

# *The Bells of Saint Mary*

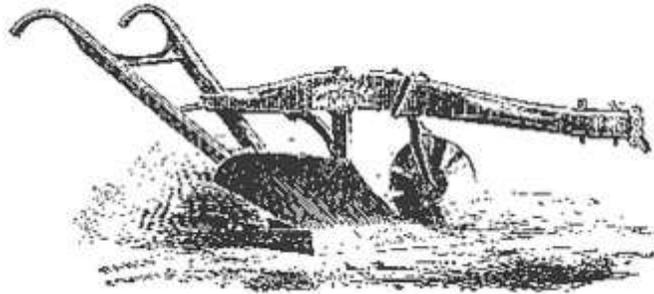
## *September, 2010*

### With My Hand on the Plow: Christian Formation

In 1988, my wife Deborah, who had discerned correctly that God was calling her to the priesthood, needed to go to seminary to begin the road to ordination. Simon, (still newly arrived from Korea) and our two dogs, Frankie and Tillie, along with Deb and I sold everything we owned and packed up a rental van and moved to New York City. And so began the next phase in my own Christian Formation. Besides the rhythm of Morning Prayer and daily services in the chapel at the General Theological Seminary, the single most important factor in my early stages of formation was my Education for Ministry class. EFM was a “**spouses support group**” class for the spouses and partners of seminarians at General. Deborah and I had always worked in the entertainment industry since we had gotten married in 1977, and I was afraid I was going to lose the ability to talk to her about things that matter. I was in danger of losing the common vocabulary that is so critical **to the success of relationships...the common vocabulary of a shared life and common interest.** EFM, which is a four year course, done in one year increments, was just the ticket for me. Year One is the Old Testament. Year Two, the New Testament. Year three, Church History and Year Four, Ethics and Theology. Far from losing my ability to talk to Deb, I learned, pretty darn quick, that I could argue with her! And that was

just what I needed to begin to acquire some confidence that I was capable of thinking critically about matters of the faith. Thus began my journey into the faith that has continued to this day. I have never stopped doing EFM. I have mentored so many classes now that I have lost count, and some years ago, at least 15 now, I became a trainer for The University of the South, the seminary that is the administrator of the EFM program.

EFM is a class designed for the laity. It has no tests, no grades, and is a classic adult education class. Limited to twelve students, with one or two trained and accredited mentors, it is a guided conversation about the Episcopal faith. It is basically the curriculum of the Masters of Divinity



program at the University of the South, (Sewanee) and features a way of discovering and encountering Holy Scripture known as Theological Reflection according to a Four Source Model. It provided me with a means to understand and incorporate my faith in Jesus Christ and the Church into a viable expression of my life in Christ which is my ministry. That understanding also equipped me for ministry and eventually, after almost 20 years of studying and mentoring and training in EFM, led me to ordained ministry as your priest and Rector. But EFM is not a program about being **ordained...it was and is a program about learning**

more about the faith and becoming equipped for the ministry of the baptized.

**Here at St. Mary's, we have an EFM class that** meets on Wednesday nights from 6 to 8:30 pm. We are signing up folks now for this **year's continuing class.** We have four students who will be going into Year Two, and have slots available for up to eight new students to begin the program. The cost of the program is \$350, which works out to be about a dollar a day for **the first year's class. The class meets from Sep-**tember to May, with time off for Christmas and Easter. EFM also forms a core group that becomes a very important part of your own formation and support. A typical seminar includes time to pray and worship, time to discuss the Bible lessons for the week, time to reflect theologically on passages of scripture, and time for fellowship and sharing with one another, in complete confidentiality, what is going on in your life and ministry. Education for Ministry is the best thing I ever did for myself and my growth in the faith. It gave me a way to understand many of the questions I had, and gave me the ability to ask more, with confidence, in myself, my faith and my church. I recommend it to you with complete confidence that it can be a transformative part of your life and witness. Contact Trudy Ardizzone here at church to **register for this year's class.**

September also begins all of our Christian Formation programs for the year. Look elsewhere **in this edition of the Bells of St. Mary's for sched-**ules and more detailed information on what, when, where and how sort of info. I need you to know that Sunday School classes will be at 10 on Sunday morning with our children joining you at the Peace and then staying for the Liturgy of the Table. Tuesday nights will be our primary night for Christian Formation and will **be an extension of Sunday morning at 9 o'clock,** which will be our daytime offering for our Formation programs. That way, those of you who

**don't want to drive at night can still have access** to our programs at what we hope will be a convenient time for you. Wednesday evenings will be EFM, Thursday evenings will be choir rehearsals, Vestry will still meet one Monday night a month, and I hope to bring some sort of Jazz Liturgy/Evening Prayer/Vespers offering on Friday evenings once we get settled in with our new Choir Director/Minister of Music, Chris Bowman.

**This is an exciting time before us at St. Mary's!** Our Blue Envelope campaign to retire the mortgage is now over \$22,000 of the \$144,000 that we are heading for by June of next year. We have hired a new Minister of Music, Chris A. Bowman, to be our new Organist/Choir Director and our plans for our fall Formation series are now in place. I am excited about all that God has in store for us as we move forward, **Adelante!, into God's future together here at St. Mary's. My God continue to bless you in** your lives and ministry.

With my hand on the plow,  
Fr. Michael

## If God had texted the Ten Commandments to Moses:

M, pls rite on tabs & giv 2 ppl:

1. no1 b4 me. srsly.
2. dnt wrshp pix/idols
3. **no omg's**
4. no wrk on w/end (sat 4 now; sun l8r)
5. pos ok - ur m&d r cool
6. dnt kill ppl
7. :-X only w/m8
8. dnt steal
9. dnt lie re: bf
10. **dnt ogle ur bf's m8.** or ox. Or dnkey. myob.

