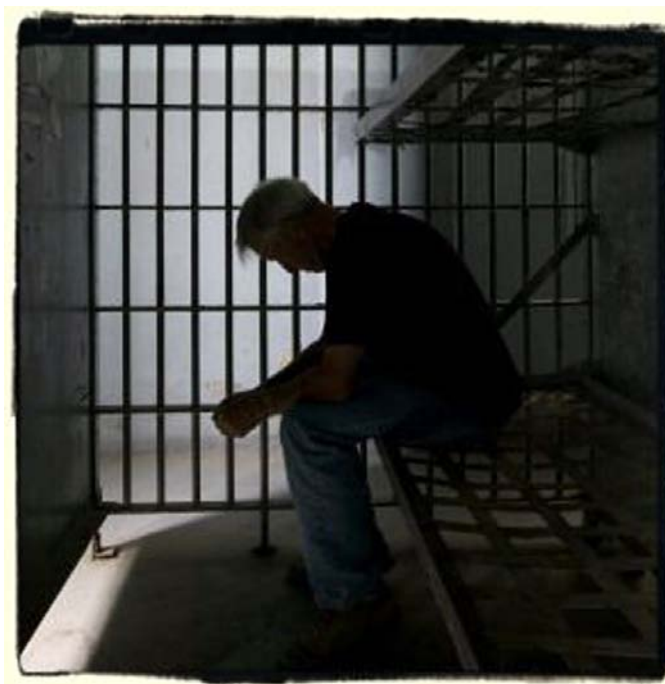
The issue of capital punishment is a divisive one, but proponents of abolition come from a broad spectrum of backgrounds, both economically and politically. They cite the expense of prosecuting capital cases as one reason to consider abolition. Attorney General of Louisiana Buddy Caldwell has estimated that it costs ten times as much to prosecute a death penalty case at trial and that is without the huge costs

associated with the appellate process, confinement and the execution itself.¹ The fact that the death penalty is not a deterrent to murder but rather tends to have the opposite effect (states with the highest death penalty rate also have the highest rate of violent crime) is yet another factor in the broad support for abolition. Others note that both the conviction and the application of the death penalty is deeply flawed and highly prone to error. With so many cases being overturned on new evidence, there is reason to suspect that countless numbers have been put to death erroneously by the State, so much so that many states are abolishing the death penalty on that basis alone.

Louisiana has executed 28 people since the death penalty was re-established in 1976, making it one of the states most likely to impose the penalty. Conversely, four states in four years have abolished the death penalty both for financial reasons and because of concerns about the impartiality of the process, noting that most capital cases involve an African American defendant accused of murdering a white person. Studies have shown that in some places the odds of a death sentence are 97 percent higher for those who kill whites than for those who kill African Americans.²

If we think of justice as simply punishment, then mercy and justice are often opposites. However, if we think of justice as restoring right relationship, then mercy is often the best way, allowing God's action to restore, heal and make whole.

If you are interested in having a presentation on capital punishment abolition and/or in attending the monthly meetings of this group, please contact me at deaconelaine@gmail.com for the date and location of the next meeting.



¹<http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org/louisiana-prosecutors-deeply-concerned-about-costs-death-penalty>

² *Just South Quarterly*, a publication of the Jesuit Social Research Institute, College of Social Sciences, Loyola University of New Orleans, Fall, 2011.

UPCOMING YOUTH EVENTS

- January 13th through 15th: Senior High Youth Rally
- February 3rd through 5th: Happening
- March 16th through 18th: Junior High Youth Rally

Changing Their Names

By Deacon Elizabeth Becker

It's not rocket science, but to women who must rebuild their lives after prison, certain basic living skills may seem challenging. An eight-week class, offered to incarcerated women at the Ascension Parish Jail by Deacon Elizabeth Becker and Pati Rudisel of the Episcopal Church of the Holy Spirit (Baton Rouge), provides them with a few tools for making a successful return to their communities. The class was first offered to 12 women in the Spring of 2011, but it proved so popular that its size increased to 20 for the fall session, which recently ended on December 7th.

