



The Bells of Saint Mary

July, 2009

With My Hand on the Plow: The Red Shirt Project

There is ministry that helps to define us...such is the Red Shirt Project in my life, and increasingly, in the life of St. Mary's.

The Red Shirt Project began in the year 2000 when my friend The Rev. Robert Two Bulls, **was an Associate at St. George's in La Canada,** in our diocese. Robert was newly ordained and he brought the idea to his parish as a means of outreach to that community. The following year, in 2001, Robert approached me about being part **of the project...** with youth. At that point in my work, I enjoyed a pretty solid reputation as a person who did some creative work with teenaged youth.

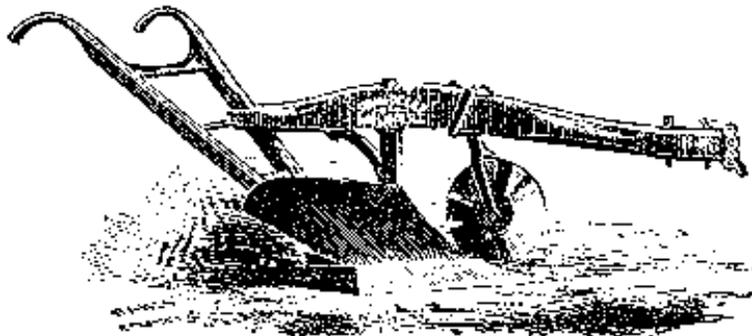
Robert and I liked each other just fine, and the project was launched. The idea then, and now, was to bring youth from all over the diocese, of every race and language and socio-economic background together for a drive, half-way across the country, to the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota. And then work. And worship. And enter into relationships with the **young people from the village of Red Shirt... relationships that would become friendships...** that would endure. And it has worked.

A typical day is to wake up with the sun, get breakfast rolling for as many as 40 people, (usually at least a dozen or so who walk up

from the village) and having had breakfast and the dishes being done, gather in the church yard for a circle. The circle features worship **from the Disciples' Prayer Book, (a copy of which I gave to each person when we gathered for the first Christian Formation class two weeks ago)** as how we start each day. After breakfast we all gather, reflect upon the gospel of the day, and share stories of the day. We engage, from day one, the necessity of all Christian people everywhere to live an exam-

ined life. We encourage all participants, as I encourage you now, to reflect upon their lives in the light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. What happens, when this occurs, is a whole new view of life. This is particularly evident

in the witness that our young people bring back to their lives when they have completed the Red Shirt Project in any given year. We **then go to work...on any number of various projects that make up the daily life of our participants.** We have our meals together, as one **big group...sometimes numbering 50 or more** for the evening meal, as many more people from the village join us for the evenings. The evenings frequently feature guest speakers who share with us and teach us many aspects of the lives and history of the Lakota/Oglala nation. Some are story tellers, some are historians; all give freely of their knowledge and lives so that we might learn more about this



great people, who live in such great poverty and yet have a richness of spirit and faith that teaches us a good and honorable way to live our lives. The day ends with a gathering at a fire pit on the church yard, with singing, stories and the unique special feeling that only a camp-fire can provide. Bed-time takes our tired workers to their tents and much needed rest before the next day begins.

The Red Shirt project, and my participation in it, has been the single most profound experience of my life. It has shaped me into the man I am, the priest I continually seek to be, and has opened my heart to a far more profound understanding of how to live the Gospel of Jesus Christ in my life.

When I came to St. Mary's, with its rich history of outreach and care for others, I felt so blessed to be part of a community that already understood that the work we do outside our parish walls is the work that defines us inside those same walls. That you embraced the Red Shirt Project so readily, without even knowing that much about it, was a great gift from God. Now, in my third journey to Red Shirt since I came here, (the first being only two weeks after I arrived and I think most of you thought "now where did that new guy go?!") the project has included five from our church last year, and at least four this year. This year, among many other things, we will re-build the entrance to the Lakota Oyate Episcopal Church where we camp and stay, plant cottonwood



Fr. Michael baptizing Andrew Connor Wallace and Ashlie Michele Wallace at the June 14th service. (Michele Wallace photo.)

trees at the church and in the village, build shade cover down at the Pow-Wow grounds for a food service table we will also be completing, and assist in the clean-up of the village and the graveyard next to the church. If you get a chance, ask my daughter Sarah or Adrian Gusland about their experiences with the Red Shirt Project, and how it has had such a profound impact on their Christianity and their ministry.

