

# St. Michael's Episcopal Church

4000 Lees Summit Rd, Independence, MO

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March 2008

A Reflection from the Vicar ...

*We are not ordinary disciples*

Our Spiritual life is a journey which engages all our senses and calls us to engage passionately in God's life and in God's work in the world. People engage by connecting to one another, by symbols which represent significant values, and by meaningful experiences. This is one reason that worship is a central part of our week, because it is a time when we come together as a community of faith to experience God's presence and to offer ourselves to God's service.

The mission of St. Michael's says that we are "Called out of the world by Jesus, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to know and worship God and to serve and heal God's people in the world."

On this journey as a disciple of Jesus Christ, we are both followers and leaders. We follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but our lives become models which others emulate and follow. So we both follow and lead. *We are not ordinary disciples, we are those sent to serve.*

Our Christian journey is God letting us be who we are, all the while begging us from the cross to be who we can be. God has given each of us unique gifts to use to help others and we will be more fulfilled when we use these gifts for God's kingdom. Because we have been created in the image of God, we are called to live into that identity.

*We are not ordinary disciples, we are those who follow Christ & serve others.* Our lives are a journey with God. *We are not ordinary disciples, but friends and partners in the journey.* The essence of a human being is participation in the essence of God. We participate in the divine by the power of the Holy Spirit. *We are not ordinary disciples; we are those who go with Jesus to heal.*

We all participate in the divine every day of our lives, but we are often blind to God's presence. We need to find ways to see more clearly God's presence and actions in our lives. A Jewish word, *chutzpah* means holy boldness. Holy boldness - how do we claim God's presence working in our lives and then take responsibility to share it? How do we move from ordinary discipleship to the call of Christ to go and serve? What does **holy boldness** look like in our lives? How are you currently **impacting the world** you work in? Where does your **greatest passion intersect with the world's greatest needs**? These are questions to ponder during this season of Lent, because we are not called to regular discipleship.

**We are Not Regular Disciples!** Perhaps you are wondering why I keep repeating the phrase that "we are not ordinary, regular disciples". Well, Jesus didn't call the disciples to regular discipleship. Regular disciples would have stayed in Jerusalem, founded a school, studied the words and works of their master, carefully screened applicants; and then admitted only the most promising students to study what Jesus did during his life. But Jesus wasn't regular. He commanded his disciples to scatter,

to go to the ends of the earth, preaching and teaching the good news, healing the sick, casting out demons, witnessing about His life, death and resurrection. **Jesus wants witnesses**, not students, not caretakers, not wise sages. Jesus wants us to live lives of holy boldness showing the world the love of God.

Christians are not like other people. They have a different rhythm to their lives. They have a different way of understanding how they fit and don't fit into the world. Our Christian Journey begins and ends with God. Jesus is the image of God, the one we follow and the one who commands us to go, serve, heal, teach, and lead others to the Light.

We are not servants or ordinary disciples who simply study the words of the teacher. We are those who are called, equipped and sent out to do the work of T of healing, teaching, serving, loving, and calling all people our friends. It is our life's work. It is our spiritual journey to engage in an ever deepening friendship with Jesus.

What practices do you need to engage in to nurture your soul, your dreams and your passion; so that you may be a witness to the Risen Christ? Use Lent to discern those things you need to do regularly and incorporate them into your life. Lent is that time of discernment that will equip you to witness with holy boldness about God's light and love. We are not ordinary disciples--Jesus calls us, equips us and sends us out to do the work that he left unfinished. We are those who model his life. We are those who point to the light. We are those who serve, heal, teach and lead others to Christ - not because we are perfect, but because we have been called disciples and friends of Jesus our Lord.

Go serve and heal God's people in the world! Mother Pat+

## **From the Deacon**

### Reading Scripture

There is the story of an old man who lived on a farm in the mountains of Kentucky with his young grandson. Each morning, Grandpa was up early sitting at the kitchen table reading his Bible. His grandson, who wanted to be just like him, would also read his Bible. One day the grandson asked, "Papa, I try to read the Bible just like you, but I don't understand it, and what I do understand I forget as soon as I close the book. What good does reading the Bible do?" The Grandfather quietly turned from putting coal in the stove and said, "Take this coal basket down to the river, and bring back a basket of water." The boy did as he was told, even though all the water leaked out before he could get back to the house. The grandfather laughed and said, "You will have to move a little faster next time," and sent him back to the river with the basket to try again. This time the boy ran faster, but again the basket was empty before he returned home. Out of breath, he told his grandfather that it was "impossible to carry water in a basket," and he went to get a bucket instead. The old man said, "I don't want a bucket of water, I want a basket of water. You can do this. You're just not trying hard enough," and he went out the door to watch the boy try again. At this point, the boy knew it was impossible, but he wanted to show his grandfather that even if he ran as fast as he could the water would leak out before he got far at all. The boy scooped the water and ran hard, but the basket was again empty when he reached his grandfather. Out of breathe, he said, "See Papa, it's useless!" "So you think it is useless?" the old man said, "Look at the basket." The boy looked at the basket and for the first time he realized that the basket looked different. Instead of a dirty old coal basket, it was clean. "Son, that's what happens when you read the Bible. You might not understand or remember everything, but when you read it, it will change you from the inside out." That is the work of God in our lives to change us from the inside out, and gradually transform us into the image of Christ. Take time to read a portion of God's word each day by reading the Daily Office. You can follow the readings from the [Forward Day by Day](#), or you can go on line to find the daily reading at <http://dailyoffice.org/>. Remember that how we live our lives is an example, either good or bad to