Entitled "Changing Your Name," the class addresses from the Christian perspective such practical topics as self-image, goal setting, constructive anger management, family and community relationships, communication, employment, and substance abuse.

"These women need to make fundamental changes in their values, habits, relationships, and choices, because their old ways have failed miserably. But probably the most important change needed is in their self-image," says Becker. "They feel unworthy and powerless, like outcasts. We want to help them see themselves as unique creations of the God who loves them and has wonderful plans for their lives—plans that can still be realized in spite of the wrong choices and mistakes they've made."

From the beginning, the Holy Spirit women stress their kinship with the women in the class, sharing their own day-to-day struggles. "Our problems may have been different, but we've also had obstacles to overcome and we've had to learn the same life lessons," Rudisel tells them.

As a first step in getting to know the participants and showing them that their lives mattered, Rudisel has developed a survey that asks each woman questions about herself and

her family, as well as her favorite color, food, music, and candy. She uses these forms to design special nametags containing symbols reflecting their preferences and interests. The women are especially touched when Rudisel brings each of them her favorite candy.

During class sessions, the women are invited to share their fears and hopes and to reexamine their lives and relationships in terms of God's purposes for them. Realistic goal-setting is emphasized. Journal-keeping is encouraged as an effective tool for identifying feelings and controlling inappropriate responses. The women also receive practical guidance for their lives after release — such as learning how to deal with questions about their incarceration at job interviews and avoiding the traps that can lure them back into substance abuse.

Because a parish prison often serves as a holding facility while offenders await court hearings, a number of the women in the Spring class left before the class ended. But Becker and Rudisel felt that they must be doing something right when one young woman due to be sent home asked if she could come back to the jail to finish out the class. Another participant told the group that the most valuable element of the class for her was being treated with respect, like a human being. Undoubtedly, however, the most exciting moment of the Spring class was during the last session, when the group prayed for one of the women who chose to give her life to Christ.

"The recidivism rate in Louisiana is high, but if this class can help even just a few of these women draw closer to God and use what they learn to stay out of jail, we'll consider it a success," says Becker.



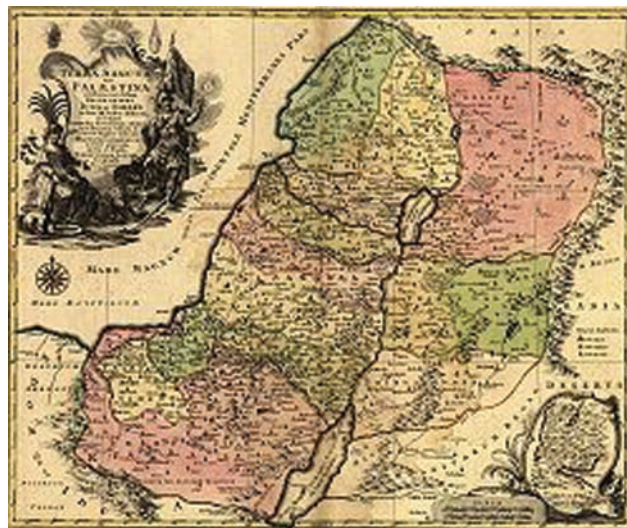
The Rev'd Joe Hermerding blesses a mastiff on the Feast of St. Francis in October at St. Luke's Day School in Baton Rouge.

Journey To The Holy Land

Bishop Thompson hopes to host a very special Journey to the Holy Land from October 4th through 17th, 2012. Dean David duPlantier of Christ Church Cathedral will be coordinating the arrangements and would like to hear from you if you may be interested in participating.

A maximum of 40 persons can participate, and the full itinerary and pricing should be finalized soon.

If you would like to be kept informed as this information becomes available, please send your full contact information to Mrs. Carol Butcher at carolbutcher@cccnola.org



World's AIDS Day in Baton Rouge

by the Rev'd Mary Ann Garrett

The Honorable Kip Holden, mayor of Baton Rouge, offered words of challenge and hope during a United Methodist sponsored World AIDS Day event December 1st.

