

COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS

April 2006



A communication tool for the Deacon community of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lansing

On-Going Formation

Fr. Robert Rivers, CSP, will present “From Maintenance to Mission: Evangelization and the Revitalization of the Parish” at St. Agnes Parish in Fowlerville, May 12, 2006 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Fr. Rivers has been the Director of Diocesan and Parish Services, Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association since 1994. With 25 years of pastoral experience, he functions as a consultant to parishes in the area of evangelization, giving workshops, missions, retreats to parishes and dioceses and as a consultant in evangelization. He has written a book of the same title as the program and numerous articles in national publications.

For more information, contact the Office of Deacons at 517-342-2510. Cost of the day, including lunch, is \$25.

Blues and Jazz for Parkinson's

Benefit concert for Deacon Candidate Tony “Nino” Mammina - Holy Trinity, Ypsilanti
Hosted by Martin Bandyke, this will be a family friendly musical event featuring a slate of national and local performers including: Peter Madcat Ruth, Sherry Kane, Jenna Mammina, Muruga & Global Village, Al Goldberg, Chris Benjay, Like Water Drum and Dance, Judd Boyer & others. Proceeds will go to the Parkinson's Education & Support Group of Washtenaw County to assist Tony with medical costs associated with Deep Brain Stimulation surgery scheduled for May 31 at the University of Michigan Hospital.



The concert will be held Sunday, May 21, from 2 pm-10 pm at the Ypsilanti Moose Club, 5506 Stony Creek, Ypsilanti, 48197. Tickets are \$15, kids free. Please come and join in this wonderful event for great music, dancing, food, raffles and fun. For tickets and information contact peterthomason@acn.net or 734-482-2438. This is a “Hope for our Families” production.



Newsletter on-line at: <http://parishesonline.com/CommunityCommunications>

Lansing Deacons on-line at: <http://parishesonline.com/LansingDeacons>

Zenit News

Apostles Proclaim Christ, Not an Idea, Says Pope

from Zenit News Service

The first apostles, like today's, were not heralds of an idea but rather witnesses of Christ before the world, says Benedict XVI.

The Pope delivered that message in his second general audience address, March 22, dedicated to explain the relationship between Jesus and the Church. The Holy Father focused on Jesus' call to the Twelve Apostle's.

In particular, the Pope recalled the dialogue recounted by John the Evangelist on the banks of the Jordan, when John the Baptizer presented Jesus as the Lamb of God.

To the question: "What do you seek?" the future apostles replied with another question: "Rabbi - which means Teacher - 'where are you staying?'" Jesus replied "Come and See."

"Thus, the apostles' adventure began as a gathering of persons who open to one another reciprocally. A direct knowledge of the Teacher began for the disciples," Benedict XVI explained.

They saw were he lived and began to know him. They would not have to be heralds of an idea, but witnesses of a person," he added.

"Before being sent to evangelize, they would have to 'be' (emphasis added) with Jesus, establishing a personal relationship with him." the Pope continued.

Therefore, "evangelization is no more than a proclamation of what has been experienced and an invitation to enter into the mystery of communion with Christ," added the Holy Father. "An apostle is someone who is sent, but even before that he is an 'expert' on Jesus."

After his passion and resurrection, Christ "would send the apostles 'into all the world,' and 'to all nations,' 'and to the end of earth,'" indicated the Pope.

"And this mission continues," he said. "The Lord's commandment always continues to gather the nations in the unity of his love.

"This is our hope and this is also our commandment to contribute to that universality, to this true unity in the richness of cultures, in communion with our true Lord Jesus Christ."

Entering Nightfall

By Tom Franklin

In the Summer, one must listen for nightfall's arrival as it glides into the meadow, riding on the back of a firefly.

If you wish to know when Autumn's nightfall is upon you, listen for its sigh in the falling leaves.

To detect nightfall in the Winter, one must have a keen sense of hearing - night's falling is quieter than the sound of a snowflake coming to rest on a twig, but a bit louder than the blink of the evening's first star-twinkle.

To smell nightfall in early Spring, one must smell the sounds of Nature's birthing new life, as the warming earth is overturned, grain by grain, when spring's fresh grass awakens.

But, to enter into nightfall as Easter's season dawns, one must become alert in the dark and be still, feeling the silent breeze stir amongst us as the prophets gather from the four winds to tell us our stories once again. And then, in the dark, one must listen for the fall of linens and the sounds of ineffable light.