those around us, especially the children.

God's Peace, Deacon Larry



## **BISHOP'S BALL**

Caitlin Crawford represented St. Michael's at the Diocesan Youth Bishop's Ball in January. The Ball was a formal affair, and plenty of fun, food, and friends made for a great night.

## Every Little Bit Helps: Things WE Can Do

### The Every Day Environmentalist

Life is full of little questions – “Do you want fries with that?” and “Did you save some room for dessert?” and “Paper or plastic?”... The list goes on. While we can’t help with the first two, here is a little practical insight on that everyday shopping question. Which is a better choice, paper or plastic... how about neither?

Realizing this is not a direct answer to the question, let’s examine the consequences of going with the flow. Both choices begin with a natural resource, energy is used and pollution created in their manufacture, it takes energy and creates more pollution to get them to the store, and both go somewhere when we’re done getting our goods home.

Which is “least bad”? From a *National Geographic* article, “Compared to paper grocery bags, plastic grocery bags consume 40 percent less energy, generate 80 percent less solid waste, produce 70 percent fewer atmospheric emissions, and release up to 94 percent fewer waterborne wastes.” One research source concludes “it is our unbiased opinion that plastic is indeed more beneficial to the environment, in that it is less harmful.”

Great, “less harmful”... Whether I step on a tack or a nail, it still hurts even if the hole in my foot from the tack is “less harmful”. This brings us back to “neither”. Not using a disposable bag of any type is the “least harmful” option. Retailers are starting to realize that many are looking for the third option and have begun stocking re-useable bags. A recent trip to the local grocer found bags at the checkout area for a dollar. They are sturdy, have strong handles, and convenient. Bringing our own bags in again and again is a little thing that anyone can do – and the little things can add up. The key for our family is remembering to bring the bags into the store – we’re trying to change our habits by keeping the bags in the car.

### So here’s the recap:

**First choice** – use a re-useable bag, again and again

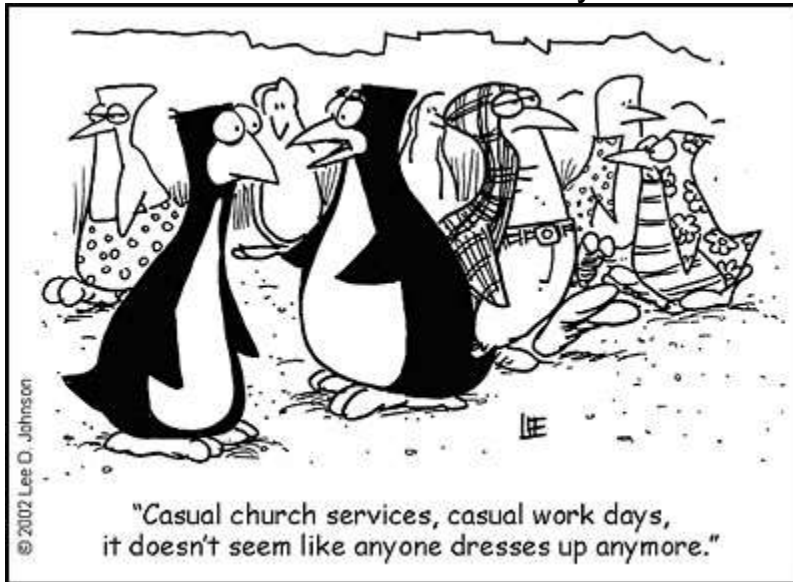
**Second choice** – forgot your bags and the store is out of stock, use plastic

**Follow up** – when you do have plastic bags, re-use them around the house

**The final word** – when the bag can’t hold out any more, recycle

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God has not called his servants to a mediocre, ordinary life, but rather to the perfection of a sublime holiness.



