

# COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS

April 2006



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

## Pre-Ordination Retreat



The third year Candidates and their wives will be making their pre-ordination retreat at Bethany House the weekend of May 4-6 with Fr. Thomas Dubay. Fr. Dubay is well known for his work on spiritual direction and his writings on prayer and the interior life. He has written more than twenty books and is considered an expert on the teachings and writings of John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila. Please keep them in your prayers that weekend as they take this final step of discernment and spiritual growth prior to ordination.

## Pray for Us

Third Year Candidates and Spouses

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*Terry William Carsten (Mary Ann)*

*Randy Eugene Coffelt (Debra)*

*Douglas Arthur Cummings (Maureen)*

*Michael Robert Dear (Cynthia)*

*Gerald Raymond Fust (Alice)*

*Anthony Manuel Mammina (Beth)*

*Gideon James Marsal (Rosemary)*

*Charles Raymond Thelen (Suzanne)*

*Albert Anthony Turkovich (Helen)*

*Richard Dennis Walters (Susan)*

*St. John the Evangelist, Fenton*

*St. Mary, Pinckney*

*St. Andrew, Saline*

*Holy Rosary, Flint*

*St. Joseph, St. Johns*

*Holy Trinity Student Parish, Ypsilanti*

*St. Peter, Eaton Rapids*

*St. Mary, Westphalia*

*St. Casimir, Lansing*

*Christ the King, Ann Arbor*

*"That they may become ministers of the Church who will strengthen the faith of their brothers and sisters by word and example, and gather them together to share in the Eucharist, let us pray to the Lord..." (Rite of Admission to Candidacy)*

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

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

# Tulips and Daffodils and Hope

by Tom Franklin

Lord, I thought I heard your presence in the Garden Department at Lowes—the early Spring sun was shining and the bulb baskets were budding— tulips and daffodils, and hyacinth and crocus, each basket joining the chorus and whispering your invitation— “Choose me, I am your personal sign of hope in this season of Holy Hope.” It seemed that all of us who wandered up the aisles and wondered about the possibilities of buds a flowering were drawn to respond with a smile.

So soft and subtle are your words, Lord, and your Word persists across the moments, gentle and diffuse as the breath of silent breezes. So stirring are your words, Lord, that they resonate in hearts flesh and in hearts of stone, calling all hearts to dare to find hope while pinioned to a tree at Golgotha and while entombed, death-like in the Garden, awaiting that night of nights, where Hope and Life triumph over despair and death.

Lord help me to be as a basket of new bulbs, a humble, living, joy-filled sign of the Resurrection in a world that needs the courage to hope.



## Groaning Amen

by Wayne Corrion

This is a theological reflection on a personal experience of ministering to a group of developmental disAbled adults who had gathered in Jackson Michigan for their annual retreat.

As I exited my vehicle to go inside to meet the staff and students of the Jackson Area Catholic Special Religious Education Program the sun was shining on my face and the warmth of the spring air embraced me, as if embraced by the Holy Spirit.

As I neared the door I noticed the faces of the developmental disAbled who were gathering for their day retreat. An uneasy feeling of whom I would be ministering to that day came over me. I only knew before hand that it would be a retreat for the disAbled, I was not aware that it would be with those who are developmental disAbled. My doubt of how I would deal with this played tricks on my mind. I have had minimal experience with the developmental disAbled and was a little unsure of what this day would bring.

I entered and said hello to those I met along the way. The director of the retreat, Joanne, told me that I would be starting the music portion of the retreat in about an hour. I did not bring my things in with me, so I went back outside to retrieve my guitar and sheet music.

On my way out the door I encountered three men who were there for the retreat. I said hello and their faces lit up. One man stuck his hand out and extended a strong hand shake and a huge smile and introduced himself as Brian. The next person was Steve who did not hesitate to open wide his arms and embrace me. As I continued on my route I heard one of them say “hey guys, that’s my priest”.

Still feeling uneasy after that warm welcome I retrieved my gear and returned inside. Back inside I put my best foot forward and sat with the group to listen to the opening words from Joanne. She began by discussing the theme of the retreat which was “the vine and the branches”.

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Within a short time period the group had started their service project of making stuffed animals and tying fringes of a blanket all to be used in Easter baskets for needy children. As I circled the room to help them with the project in any way I could, I felt more relaxed and welcomed by each person I talked to.

My eyes began to be open to see just how beautiful these developmental disAbled adults are. I could see the gladness in their eyes and hear the joy in their voices. As Joanne would ask questions during the discussion I noticed that Brian was always very willing to answer any of her questions with a huge smile, signal her with thumbs up, and offer a very confident but quite “YES”.

