



# *The Bells of Saint Mary*

## *November, 2009*

### With My Hand on the Plow: Thanksgiving

About as far back as I can remember, I remember Thanksgiving Day in my world. In my earliest memories, it was always the day when the Texas Longhorns and the Texas Aggies played their annual football game. The events that led up to that day included a huge bonfire the night before the game, and a big parade in downtown Austin (on those years when the game was in Austin), with bands from both schools, and most notably, the Aggie Corps... which was a military marching band that was always incredible to watch.

Many was the year that my father would take us downtown to his office, where he could park the car, and then walk us down to Congress Avenue to see the parade. Seeing how my family was "football crazy" I don't know how my mother ever managed to get us to sit down, say grace, and eat the meal without the game being on.

In those days, the game was "on" the radio. I did not grow up in a house that watched television, or even had a life that was centered on television watching at all. I look back on that now with a very grateful heart, as I think television is not one of the things that is ever at the top of my "these are things I am thankful for" list. But there are many things that are on that list, and I would like to share some of them with you.

I wonder if you do this, make a list of those things in your life that you are thankful for...it is a good thing to do, and has provided me with some very important perspective over the years. Some of mine include:

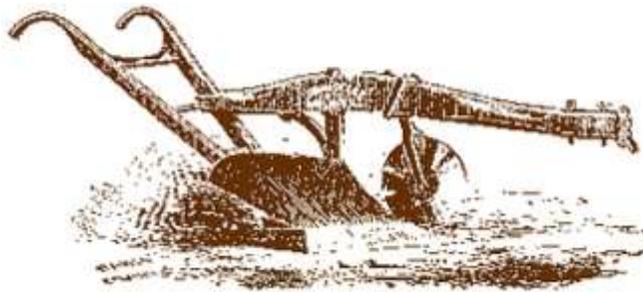
Deborah: I am most thankful to God for Deborah. She is my best friend, and the person I have always loved living with since 1976, when we first got together.

Simon and Sarah: I am most thankful to God for Simon and Sarah. When I think about the ups and downs of family life, and the struggles

many people have in their family relationships, I see my children growing easily into adulthood, with a sense of generosity of spirit that becomes them. Feisty, stubborn, and finding their way, they love easily, laugh readily, and appreciate their lives the way they live them.

My mom, Irene, and dad, Don: Now past 80, they continue to be first for one another, dedicated completely to their children and grandchildren, and still managing to keep praying, going and loving.

My mother-in-law Dede: She has been through so much loss and grief in her life, and yet she keeps going, every day, caring for her son, my brother-in-law John who was injured horribly by a drunk driver years



ago, loving her son Bill and her daughter Deborah, and always putting others ahead of her own wants or desires. I also love watching college football games with her. (Since I most certainly do watch television these days!)

St. Mary's: This remarkable church community of ours is the on-going source of my thankfulness most days.

The dedication to helping others, the commitment to those less fortunate, the backpacks, the Senior Saints luncheon, the Martha's who prepare a reception every time we have a funeral; the ushers, the greeters, the teachers, the Godly Play story-tellers, the Choir, our Organist Robin, Elizabeth, Glen, Trudy, our Sexton Mark, our nursery care workers, our wardens, our vestry, our work parties and their team leaders. Deacon Judy, who teaches us every day the beauty of servant-hood ministry. The list is so remarkable because all of you are. Our new playground area, Bina's Place. Our new garden dedicated to St. Francis. Our Lay Eucharistic Ministers and Visitors. Our kitchen angels. Our altar guild.

When you look at what it takes to keep in love and care all the activities of this busy parish church, it will just floor you. Did you know that if everyone on our rolls showed up at church on the same day, we would more than fill the place? The mailing for the Bells is big, and getting bigger. And while we are at it, I am thankful for the team that organizes and sorts and stamps the Bells. And John Beeler, who faithfully compiles it and publishes it for us. I am thankful for our volunteers in our office who serve three days a week, answering the phones, folding the bulletins, opening the mail...and keeping the ball rolling. And countless others who serve as volunteers on our various Ministry Development Teams.