The Power of “To Be”

by *Tony Mamma*, 2nd year Candidate

The nursing home I visit is a ‘nice’ facility, as nice as long term care facilities can be. They have an attentive staff, good maintenance department, it doesn’t smell of urine; but it ‘reeks’ of loneliness, heartbreak and impending death. As one walks through the common area, one tries to smile and have a word for those that can recognize either. This sense of despair follows one through the dining room and into hallways of the residents’ rooms.

That is until you get to John’s door. A single flower, an American flag sticker and a smiley face beneath his name greet you. It always makes me feel lighter and I begin to smile knowing that I am going to be visiting with a great guy.

John and his wife, Mabel, moved into this tiny room together three years ago, from their home in a nearby town. They took most of their meals in the dining room. John would occasionally fix her breakfast, at least that’s what he told me. I never met Mabel. She had gone to be with the Lord the previous Spring, and if you asked John, he was ready, too. He missed her terribly.

He wasn’t what you would call a strong Christian, hadn’t really practiced his faith since Mabel passed. But he loved to hear me read the bible to him. He would close his eyes; one could almost see that he was imagining the characters in the bible, as he played out their stories in his mind. A sense of calm and peace would come over him and he would usually fall asleep with a smile on his face. Occasionally, he would open his eyes and blurt out, “Yeah!” or “That’s right.” or “How do they know that?” We’d proceed to have a discussion about who, what and why. Inevitably agreeing that it was that way, because God wanted it that way. After a while he would close his eyes again, tired of talking and fall asleep. I would replace his oxygen in his nose and quietly leave.

The anticipation of this pattern was harshly interrupted a few Sundays ago, when I approached his door for our visit and saw it half open. Some of the staff were crowded around John’s bed, his breathing was labored, his color was poor and he was not responsive.

They told me his son was out of town, he never visited much, anyway. He had called from Hawaii and told them to “do all they could for him.” I guess he didn’t know that’s what they always did. Although now, without a DNR in the record, a statement like that would mean John would have to be taken out in to the cold to the hospital for the inevitable to happen.

The nurses recognized me and made room for me around his bed. I took a seat and began reading from the bible. His breathing became more regular and it even seemed like his color improved. A slight smile seemed to come upon his lips. I adjusted his oxygen in his nose and quietly left.

John was at peace.

Directory Updates

Jerry Butler
email: jerry.butler@gm.com

Aspirant
John Epley
email: jacepley@aol.com



Evangelizing Evangelizers

By Marv Robertson

On a recent Saturday morning, I began mental preparation for my next Sunday homily. The doorbell ring and the Schnauzer's bark interrupted my train of thought. Through the door window, I could see two young gentlemen, neatly attired, with nametags identifying each as "Elder." On this cold wintry morning with wind gusts of 40 mph, these two ear-muffled Mormons looked frozen. I invited them in, and had them take seats close to the gas-log Franklin stove in my recreation room to warm up. An old pun on vocation came to mind: "Many are cold, but few are frozen."

At the outset, I introduced myself as a Catholic deacon, and told them that I already had a Book of Mormon from a previous visit from others. We discussed shared beliefs--the need for strong faith and family values in a corruptive culture, fidelity to orthodox morality, the need for religious authority. They had a great deal of respect for Pope John Paul II, and curiosity about the priorities of Pope Benedict. I shared with them a bit of the Holy Father's first encyclical, "God is Love." I expressed my admiration for their witness to their faith--young men serve two years in evangelizing, young women 18 months.

As they appeared warm at the end of our fireside chat, I gave them a copy of "Handbook for Today's Catholic." Even though ecclesial purists do not recognize the Mormons as "Christian," we nevertheless concluded with a prayer for Christian unity. As they departed, I invited them to stop back the next time they were in the neighborhood. In spite of the vast doctrinal separation between Mormons and Catholics, I could not help but think that if our young Catholic adults were as committed as these two fine young men, we'd change the world with the fire of faith.

Prayer of a Desperate Lover

By Tom Franklin

Abba, my Father, I need to talk with you about my brother, Jesus. Jesus told me that I could call you daddy, even though I don't dare to call he who fathered me by anything more intimate than "sir"... I ache with love for my brother, and he does not listen to reason. He keeps talking about this kingdom of his, this "already but not yet" place that seems to be just over the horizon. I can't see it and I can't touch it, and when I complain to him about how I cannot measure this place of his, he smiles at me, and says not to worry. – And for a moment, I do not worry...