The time had come for me to prepare them for the music that would be used at Mass that afternoon. I was introduced and they were told that I had traveled from the Flint area to be with them that afternoon.

As I started their eyes were filled with excitement. But before I could start the first song one of the men, named Greg, came and stood next to me. He was somewhat fascinated with the guitar and he started to softly touch the tuning pegs and other things on the guitar as I was into my first song. One of the chaperones thought it would be better if he were not up there with me and tried to coax him to sit down with the others but between Greg’s persistence to stay there with me and my relaxed expression the chaperone knew all was well.

After we sang a few songs Greg decided he would lead us in a beautiful rendition of “Jesus Loves Me”. The next thing I knew we were side tracked from the Mass music and I was taking requests that ranged from John Denver to Three Dog Night. It was so much fun singing with them and their appreciation overwhelmed me. One of the retreatants named Tony, enjoyed the music rehearsal and cheered loudly after each song. I noticed that while practicing the songs that Tony and others had some difficulty reading the words while trying to keep up with the music. Some of their words were not clear, but they would try, even if it was just crying out sounds to stay with the music.

***My eyes began to be open to see just how beautiful these developmental disAbled adults are.***

We were able to get through the Mass music and later one of the retreatants, named Ann, asked me if I would be interested in joining her band. The rest of the retreat was a beautiful as I was able to get to know more of the people at the retreat.

I was moved later when visiting another of the retreatants, named Diane that she was very concerned that I had traveled so far to be with them that day. This compassion warmed my heart.

At 4:00 pm I had left the retreat to go to the church to get ready for the Mass. At 4:45 the retreatants entered the church. I was smiling from ear to ear as they made their way to the pews right in front of me and the other musicians. We exchanged smiles as they entered.

It was like a family reunion. And almost directly in front of me was Tony and as he entered the pew he smiled at me and in a very loud voice said to me “we are with you”. This made me feel very welcomed in this unfamiliar church as the Liturgy was about to start.

Even though I had noticed earlier that they had struggled with pronouncing the words to the song, I hadn’t noticed until the responsorial psalm that even though they struggled with the words to the psalm they put one-hundred percent effort into it, even if it was only a loud groan.

This became very clear to me when the entire assembly recited the Profession of Faith. I watched Tony very carefully during this. His lips were not moving but he groaned loudly for each stanza of the profession in unison with the whole assembly. While reflecting on this experience Romans 8:26 came to mind:

***In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.***

Now looking back on this experience I know I witnessed the Holy Spirit praying for us, carrying our prayer to God through Tony and these very special people.

This thought of Tony saying earlier that he would “be with me”, and the groaning during the songs and the profession of faith all culminated and really struck my heart when the retreatants processed for the Eucharist.

I could not watch them because my eyes were focused on the sheet music while we were singing the song “One Bread One Body” but as they drew near the Eucharist I knew Tony was there with me just like he said he would be. The song climaxed with the whole congregation singing the refrain and over it all I could hear Tony loudly groan AMEN as he received our Lord.

I thank you Lord for these people that you promised would always be with us in Matthew 26:11

***The poor you will always have with you, but you will not always have me.***

I am so glad they are with us to remind us that Jesus is always close to us and that no matter when we pray we should appreciate that we are in the presence of God and knowing that we should be giving it our all.

# My Mission

submitted by Fr. Charlie Irvin

“God has created me to do some definite service,  
 God has committed some work to me, which has not been committed to another,  
 I have my mission - I may never know it in this life, but shall be told it in the next.  
 I am a link in a chain; a bond of connection between persons.  
 God has not created me for naught.  
 I shall do good. I shall do God’s work;  
 I shall be an angel of peace, a preacher of truth in my own place.  
 Whatever, wherever I am, I can never be thrown away.  
 If I am in sickness, my sickness may serve the Lord.  
 In my perplexity, my perplexity may serve the Lord.  
 God does nothing in vain.  
 Therefore I will trust in the Lord.”  
 John Henry Cardinal Newman



# Conversations In Ministry

Conversations in Ministry is an annual opportunity for all involved in ministry including our priests, deacons, lay ministers, seminarians and those in the Ministry Formation Program to come together for a day of fellowship and on-going formation.