This month, you will hear from folks who

have volunteered to be part of our New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Team. Some of them are relatively new to our church, and some of them have never stood up in front of our church to speak about anything, let alone their relationship to the God we serve. It humbles me to see how many of you are helping, caring, loving, and serving our church in such selfless and complete ways.



"Don't be fooled by the pumpkin pie. It's just squash casserole with sugar."

The list could go on for pages, but you get the idea. Whenever I get to thinking that my life is stressed out, or that somehow I need to work smarter, better, stronger...I need only think of this list...and I only have one to add...who is always first on the list, but somehow, today, gets last billing. Jesus.

The list exists because Jesus is in my life. I can think of the list because of the gift of thankfulness that comes from Jesus. I have what I have in life because of the gift. And all of you are on my list because Jesus wrote the list in the first place. And the same goes for you and your list. Stop today, think of all the gifts that Jesus has given you, and I bet your list will come pouring out of you. And when it does, write it down. Not because you might forget...but because you want to remember. And there is a big difference between

the two. What is on your list you will never forget...for the list lives in your heart...but what you want to make sure of in writing it down is that you begin to remember... because that is how your list becomes endless. When your intent is to honor all those who are unforgettable, then your list will never end. And that is a very good thing to do as Thanksgiving Day comes closer and closer.

To paraphrase the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm: The Lord is my shepherd, that's all I want.

With my hand on the plow,  
Fr. Michael

## Consecration Sunday Is Coming

Congregations that approach financial stewardship from a biblical perspective do not view the money Christians give to their church merely as a way to pay its bills. Rather, such congregations see financial contributions as a way to help people grow spiritually in their relationship with God by supporting their church's mission and ministry with a percentage of their incomes.

Our congregation's stewardship committee has selected the New Consecration Sunday Stewardship Program as a way to teach the biblical and spiritual principles of generous giving in our stewardship education emphasis this year.

New Consecration Sunday is based on the biblical philosophy of the need of the giver to give for his or her own spiritual development, rather than on the need of the church to receive. Instead of treating people like members of a social club who should pay dues, we will treat people like followers of Jesus Christ who want to give unselfishly as an act of discipleship. New Consecration Sunday encourages people toward proportionate and systematic giving in response to the question, "What percentage of my income is God calling me to give?"

During morning worship on Consecration Sunday, we are asking our attendees and members to make their financial commitments to our church's missionary, benevolent, and educational ministries in this community and around the world.

Every attendee and member who completes an Estimate of Giving Card does so voluntarily by attending morning worship on Consecration Sunday. The procedure is done in such a way that no one feels personal embarrassment if he or she chooses not to fill out a card.

We will do no home solicitation to ask people to complete cards. During morning worship our guest leader, The Rt. Rev. Gethin Hughes, will conduct a brief period of instruction and inspiration, followed by members making their commitments as a confidential act of worship.

We will encourage participation in Consecration Sunday events through the Consecration Sunday team and vestry members. Since we will make no follow-up visits to ask people to complete their cards, we will make every effort to inform, inspire, and commit everyone to attend Consecration Sunday worship.

Thanks in advance for your enthusiastic participation in Consecration Sunday events.

Marno Goetsch,  
Senior Warden



*Sally Goetsch (with Marno just out of view to the left) leads a Crown Ministry class.  
(John Beeler photo)*

## African Team Ministries Sale – November 8<sup>TH</sup> And 15<sup>TH</sup>

We thank you for your support in years past and ask you once again to visit the display of wonderful gift items.

In case you need another reason to support the African Team Ministry Sale:

Each year, according to the World Health Organization, some 500 million people are infected with mosquito-borne illnesses: dengue, malaria, yellow fever, and various forms of encephalitis, including the West Nile virus.



Malaria, a preventable and treatable disease, is one of the biggest killers of young children in Africa. Overall, the disease, which is transmitted by mosquitoes, kills an estimated 1 million people annually, the vast majority of them in Africa. One of the most effective preventive measures against malaria is to sleep under insecticide-treated bed nets, which are a finely woven barrier and kill most mosquitoes upon contact.