I want him to be safe, and yet he confronts the powerful and calls them to account. Being unnoticed is the path to survival in this day and age, what with the Romans and all. Contributions are drying up because nobody wants to be associated with a "troublemaker" and the places we can go and rest are fewer and fewer with each passing day. I know that I've taken from the purse, but I'm going to make it right as soon as I can.

I hear that the Sanhedrin is plotting against him, so maybe if I can figure out a way to get them to act before they've really figured out what they want to do, we and they can come to some kind of arrangement. Abba, I'm frightened. I'm in way over my head, but I can't just sit here and do nothing to stop this madness. He's going to get us all killed, and his dream, my dream, will die with us if I don't do something drastic to upset the way things are going. I love him so, and I am so afraid...

For the sick:

- Judy Barrett
- Mike Barrett
- Jim Brown
- Bob Chadwick
- Currie Cormier
- Bill Everett
- Terry Fleming
- Jim Hashman
- Warren Hecht
- Pat Pigott
- Jesse Pizana
Grandson of Ray & Grace
- John Sundwick

For those who have died:

- Rev. Pat Barrett**
Brother of Deacon Mike
- John Butler**
Father of Deacon Jerry
- George Eisele**
Brother of Fr. Jim Eisele
- Fr. Gil Rahrig**

Necrology

April

- 2 John Paul II 2005
- 25 Kathleen Huiskens 2005
- 27 Deacon Robert Bohmer 1974

May

- 2 Mr. Ferdie Savoie 1990
- 16 Bishop Alexander Zaleski 1975
- 19 Josephine Fournier 2000



Community Prayer Line



Genesee/Owosso Cluster

Place: No meeting scheduled
Date:
Time:
Contact: Gary Gallagher
Other Details:

Jackson/Lenawee/Hillsdale Cluster

Place: Bill's Coffee Manor
Date: May 20
Time: 9 a.m.
Contact: Carol or Linda Franssen
Other Details:

Lansing Cluster

Place: St. Mary Cathedral
Date: May 19
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Contact: Dick Stanford
Other Details:

Livingston Cluster

Place: Chevalier's home
Date: May 13
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Contact: Jim Chevalier
Other Details:

Washtenaw Cluster

Place: No meeting scheduled
Date:
Time:
Contact: W. Hecht or T. Franklin
Other Details:

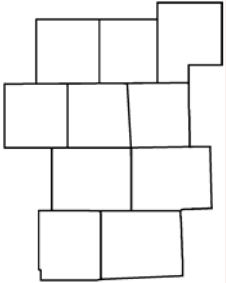
Cluster Meetings



Diocese of Lansing Office of Deacons

300 West Ottawa St.
Lansing, Michigan 48933

Submit newsletter articles to the Office of Deacons
(bsirl@dioceseoflansing.org or awoelf@dioceseoflansing.org)



The Lighter Side

The Dead Duck

submitted by Jim Sirl

A woman brought a very limp duck into a veterinary surgeon. As she lay her pet on the table, the vet pulled out a stethoscope and listened to the bird's chest.

After a moment or two, the vet shook his head sadly and said, "I'm so sorry, your duck, Cuddles, has passed away."

The distressed owner wailed, "Are you sure?"

"Yes, I'm sure. The duck is dead," he replied.

"How can you be so sure," she protested. "I mean, you haven't done any testing on him or anything. He might be in a coma or something."

The vet rolled his eyes, turned around and left the room, and returned a few moments later with a black Labrador Retriever.

As the duck's owner looked on in amazement, the dog stood on his hind legs, put his front paws on the examination table and sniffed the duck from top to bottom. He then looked at the vet with sad eyes and shook his head.

The vet patted the dog and took it out, and returned a few moments later with a cat.

The cat jumped up on the table and also sniffed delicately at the bird from head to foot. The cat sat back on its haunches, shook its head, meowed softly and strolled out of the room.

The vet looked at the women and said, "I'm sorry, but as I said, this is most definitely, 100% certifiably, a dead duck."

Then the vet turned to his computer terminal, hit a few keys and produced a bill, which he handed to the woman.

The duck's owner, still in shock, took the bill. "\$150!" she cried. "\$150 just to tell me my duck is dead!"

The vet shrugged, "I'm sorry. If you'd taken my word for it, the bill would have been \$20, but with the Lab Report and the Cat Scan, it's now \$150."

(Ed note: It might have been worse. He could have charged for a PET Scan, too!)