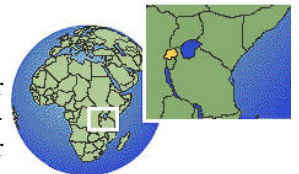
This year, Fr. Timothy Gallagher will speak on “*Discernment of Spirits*” August 18, 2007 in the Cathedral Parish Hall. Fr. Gallagher has written a book of the same title and is a popular presenter. Watch for registration flyers. In the meantime reserve Saturday, August 18 on your calendar.

# Left To Tell

“*Left to Tell: Discovering God Amidst the Rwandan Holocaust*”



Immaculee Ilibagiza is a survivor of the Rwandan wave of genocide. In her book of the above title, she writes of her harrowing experiences as she was hidden for ninety-one days in a four foot by six foot bathroom with five other women while former friends, neighbors and soldiers hunted her. Her story of fear for the atrocities taking place and her trust in God is both horrifying and inspiring. She has appeared on national network talk shows to tell her story. Now we have an opportunity to hear her in person as the Department of Formation has arranged for Immaculee to come to our diocese. She will be at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Ann Arbor the evening of Thursday, October 4. The following day she will be at St. Thomas Aquinas in East Lansing. You will definitely want to hear her witness to the power of prayer and trust in God.



**For the sick:**

- Mike Barrett**
- Bob Chadwick**
- Bill Everett**
- Doug Fogle**  
Tom & Jo's son
- Warren Hecht**
- Lisa Kenney**
- Margaret Krieger**
- Tony Mammina**
- Jesse Pizana**  
Ray & Grace's grandson
- John Sundwick**
- Tony Verdun**
- Lynn Williams**  
Papp's daughter



**Necrology**

April

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

May

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



**Community Prayer Line**

*For the safety and well being of our men and women in uniform, especially:*

- Spc. Daniel Flanagan**  
Flanagan's son
- Maj. Christopher Fogle**
- Ist Lt. Mark Fogle**
- TSgt. Angelia Fogle**
- SSgt. Glenn Fogle**  
Fogle's sons,  
daughter-in-law  
& nephew
- Spc. Patrick Franklin**  
Franklin's son
- John Patrick Hilker**  
Hilker's son
- Maj. Timothy McDonald**
- Spc. Michael McDonald**  
McDonald's son's
- MSgt. Bill Shively**  
Cahaney's son-in-law



**Genesee/Owosso**

- Place:** TBD
- Date:** TBD
- Time:** TBD
- Contact:** Gary Gallagher
- Other Details:**

**Jackson/Lenawee/Hillsdale**

- Place:** Steve's Ranch, Jackson
- Date:** April 14
- Time:** 9:00 a.m.
- Contact:** Carol or Linda Franssen
- Other Details:**

**Lansing**

- Place:** TBD
- Date:** May 18
- Time:** 6:30 p.m.
- Contact:** T. Heutsche, T. Fogle
- Other Details:** E. Schneider on Funerals

**Livingston**

- Place:** St. Mary Magdalen
- Date:** April 21
- Time:** 9:00 a.m.
- Contact:** D. Piggot, J. Chevalier
- Other Details:**

**Washtenaw**

- Place:** TBD
- Date:** TBD
- Time:** TBD
- Contact:** W. Hecht or T. Franklin
- Other Details:**

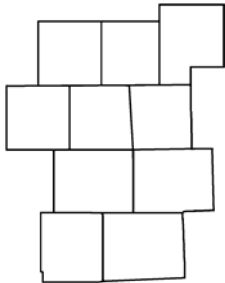
**Cluster Meetings**



# 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 )



## Postcards and Prayers

**Submitted By: Wayne Charlton**

Inmates on death row are the most forgotten people in the prison system. Fr. Jude Siciliano, O.P. posts these names along with his “First Impressions” weekly scripture reflections. You are invited to write a postcard to one or more of these inmates to let them know that: we have not forgotten them; are praying for them and their families; or, whatever personal encouragement you might like to give them. If you like, tell them you heard about them through North Carolina's, **“People of Faith Against the Death Penalty”**

Please write to:

Eric F. Murillo	#0499258	(On death row since 4/18/96)
George F. Page	#0310202	(4/26/96)
Guy T. Le Grande	#0238344	(4/26/96)
Russell Tucker	#0413011	(2/21/96)
Kenneth Neal	#0495163	(2/26/96)
Elmer R. Mc Neill	#0528622	(4/9/96)
John D. Mc Neil	#0275678	(11/10/95)
Stacey A. Tyler	#0414853	(11/14/94)
Davy G. Stephens	#0388922	(12/20/95)



**Central Prison 1300 Western Blvd. Raleigh, NC 27606**

Pray for Peace