*Edythe Ortiz and Pat Baker at last year's African Team Ministries sale.*

This year one of the programs supported by African Team Ministries is providing insecticide-treated bed nets to people in their communities. The first priority is to provide them to children and pregnant women to prevent malaria infections and deaths.

Elizabeth Hatcher

### The Thoughtful Christian

My vision for Christian Formation at St. Mary's was that it should resemble God's dream for the coming Kingdom. That is, it should be egalitarian with everyone having equal access to resources. To that end I have purchased a subscription to The Thoughtful Christian.com. This internet resource offers a wealth of lessons on a wide variety of Christian subjects and concerns. It is easy to access and navigate. Any of you may download as many lessons as you wish. Our contract does state that the use is only for within our church. Please explore this site and let me know which lessons you would like us to offer in the future or ones you might like to lead. If you have signed up for a learning circle that is using these lessons you can download the student guide and background information in advance.

The log in ID is Trudy

The password is StMarysLompoc

Knowledge is power. I would like to share it.

Trudy Ardizzone

Missioner for Christian Formation

## Writers Wanted

*All members of Saint Mary's are invited to submit photos, or letters or articles on relevant topics, including their spiritual life. We would especially appreciate articles about our upcoming Bells themes:*

<i>December 2009:</i>	Anticipation	<i>March 2010:</i>	Looking for Light
<i>January 2010:</i>	Shining Light	<i>April 2010:</i>	Glory
<i>February 2010:</i>	Looking at Lent		

*Please send photos and articles to the Bells editor at: john.beeler@verizon.net. If you do not have e-mail, you can put them on paper, and drop it in the mail slot just outside the Parish office instead. (Photos will be returned as soon as possible.) Thanks!*



*Left: Mary Saladino and her cat, with Pete Drus in the rear.*

*Right: Pete insisted that I take a picture of this badge, so I guess I had better publish it.*

*(John Beeler photos)*



## Financial Statement, September 30th, 2009

Undesignated checking/savings	90,151
Designated checking	18,458
Designated fund obligations	18,458
Parish mortgage	384,353

	Actual Sep 09	Actual Jan - Sep 09	Budget Jan - Sep 09
Income	24,431	238,222	255,285
Expenses	29,941	263,580	269,189
Net income/(loss)	(5,510)	(25,358)	(13,904)

### *Explanation by Finance Committee*

Actual expenses for the 9 months ended September 2009 are approximately \$5,600 below budget, however, income is approximately \$17,000 below budget. This month's expenses are consistent with last month, however, this month's income is below last month's income by approximately \$3,400. The large drop in designated funds represents the final payments for the completed children's playground remodel.

## What is Christian Formation?

At a national Episcopal formation conference, held in February 2003, titled “Will Our Faith Have Children?” Presiding Bishop Griswold stated:

“In this era in which the Episcopal Church is becoming more mission minded, it is important that people assimilate their own faith story, and that they learn to speak out of the scripture of their own lives.”

Unfortunately, many people lack the confidence or the vocabulary to see the connection between their own inner sense of reality, and what they perceive to be The Church. For others, it is a lack of conviction or sense of relevance that inhibits them from being bearers of the Good News of Christ. Several generations ago the society promoted and produced Christians. Churches then saw their task as taking the already Christian entrants and making them into good, tithing church members.

Today in our post modern, secular culture we cannot expect any society interest in forming Christians. It is the job of the Church (and this means every single member) to promote and form Christians. The Church is the natural home where formation is faithfully and intentionally practiced. The early church engaged in catechesis. This comes from the Greek verb which means, “to cause to sound in the ear” or “to echo.” The goal of Christian catechesis was then to have The Word of God sound in the learner’s ear. This meant not only the Biblical story, but the Word made flesh in Jesus Christ. Catechesis is a way of life, not just a teaching method. With Jesus as our role model, we seek disciples (learners) and invite them to follow him. Jesus taught by the example of his life and invited his followers to participate in and practice his way of a new kingdom life.