"AIDS is the Goliath, but we are the Davids that will slay this devastating disease," said Holden during a press conference held prior to an ecumenical service at the Baton Rouge Gallery in City Park.

Organized by the Louisiana Annual Conference Committee on Global Health, the event was one of four World AIDS Day events held statewide. Other services took place in Lake Charles, New Orleans and Shreveport.

Jeff Stafford, event coordinator and a member of First United Methodist Church in Baton Rouge, addressed a somber crowd during the service held outside the art gallery.

"Since the beginning of the AIDS epidemic, more than 30 million people have died from AIDS around the world. There are 33.3 million people living with the HIV infection--over half of them are women, and more than two million are children under the age of 15," said Stafford.

Most surprising to many of those in attendance were some alarming statistics about the disease and the city of Baton Rouge.

"We have the second-highest number of HIV/AIDS cases among American cities. More than 3,000 people have died of AIDS in Baton Rouge since these statistics were gathered," he added.

"But HIV/AIDS is much more than a statistic, Stafford pointed out. "We are deluged with percentages, statistics, numbers and facts, but do we see the human faces behind these numbers? Do we see the fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, wives, husbands and children who are sick and who are living with HIV/AIDS?"

Rev'd Juan Huertas, pastor of St. John UMC in Baton Rouge, urged those gathered to have "hope for the improbable, hope for the impossible."

"We gather here because we are fully aware that we are being called to make this reality possible,



that we are being empowered as people of faith to make this reality possible, that God's own power and strength will guide us out of exile into the place of promise. That it begins with us . . . all of us agents of 'making the way,'" said Rev. Huertas.

Rabbi Thomas Gardner with Beth Shalom Synagogue reminded the crowd that hope is central in the fight against AIDS. "Remember that the God who was with us throughout the trials found in the Scriptures is still with us today."

Urging participants to "pray for awareness," the Rev'd Mary Ann Garrett with St. James, Baton Rouge hoped for "unity of our faith communities, that we may work together for the care of and the dignity of those affected by HIV/AIDS, and that we might replace ignorance with education."

"Encourage our resolve to say, 'Enough is enough,'" added the Rev'd Garrett.

Prior to the 9:30 a.m. press conference, posters designed by graphic design students from Baton Rouge Community College were on display in the gallery. Using HIV/AIDS as the central theme, the posters used dramatic and sometimes shocking images to bring awareness to the devastation of the disease. One design featured a man wearing a ball and chain, representing the imprisoning affect of living with HIV/AIDS. During the press conference, Mayor Kip Holden reminded the crowd that those living with the burden of AIDS are "no different than you and I."

"They are us. We are them. We are in this together," said Holden, who affirmed that government representatives are committed at a local and statewide level to continue fighting the disease and to raise levels of awareness.

The mayor firmly stated that the best weapon in the fight against AIDS is "testing, testing, testing." "Encourage others to get tested for the disease. Set the example and get tested, yourself."

Stressing the importance of the involvement of the faith community in the fight against AIDS, Holden encouraged the crowd, "Don't just get on your knees, stand up and do everything you can to educate and elevate awareness."

At the end of the service, the Rev'd Susie Thomas, associate pastor at First UMC in Baton Rouge, invited the crowd to place pebbles in a basket in remembrance of loved ones who have died due to complications with AIDS. Several participants wept openly as they brought their pebble to the central table.

Rev'd Thomas prayed, "As we place these stones together on this table, help us to remember and to speak aloud the name of one we know who was lost to AIDS. As our voices speak these precious names, and as our hands place these stones together, one by one, help us to hold our friends in holy memory, and give us hope and courage to envision a community where HIV/AIDS is no more."

CHURCHWORK SCHEDULE: 2012

SPRING ISSUE

DEADLINE JANUARY 27TH
MAILS FIRST WEEK IN MARCH

SUMMER ISSUE

DEADLINE FRIDAY, APRIL 27TH
MAILS FIRST WEEK OF JUNE

FALL ISSUE

DEADLINE FRIDAY, JULY 27TH
MAILS FIRST WEEK OF SEPTEMBER

WINTER ISSUE

DEADLINE OCTOBER 26TH
MAILS FIRST WEEK OF DECEMBER

Please see inside cover for submission requirements.