## **FAMILY CELEBRATIONS**

### **MARCH BIRTHDAYS**

Barbara Wright	March 1
Margie Gray	March 7
Grant Prettejohn	March 8
Teri Adams	March 12
Marybeth Allen	March 18
Ethan Trowbridge	March 18
Genesis Trowbridge	March 18
Joseph Hogan	March 23
Michelle Parsons	March 25
Sheri Williams	March 25
Anthony Amador	March 29

### **MARCH ANNIVERSARIES**

None

### **MARCH BAPTISMS**

Shaun Bentley	March
Jewell Cox	March
HazelAnn Barkie-Cox	March 8
Sheri Williams	March 28

## HOLY WEEK SERVICES

March 17	MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK	6:30 P.M.
March 18	TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK	6:30 P.M.
March 19	WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK	6:30 P.M.
March 20	MAUDY THURSDAY	6:30 P.M.
March 21	GOOD FRIDAY	6:30 P.M.

## Revised Lectionary March

Sunday	Date	Psalm	1 <sup>st</sup> Lesson	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lesson	Gospel
4 <sup>th</sup> Sunday In Lent	Mar 2	23	1 Samuel 16:1-13	Ephesians 5:8-14	John 9:1-41
5 <sup>th</sup> Sunday In Lent	Mar 9	130	Ezekiel 37:1-14	Romans 8:6-11	John 11:1-45
Palm Sunday	Mar 16	118:1-2 & 19-29	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Philippians 2:5-11	Matt 21:1-11
Monday in Holy Week	Mar 17	36:5-11	Isaiah 42:1-9	Hebrews 9:11-15	John 12:1-11
Tuesday in Holy Week	Mar 18	71:1-14	Isaiah 49:1-7	1 Cor. 1:18-31	John 12:30-36
Wednesday in Holy Week	Mar 19	70	Isaiah 50:4-9a	Hebrews 12:1-3	John 13:21-32
Maudy Thursday	Mar 20	116:1, 10-17	Exodus 1-4 (5-10) 11-14	1 Cor. 11:23-26	John 13:1-17, 31b-35
Good Friday	Mar 21	22	Isaiah 52:13-53:12	Hebrews 10:16-25 OR Heb 4:14-16, 5:7-9	John 18:1-19:42
Holy Saturday	Mar 22	31:1-4, 15-16	Job 14:1-14	1 Peter 4:1-8	Matthew 27:57-66
Easter Day-- Sunrise	Mar 23	NA	NA	Romans 6:3-11	Matt 28:1-10
Easter Day— 10:30a	Mar 23	118:1-2, 14-24	Acts 10:34-43	Colossians 3:1-4	John 20:1-18
2 <sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Easter	Mar 30	16	Acts 2:14a, 22-32	1 Peter 1:3-9	John 20:19-31

## **From the Parish Nurse:**

April 16, 2008 has been designated Nation Healthcare Decisions Day. What does that mean? This day has been set aside to remind people that we have a say in our healthcare including who can make decisions for us if we cannot make our own (power of attorney for healthcare) and we have the right to self determine what types of care we do or do not want. When faced with chronic conditions or end of life care, it is important that the people around you know your wishes. It's important that you know your wishes – what do I want, what do I feel is excessive, and what can I emotionally, spiritually tolerate.

Here's a bit of information from the web site for the organizers of the National Healthcare Decisions Day - <http://www.nationalhealthcaredecisionsday.org/Welcome.htm>

The site is for-profit and the point of this article is not to promote an organization. The site has good information and links to organizations and information that can help with planning an advanced directive.

Did you know:

The Federal Patient Self-Determination Act requires that all Medicare-participating healthcare facilities inquire about and provide information to patients on Advance Directives; it also requires these facilities to provide community education on Advance Directives. See 42 C.F.R. § 489.102. All healthcare facilities are required to:

- Provide information about health care decision-making rights.

- Ask all patients if they have an advance directive.
- Educate their staff and community about advance directives.
- Not discriminate against patients based on an advance directive status.

The U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality ([www.ahrq.gov](http://www.ahrq.gov)), in a 2003 article, "Advance Care Planning: Preferences for Care at the End of Life," found the following:

- Less than 50 percent of the severely or terminally ill patients studied had an advance directive in their medical record.
- Only 12 percent of patients with an advance directive had received input from their physician in its development.
- Between 65 and 76 percent of physicians whose patients had an advance directive were not aware that it existed.

Also on this site was a link to an organization called Caring Connections. This is an organization dedicated to the care givers and those planning advanced directive, in end of life or grieving a loss. (Disclaimer time again: Caring Connections, a program of the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO), is a national consumer and community engagement initiative to improve care at the end of life, supported by a grant from The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.) <http://www.caringinfo.org/Home.htm>

**Caring Connections site has a link to information specific for the state of Missouri. I have printed a copy out and will place the information on the bulletin board in the library. We also have advanced directive and power of attorney information and forms available through St. Michael's if you are interested.**

**If you would like a copy of the bulletin board information for your own, please contact me, Vicky Anderson at 816-554-9293.**