Formation is the participation in and practice of the Christian life of faith. It is the means by which a community’s world-view and value system are transmitted. It can happen through enculturation, socialization, assimilation or conversion. Every thing that happens in, around, or because of the Church, affects the formation process. That is why it is necessary to be specific and intentional in our practices, lest a hidden curriculum develops and wrong messages are transmitted.

There are several specific elements that impact formation. One essential venue of formation is participation in the communal rites of the Church. These rites are repetitive, symbolic actions which tell the Church’s sacred story. The physical environment also contributes to formation. This means not only the perceived sacred spaces, but also the Church’s meeting, work and recreational spaces, as well as our own homes. The ordering of time influences our communal life. The rhythms of the Church calendar’s holy days and seasons also help tell the



*Curtis Baker at the Blessing of the Animals.  
(John Beeler Photos)*



sacred story. The organization of our lives, both personally and corporately affect formation. How we spend our own time, talents and resources, as well as the Church's sends a message. Another factor is our communal interactions, e.g., how we organize ourselves into groups, committees and ministries, how we choose leaders, welcome newcomers, and resolve conflicts. All these reflect what it means to be a Christian. Formation needs role models and disciplines that are clear about which behaviors we want to promote and practice. And finally, the language of formation, how we name God and each other, needs to be sensitive and intentional.

Education is a specific part of formation. Its purpose is to give us the tools to critically reflect on what we participate in and practice. The educational process should produce change that reforms and renews us in our personal and communal lives. It should bring us into closer alignment with Christ's hopes for us. The Church is not so much an educational program, as it is an educational community. Lastly, instruction and training is the process that provides us with the necessary content about our Christian life of faith. Too often we focus only on this level.



*Participants at Gospel Based Discipleship Bible Study.*

Formation is a life-long process. Through our identity, our vocations, and our mission, God calls our name throughout our lives. He wants us to respond with the Gospel of our lives. It is the goal of the Christian Formation Ministry Team to engage the churches of our diocese in the many aspects of this process. We are here to provide training, tools, programs, leadership, and encouragement to all those who seek to deepen their faith-journey and be mentor and teachers to others on the way.

Trudy Ardizzone  
Missioner for Christian Formation

## Coming Attractions for Christian Formation

I know that everyone is very busy as the holiday season approaches and calendars get filled up very quickly. I hope I can beat the rush and have you all mark some of these upcoming events as priorities in your schedules.

Nov.1 is **All Saints Day**. Michelle Pittenger concludes her **Mask Making Workshop**, and the participants will have the opportunity to present their masks on the altar. The children will also sing that day, and there is a baptism. Doughnuts used to be called "soul cakes" and are traditionally served on this day.

Nov. 2 is **All Soul's Day**. There will be a 5:00 PM service with the reading of the names of the departed. A chili and cornbread supper will follow.

**The Nov. 8 Parenting Circle** will be a special meeting of the parents of Junior High youth to determine the direction of our programs.

Nov.15 the Learning Circles, with the exception of Crown Ministries, will be an **Advent Preview and Resource Fair**. Trudy will give some seasonal background and present an outline of our programs. Seasonal resources will be available to take home to enrich your family's Advent experience.

Nov. 20 is **St. Mary's Movie Night** featuring *Casablanca*. Bring your hankies for the airport scene.

Nov. 22 is New Consecration Sunday. There will be no Learning Circles or Sunday School classes that day. There will be a celebration lunch after the service.

Nov. 29: **Advent Circles begin.**

Dec. 6 is **St. Nicholas Day**. Look for the old Bishop of Myra to be visiting our Sunday School classes. Adults participating in our Acorns and Oaks program are invited to join their special child friend at class and / or after church for a special cookie decorating and card making party.



*McKenzie Olson shares her turtle with a friend Alisha Corman at the Blessing of the Animals. (photos this page by John Beeler )*

Dec. 6: **Pageant Rehearsals** start 9:45 to 10:30

Dec. 13 and 20: Pageant Rehearsal at 9:45 and at 12:00

Dec.24: **Intergenerational Christmas Pageant** at the 5:00 Pm service.

Dec. 27: All the Learning Circles are replaced with a chance to sing all your favorite carols one more time at a presentation of **Lessons and Carols** at 9:15.