This year, the Red Thread Promise partnered with Acción Esperanza / Partnership for Hope to provide several people with All Terrain Wheelchairs. These rugged chairs can more easily navigate the dirt roads and paths in Haiti and Nicaragua.

Learn more at redthreadpromise.org.

St. Martin's to Host the Rev'd Barbara Crafton in January

You are invited to hear Barbara Crafton, Episcopal priest and author, at St. Martin's Church, January 14 and 15, 2012. Crafton will hold a one day seminar on Saturday, January 14 and preach at all services on Sunday, January 15. The Rev'd Crafton is a gifted speaker and will speak on, as she puts it, "offering reasonable encouragement for the long haul in life."

Barbara Cawthorne Crafton heads The Geranium Farm an institute for the promotion of spiritual growth. The Farm publishes her Almost-Daily eMo, a meditation read online by tens of thousands worldwide via email or at the website. She has served a number of churches, including historic Trinity Church, Wall Street, St. John's-in-the-Village in Greenwich Village, and St. Clement's in Manhattan's theatre district. She was a maritime chaplain on the New York waterfront, and served as a chaplain at Ground Zero after the attack on the World Trade Center; most recently, she served St. James, the American church in Florence, Italy. A spiritual director, Crafton leads retreats and teaches throughout the United States and abroad.

Her many works include books of essays (*The Sewing Room, Yes! We'll Gather at*



the River, Some Things You Just Have to Live With), books of daily meditations (*Let Us Bless the Lord* (Vols 1-4), *Meditations on the Psalms*, *Finding Time for Serenity*, and several others; a book of poetry (*Blessed Paradoxes*), a book about the current wars in Iraq and Afghanistan in the aftermath of the World Trade Center bombing (*Mass in Time of War*) and, most recently, a book about how people of faith experience depression (*Jesus*

Wept: When Faith and Depression Meet).

No cost for the seminar, except for a \$10 lunch. Pre-register for the seminar and lunch at craftonseminar@yahoo.com.

Nursery for ages 3 years and under, begins at 9:15 a.m. and concludes after the 10:00 a.m. service. Sunday School for children ages 4 and older begins in the classrooms at 9:30 a.m. At 10:10 a.m., children go to "Children's Chapel". Children rejoin their parents in the church about 10:40 a.m.

Crafton's seminar and preaching will take place at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 2216 Metairie Road, Metairie, LA 70001, between Causeway and Bonnal Boulevard.

For more information, phone: 504-835-7357 or e-mail: craftonseminar@yahoo.com.

To get to know Barbara, visit her website, geraniumfarm.org, or subscribe to her email meditation, the Almost-Daily eMo, by visiting her website, clicking on Subscriptions and filling in the requested information.

Deacons Meet to Share and Learn



By Archdeacon Priscilla Maumus

The deacons of The Episcopal Diocese of Louisiana met in the summer at the Solomon Episcopal Conference Center for their annual conference. They heard from Bishop Thompson his vision of the diaconate, shared insights on the Gospel and deacons' work and heard a presentation from P. Joyce Hardy, outgoing President of the Association of Episcopal Deacons (formerly the North American Association for the Diaconate) about trends in deacon formation and deployment.

They also heard from Denise Graves, New Orleans organizer for the Micah Group, the Louisiana affiliate of People Involved in Community Organizing (PICO) about the steps involved in community organizing in churches and about some of the significant accomplishments of churches working with Micah in the New Orleans area.

The group honored Deacons Maggie Dawson, Charles deGravelles, Michael Hackett, and Ormonde Plater for their contributions to the deacon community.

Partners In Mission: Lighting A New Future

Information and photos provided by Adam Pervez

El Camino a la Superacion is an indigenous Mayan artisan cooperative in Copan Ruinas. It was started by Deborah Matherne, a Louisiana-native, as a way to help the local community pool its resources and succeed together. And now it has taken a firm step into the future.