Please know that the money I am asking you to consider donating to the project will be used to take young people a step closer to their **destiny...to be formed ministers of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.** The Red Shirt Project will take them to a place where they can make a decision about who this Jesus is, and how it is that in helping people who have so little, they can become so rich in

spirit. That by encountering the spiritual life of the people of the village of Red Shirt, they can encounter their own poverty of spirit...they can **rise, on eagle's wings, towards a vision of God's Kingdom that they could never have imagined as possible...and see it become real.** By helping these young people make their own journey **with me...you are helping them become young men and women of faith,** and this is the greatest gift you can give them.

God bless you all for your faith and how you **are giving to the Red Shirt Project...and for caring so deeply for all the young people that the Red Shirt Project exists to serve.**

With my hand on the plow,
Fr. Michael

Editor's Notes

The August and September editions of the *Bells* are being combined. The August theme is "Mary", and September's theme is "Back to School"; articles fitting either theme will be accepted. Articles are due to the editor July 21st. Themes for the following months are:

October:	Harvest
November:	Thanksgiving
December:	Anticipation
January, 2010:	Shining Light

I will be out of town for most of August, so the next edition of *Planting* will be postponed until October.

John Beeler
Bells Editor

A Note from Elizabeth:

Again this year, 15 exchange students and one chaperone from Spain will spend weekday mornings at St Mary's learning English and American culture. Each student is being hosted by a Lompoc family through Cultural Homestay International. Please feel free to visit our classroom; check in with Elizabeth to learn which days and times we'll be there. Thank you to everyone!

Nothing to do this summer?

Read the paragraph below and look for titles of books from the Bible. They may be part of a word or a combination of two words, or simply a word standing alone. Example: "something in our **GENES IS** responsible..." The solution will appear in the next issue of the *Bells*.

"Can you find the names of 25 books of the Bible in this paragraph? This is a most remarkable puzzle. Someone found it in the seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping himself occupied for hours. One man from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Roy Clark studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Vicks mentioned it in her column once. One woman judges the job to be so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help calm her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot . . . that's a fact. Some people will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. The truth is, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or scholar to see some of them at the worst. Something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have. Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation might help: books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. And punctuation or spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete. Remember, there are 25 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph."

The Bat in the Belfry

Hi! It's me, Bede.

Did you have a great Father's Day? We had a really nice day. My Mom cooked dinner, and we had friends from Santa Maria over for a visit. They attend St. Peter's, and are friends with a nice Mouse family that we know. The day started in the usual way, but it soon took an unexpected turn.



Boris may not talk much, but he does yawn sometimes! (Ernst Haeckel, of course.)

you know, we have sharp claws and we read while hanging upside down, and quite often we go to sleep and drop the book we're reading. (I think I've told you about a few instances when I've dropped books during vestry meetings, in chalices, on Sunday School children, on choir members and other times too embarrassing to mention.) Anyway, Dad's Prayer Book was a bit the worse for wear. He and Mom are lifelong EpiscoBats and I knew that this was his first Prayer Book. I was proud that I had thought of getting him a new one. He accepted the new book, but he went and got his old one out of his suitcase.

I said to him that now he could put the old one away and just use the new one. Then, I really got a surprise. My quiet, retiring, gentle Dad began to talk and this is what he said: "Thanks so much for the beautiful new Prayer Book. It's really wonderful and I'll enjoy using it, but if it won't hurt your feelings, I'll keep my old one out where I can see it and still use it. You see, it has so many memories on its pages." He picked up the old Prayer Book and continued speaking. "See here where the tear is on this page? I tore that because I was so excited to see a real Bishop. I'd never seen one before. And this page here that looks like someone spilled water on it; those are my tears when your GrannyBat died. Every tear and every tear is a memory of a moment in life that I'll always remember. I love my new Prayer Book and I love you for remembering me. So I hope you won't mind if I use both books. O.K.?" It's more than O.K. with me. I love the idea and I love my Dad. Telling me about his old Prayer Book made my day. It's a Father's Day I'll always remember, and I thank the Father of us all for giving me such a wonderful earthly Father. I hope your day was as great as mine.