Jan. 3: We will have an all church **Epiphany Celebration** during the education hour.

Stay tuned for more information about a ten week class for confirmation candidates and new comers using the books, *My Faith, my Life* and *Your Faith*



*Robin Smith at the piano at the Blessing of the Animals, with Glen Newcomb standing at*

*Your Life*. Sign ups will begin in December. The class is open to high school students with the permission of the rector.

Speaking of books, have you read Dan Brown's latest, *The Lost Symbol*? I think it is rich with discussion opportunities. Let's have another **One Night Book Club** sometime in January.

## **It's Time To Polish Your Halo**

Last year's intergenerational Christmas pageant was such a success that it will be returning by popular demand. Can anyone top the Ricci family in their vigilant and heartfelt portrayal of a shepherd family? Will anyone else be as regal as Glen Newcomb's wise man? All are welcome to participate. Anyone who wants a speaking part can have one. One caveat, it is much easier to put on a Christmas Pageant with people who can actually show up for rehearsals. Check your schedule before you commit. Talk to me before Nov. 29, children as well, so I can assign parts and costumes. I guarantee you will have an unforgettable time.

## **The Lion, the Witch and The Wardrobe**

Last year twenty of us had a wonderful time seeing A Christmas Carol together at the Melodrama. This year PCPA in Santa Maria is putting on a musical version of The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe for the holiday season. I will be taking sign ups through Nov. 8 to see if there is enough interest to make another theater party outing.

## **The Children's Section**

You will be noticing that our children are sitting together off to the side with their Sunday School teachers. We will be trying this for a period of time so that we may provide instruction to the children during worship. We know that the more informed and engaged they are in the service the more they will get out of it. Fr. Michael and I will be continuing to find active and meaningful ways for the children to participate in worship.

Trudy



*The proclamation of the Gospel at the Blessing of the Animals service. (John Beeler photo)*




  
**November Work Party**
  

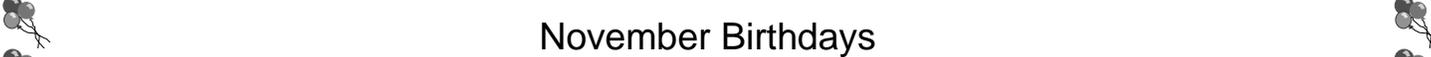

If you are a member of Team John or would like to be, it's your turn to help keep the church looking good on November 14th at 8:30 AM. Members are: Marno Goetsch (team leader), Kay Rowland (lunches), and Nancy Straight, Mary Saladino, John Sipos, Sally Goetsch, Stewart and Jeanne Johnston, Rick and Jeanne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



*Right: The dedication of Saint Francis Garden on the west side of the church, while Saint Francis (highlighted) looks on.*

*Above: One of the first 'residents' of the Saint Francis Garden will be Butch, Howard and Peggie Gould's (and the church's) beloved friend, who passed away about a year ago. Butch did not just show up for St. Francis Day; he often came to work parties with Howard.*




  
**November Birthdays**
  


Kirsten Linn	5	Eric Prothero	10	Nancy Straight	20
Ethan List	5	James Gibson	12	Mary Bliss	22
Dana Manchester	5	Carol Shuemaker	12	Sally Goetsch	22
Lee Hill	7	George Bowman	15	Anne Gusland	22
Donna Vordale	7	Natalie Ricci	16	Christopher Woods	22
John Daley	10	Robert B. Glasgow	18	Roberta Woods	23
DeLores [Dodie] Ellis	10	Glenna Baker	19	Henry Culmer	25
Sheila Holley	10	Peter Drus	19	Kathleen Gonzales	27



# The Bells of Saint Mary's

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November, 2009



"Blessing and glory and  
wisdom and thanksgiving and  
honor and power and might  
be to our God  
forever and ever! Amen."  
Revelation 7:12, NRSV

Next Issue:  
**Anticipation**

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**Note:** *Parish Voices* and *The Bat in the Belfry* are in *Planting* this month due to layout issues.



*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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