Many of the member communities are not connected to the electricity grid. They live off of car batteries for basic electrical infrastructure such as lighting and charging cell phones. Currently, recharging their battery necessitates an arduous, two-hour trek up and down mountains to Copan. It can take a day and it's exhausting work.

Deborah brought a solar panel kit from the U.S. for her latest trip to Honduras. As luck would have it, Adam Pervez, a modern-day journeyman traveling the world trying to leave each place a bit better than he found it, was looking for a volunteer opportunity in Honduras. Deborah contacted him as he also happens to be an electrical engineer.



Together, the two designed a platform, affixed the solar panels to the roof of her studio in Copan Ruinas, and harnessed the power of the sun to charge her own car battery.

"This is so wonderful," said Deborah as the supplied lights lit up and the system was proven to work.

Deborah plans to continue testing the system another month before handing the setup over to one of the nearby aldeas. Adam trained the aleada leaders so they will be ready to install the panels on their church in December. They plan to provide cell phones and flashlight charging during the day, and perhaps they'll offer car battery charging as well to minimize trips up and down the mountain with the heavy batteries on villagers backs.

The solar panel kits are part of Deborah's larger initiative of improving the quality of life for the cooperative members and their families.

**From top to bottom:
The entrance to El Camino a la Superacion;**

Deborah and Adam see the light;

Training the aldea leaders



Youth Presence at General Convention

From the Office of Public Affairs of The Episcopal Church

Are you an Episcopal youth, or know one who would like to learn about the governance of the church while providing a needed service? Then consider the Episcopal Youth Presence at General Convention 2012.

Eighteen positions, representing two from each Province of the Episcopal Church, are opened to youth to participate in the 77th General Convention, scheduled for July 2012 in Indianapolis, Indiana July 5 to July 12.

Bronwyn Clark Skov, Episcopal Church Officer for Youth Ministries, addressed both the importance and the honor of these positions. "The General Convention Official Youth Presence was established by an initial resolution in 1982," she explained. "The Official Youth Presence members have seat and voice on the floor of the House of Deputies during the legislative sessions and that is an exciting prospect for the youth of our church."

Process

Interested youth may apply or be nominated by an adult. The Provincial Youth Ministry Coordinators will be contacting adults with follow-up questions about the potential applicants.

Eligibility

To be eligible for one of the 18 positions, the youth must:

- be an Episcopalian active in his/her faith community
- be at least 16 years old but not more than 19 years old at the time of General Convention in July 2012
- be enrolled in high school during the 2011/2012 academic year
- have permission to travel to and from the meetings and General Convention on his/her own
- be able to attend training from April 12 to April 15 in Indianapolis
- be able to be present at General Convention 2012 in Indianapolis from Thursday, July 5 to Thursday, July 12.

Travel, lodging and meal expenses are covered. For more information, nomination forms and applications, please visit <http://episcopoyouth.blogspot.com>. Please contact Skov at bskov@episcopalchurch.org with any questions.

Upcoming Events at SECC

January 6-8: Women's Recovery Retreat

Join us for reflection and lively discussion. We will have Morning Prayer, Compline, 2 combined twelve step meetings, Taize Service, Spiritual Direction, and Holy Eucharist.

We will also have personal time to reflect, visit, rest and enjoy the grounds. January is a good time, especially for women, to do something for themselves. Christmas can be exhausting with jobs, spouses, children, presents, family dinners, etc. This weekend is a great gift to ask for or give yourself as a Christmas present.

Other events include:

- January 23rd: ECW Overnight
- January 31: Clergy Retreat
- March 8th: Cursillo
- June 20th: ECW Board Overnight





Clockwise: The Rev'd Canon E. Mark Stevenson, the Rev'd Karen Gay, the Rev'd Flip Bushey, Martha Tennison, the Rev'd Dick Almos, Bishop Thompson, the Rev'd Paul Bailey, the Rev'd Harry Jenkins, and the Rev'd Louis Ogle surround the Rev'd Nelson Tennison (center) in a celebration of new ministry at **St. Matthew's, Bogalusa**;
The Rev'd Harry Jenkins, his wife Gina and their children at his ordination at **Christ Church, Slidell**;
The Rev'd Cal Lane and his wife Denise at his ordination at **St. Mary's, Franklin**; **The Rev'd Patrick Edwards**, his wife Deborah and their children at his ordination at **St. Margaret's, Baton Rouge**.