*To answer a question many of you have asked, Bede's column is **not** being ghostwritten by the editor of the Bells. Bede's assistant wishes to remain quasi-anonymous.*

Blessings from Bede Bat

Income vs Expense: May 2009

Income	
UN-DESIGNATED	<u>32,972.05</u>
Total Income	32,972.05
Expense	
ADMINISTRATION	17,397.47
BUILDINGS & GROUN...	5,604.94
CHRISTIAN FORMATI...	166.70
MISSION SHARE FUND	2,097.17
RADICAL HOSPITALITY	97.22
WORSHIP	<u>813.55</u>
Total Expense	26,177.05
Net Income	<u><u>6,795.00</u></u>

Notes From Fr. Michael's Homily, June 21st:

"God Speaks Grace, we hear Law."

"We plan, God laughs."

"No one earns their way to God's love, and no one should have to earn their way to mine."

I just had to write those down when I heard them!

The Editor

July Work Party

If you are a member of Team John, it's your turn to help keep the church looking good on March 14th at 8:30 AM. Members are: Marno Goetsch (team leader), Kay Rowland (lunches), and Nancy Straight, Mary Saladino, John Sipos, Sally Goetsch, Stewart and Jeanne Johnston, Rick and Jeanne Kendall, Ray Gould, and Sheryl Murray.

Take Us Out to the Old Ball Game...

Friday evening, September 18th, at 7:00 PM, is Episcopal Night at Dodger Stadium in Los Angeles. The Diocese has secured \$20 tickets for just \$15.

Each congregation needs a coordinator. The coordinator's task is to monitor sign ups, collect the ticket fees, and place the order. When ready to make their ticket request, they can send one check made out to "Dodger Night" with the number of tickets they want to The Rev. Canon Gregory B Larkin, Dodger Night Coordinator.

The Diocese needs our order no later than August 17th.

Anyone who wants to volunteer to coordinate this, please see Elizabeth.

Thanks,
The Editor

July Birthdays

Michael Cunningham	07/01
Glen Newcomb	07/02
Karen Chandler	07/05
Madison Homuth	07/05
Deanna Daggon	07/06
Gladys Bonnell	07/07
Claudia (Suzy) Griffin	07/15
Margaret [Margie] Coe	07/17
Stephen Bastian	07/19
Bill Bean	07/20
Sophia Prothero	07/24
David Linscott	07/26
Uini Davis	07/30

The Weight of Nothing

"Tell me the weight of a snowflake."

"Nothing more than nothing," was the answer.

"In that case I must tell you a marvelous story," the coal mouse said.

"I sat on the branch of a fir, close to its trunk, when it began to snow,

Not heavily, not in a raging blizzard,
No, just like in a dream, without any violence.

Since I didn't have anything better to do,

I counted the snowflakes settling on the twigs and needles of my branch.

Their number was exactly 3,741,952.

When the next snowflake dropped onto the branch—nothing more than nothing,

As you say—the branch broke off."

Having said that, the coal mouse flew away.

The dove, since Noah's time an authority on the matter, thought about the story for a while and finally said to herself:

"Perhaps there is only one person's voice lacking

For peace to come about in the world."

Anonymous—submitted by Mary Smith from an old Rotary Club newsletter.



*The baptism of Andrew Connor Wallace and Ashlie Michele Wallace at the June 14th service.
(John Beeler photo)*



[Above: Howard Gould and Nemesio Balcena at the Father's Day Pancake Breakfast.]

*I sometimes adjust the color balance of photos, but that is **not** the case with the one below — we really did wear that much red on Pentecost!*



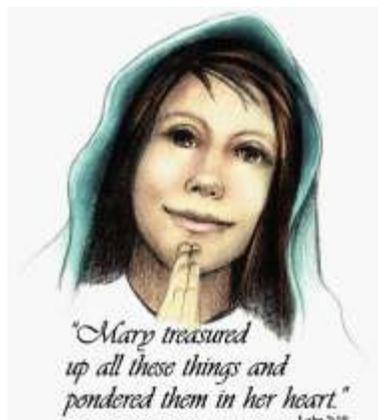
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Mary

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Sunday Eucharist
8:00 AM and 10:30AM
Christian Formation
Each Sunday at 9:15 AM

Church Office Hours
Mon - Fri 10 AM - 4 PM

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