ECS Gives Thanks for the Rebuild Program

Nearly six years, 13,000 volunteers, 75+ rebuilt houses, 900+ gutting projects, and almost \$14.5 million in impact later, the ECSLA Rebuild Program is wrapping up its mission of helping to restore the homes and lives of those still displaced by Hurricane Katrina. By focusing on the most vulnerable homeowners — the elderly, the physically or mentally disabled, those who were victims of contractor fraud or battling illness — this ministry has sought to remain faithful to Jesus' mandate to serve 'the least of these.'

Countless volunteers have testified to the transformative impact of the Rebuild Program in their own lives, from young adults who choose new, more service-oriented career paths after serving as a 'crew chief' intern, to mission teams who report that their time with ECSLA inspired them to start new ministries back home. Indeed, one of the most powerful impacts of the Rebuild Program has been its embodiment of solidarity between the people of Louisiana with churches, dioceses, schools and caring citizens from across the country and around the world.

The Diocese of Louisiana has been truly blessed by their generosity of spirit, time, effort and resources. As we mark the conclusion of this work with a series of house blessings, ECSLA will be giving thanks for God doing more through us than we could hope or imagine!

At right: Building Trades and Building Construction students from Alfred State College of New York returned for a second year to partner with ECSLA. For six weeks this fall, they used the skills acquired in their first year of study to rebuild homes. ECSLA is very grateful for this partnership. With their help, the last houses in the ECSLA Rebuild Program were completed.



Cresting Stability in Turbulent Times

When economic times are hard, those who live on the margins have an especially tough time. For the past two years, ECSLA Case Manager Rashonda Bell has steadily helped over 110 families to find their footing and make a better, more stable life for themselves.

Through the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP), ECSLA has been able to help people find or maintain decent, affordable apartments and to find new sources of income. While financial assistance has been a key component of the HPRP program, giving people time to get back on their feet, the support, encouragement and guidance of the case manager has been just as essential.

Many out-of-work job seekers, for example, battle depression as they face repeated rejections in a difficult job market; the case manager is able to help them focus on positive gains, and think creatively about their gifts and skills. In other cases, the case manager was able to help clients make better use of their own support systems, for example helping a single mother of a teenage son to work effectively with the school counselor and teachers to get his behavior back on track while the family went through difficult times.

Says one person served, "By the time I got the services here, I was really at the end of everything. I really didn't know what I was going to do and where I was going to go. Do I pay the light bill or do I buy food? That was really scary." She goes on to say that the way she was treated by ECSLA was "far more paramount than any money, because sometimes people tend to forget that you are still human when you have no money. A lack of money is a condition, it's not the sum of the person. And the one thing I have said about this program is that they have been just top-notch in their respect for a person's humanity and keeping a person on the road toward being autonomous."

As the HPRP program winds down, we wish the families served by this program blessings on their continued journeys to self-sufficiency.

Case Management Program Expands

ECSLA has been awarded a grant to provide case management support to people in the fishing industry in Terrebonne and St. Mary Parishes. Under this program, we will work with 110 families to develop a long-term recovery plan from the oil spill, strengthen their household sustainability, and meet emergency needs. Funding for this program is provided through a grant from the Baton Rouge Area Foundation to Catholic Charities.

ECSLA case managers will be stationed at St. Mary's, Franklin, and St. Andrew's, Bayou du Large.



This year, ECSLA partnered with Bayou Grace to bring a series of community dinners to the towns of Chauvin, Montegut, Dulac, and in the last few months, Smithridge. This partnership with Bayou Grace has allowed ECSLA to support stronger, more resilient communities in lower Terrebonne Parish suffering from the aftereffects of the BP oil spill. Through the community dinners, ECSLA served over 1,000 people providing spiritual care and presenting educational programs. Children's activities have been incorporated into the dinners thanks to a partnership with TCTC, Young Audiences, Deacon Charmainne Kathmann and parishioners from St. John's, Kenner.

[Photos courtesy of Bayou Grace]

Easy as ABCD

ECSLA recently organized a series of trainings around the Diocese on Asset-Based Community Development. Says participant Jeanne Voorhees of Grace Memorial in Hammond, "The training provided a big-picture view of the community development process. It helped us to see with new eyes the broader community that we seek to serve and the resources available to us. We were encouraged to involve the people we hope to serve when determining the needs to be addressed by our ministries. The training would be especially helpful for a congregation beginning a new phase of local ministry, or a group that is assessing their existing outreach ministries."

ecscla.org

Jericho Road Helps Bring Clean Energy to Faubourg Delassize

Jericho Road worked to bring the benefits of Green Light New Orleans to Faubourg Delassize in October. Green Light New Orleans invests energy in people and assists New Orleans residents face to face, one household at a time. Their volunteers install free energy efficient light bulbs to demonstrate that a mass movement of individual actions creates a significant impact on an environment and community. They aim to connect

New Orleans residents to relevant, local opportunities and encourage individual actions so that everyone can benefit from a vibrant, resilient, and sustainable community.

On October 22nd, Green Light New Orleans' volunteers installed 315 Compact Fluorescent light bulbs in 14 Faubourg Delassize homes in Central City. Homeowners signed up in advance for this opportunity. Over the 10,000 hours of

lifetime that the light bulbs installed will provide, the Faubourg Lafayette community will be saving 124,110 kilowatt hours in electricity, \$14,490 in utility bills and will be reducing New Orleans' carbon footprint by 140,805 pounds of carbon dioxide.

This is just another way resident leadership is making a difference in the community of Central City! Check out Green Light at greenlightneworleans.org.

Sold Homes Means New Homeowners!

Jericho Road is so excited to announce the sale of four newly constructed homes in November! We are even more excited to get to know the new homeowners!

Three of the homes sold are part of a larger development called Saratoga Square (<http://www.jerichohousing.org/worksite/otherworksites.php>) on Martin Luther King Blvd. in the Faubourg Lafayette neighborhood of Central City.

These houses are the only two story houses built by Jericho Road thus far. They all meet criteria to be labeled Energy Star homes and Jericho Road was able to access funds from the Neighborhood Stabilization Program to help build them.



Each house is approximately 1500 square feet, 3 bedrooms, 2.5 baths, living and dining areas. All three have deep front porches and a balcony on the second floor. And, of course, all of our homes are built with energy efficiency, universal design and traditional New Orleans architecture in mind.

Jericho Road is Moving!

In December, Jericho Road offices are relocating from the Episcopal Urban Ministry Center to the second floor of Christ Church Cathedral.

Come by and see us!!

Our new physical AND mailing address is 2919 St. Charles Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70115. You can still find us at the same phone number, 504.895.6763, and at jerichohousing.org.



JERICO ROAD
EPISCOPAL HOUSING INITIATIVE

Saratoga Street Fruit Tree Orchard invites you to

Adopt a Tree

... and help Nourish
the Roots for a
Sustainable Community!



Last year on November 17th, after months of online voting, the Communities Take Root program – a 32-fruit-tree orchard – officially became part of our community.

How can I adopt?

Help us celebrate our one-year anniversary by giving a \$200 gift to adopt a tree for one year.

Adopters Receive:

- Featured name on our big, green, beautiful map.
- An adoption certificate and a special surprise.
- The joy in knowing your tree will *grow!*

What will my gift do?

It will help us to buy fertilizer, tools, supplies, and everything else in-between to make our baby trees grow big and tall, and to welcome our community with activities, events, and workshops. You can be a part of making our orchard grow *big, green, and beautiful!*



Wanna Adopt?

Please email your donation request to Holly Heine at hollyheine@jerichohousing.org or call (504) 895-6763.

www.jerichohousing.org

Happy New Year!