By Jamie Quatro on mcsweeneys.net

## Vacation Bible School 2010

WAKAN TANKA KICI UN  
(Ask a child what it means.)

She knelt there so simply, a little girl usually super active, attention seeking, and truth to tell, noisy. And there she was, gracefully curved into the perfect stillness of listening inside her heart to the voice of God.

All of the children had chosen a place inside a red circle of yarn to ask God to speak to them. Adults were there to watch over and “keep them safe” for ten or fifteen minutes. So they asked and listened to God. And every one stayed in their circle without speaking...

One little boy rolled onto his tummy on warm stones. Another watched a hawk circling closer and closer. One child kept the rhythm of his own heartbeat with long grasses. Another picked up the circles at the end, saying “These are important.”

Oh, we had a tipi, and made Native American fry bread. We made bead pouches and listened to Chumash and Lakota God stories. We even went to Lake Cachuma and sailed on the water. We sang about Jesus and spoke about God’s love for all Creation.

But the children taught me simply and deeply. These children trust God. That’s it.

They ask. He speaks. They listen. They share.

The hawk is a messenger of God’s love, and it returned with its mate and another nesting pair every single day when the drums started playing.

The drums spoke as each person played their own beat. And when we all played the same rhythm, it was stronger and more beautiful. It was like prayer.

And we shared beads of care and affirmation; prayed for each other; had conflict; made peace with honesty; and lived for a week in the profound atmosphere of simply knowing and trusting God’s presence.

“These are important.”

Mary Newcomb

## Saint Mary’s Appoints new Organist and Choirmaster

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Chris A. Bowman, as our new organist/choirmaster. Chris is a multifaceted musician with credits as a conductor, award-winning composer (including religious music), arranger, organist, pianist, trumpet player and tenor soloist. He is equally at home with classical, popular or jazz styles of music. In addition, he is the Conductor of the Santa Ynez Valley Master Chorale, Orchestra and Youth Chorale.

Chris invites all interested singers who are able to match pitches, from high-school age on up, to sing in St. Mary’s Choir. Solo opportunities will also be available. Rehearsals are Thursday evenings at 7:00 pm, beginning September 9. New singers should arrive at 6:45 pm. For more information about singing in the Choir, contact Chris at St. Mary’s, at (805) 733-4400.



*Photo provided by Chris Bowman.*

you have children who want to sing in a holiday celebration, please call St. Mary’s Episcopal Church and leave a message of interest for Chris Bowman.

## Christian Formation: That Time of Year

It could be from having been a student most of my life, or from being a parent, that I seem to measure my life in semesters. For me, September will always mean the start of a new year. I am filled with excitement and happy anticipation. I wonder what new learning will lie ahead. If you know me well, you know that I am not the most pious person. I encounter our Lord most comfortably and eagerly through service, action and study. And when I can combine these three I am even happier. The more I learn about God and our faith, the more I know there is to learn. This pleases me because I know I will never run out of things to study. It is a life long journey. The other thing that has always brought me great joy is finding meaningful ways to help others learn about and experience their faith. The journey is enhanced by having faithful companions along the way. This September I invite you all to pack your backpacks and travel with me on the Pilgrim's road. Together we will find the Christ.

### Exploring the Bible

It is the most widely read book in the world. It is perennially on the best sellers' list. Of course, I am talking about the Bible. We have easy access to it in our pews, our homes, and every hotel night stand. We quote it regularly. We think we know it. That may be so. But I wonder if our sense of familiarity and easy access can cause us to take it for granted. [See "Gutenberg and the Children's Sabbath"] I propose this provocative venture to you. I think that studying the story of how the Bible came to be, can teach us as much about God and our religion as any of the stories found in it. Will you take the challenge with me?

In our meetings at the end of last year, some of you responded to a survey of topics

of interest. They seemed to cluster around the construction of the Bible. Responding to your requests, we will have Learning Circles on Sunday mornings at 9:00 A.M. and Tuesday evenings at 6:00 P.M.

The lessons will be the same on Sunday and Tuesday, except that we will go in to greater depth on Tuesdays because we will have more time. The lessons come from **The Thoughtful Christian, which you all have easy access to: see below for web information.** We will meet in small table groups for the first part of the circle. Then either Fr. Michael or I will be available for clarification, extended resources and reflection questions. If you are interested in being a table leader please speak to me. The Sunday and Tuesday schedules follow.

Trudy Ardizzone,  
Missioner for Christian Formation

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: Website:  
: [www.thethoughtfulchristian.com](http://www.thethoughtfulchristian.com)  
: User name: Trudy  
: Password: stmaryslompoc  
:.....



*Making frybread at Vacation Bible School.  
(Trudy Ardizzone photo)*

## Sunday Morning Learning Circles

- Sept 19 When and Why the Bible was Written, Part One
- Sept 26 When and Why the Bible was Written, Part Two
- Oct 3 The Apocrypha: The Books Between the Testaments
- Oct 10 Books That Didn't Make the Bible, Part One
- Oct 17 Books That Didn't Make the Bible, Part Two
- Oct 24 Great Themes of the Bible, Part One
- Oct 31 Great Themes of the Bible, Part Two
- Nov 7 Great Themes of the Bible, Part Three
- Nov 14 Gratitude and Simplicity as Spiritual Disciplines
- Nov 21 Great Themes of the Bible: Part Four

## Tuesday Evening Christian Formation: Exploring the Bible

- Sept 21 When and Where the Bible was Written, Part 1: Names for God in the Bible
- Sept 28 When and Where the Bible was written, Part 2: Types of Literature in the Bible
- Oct 5 The Books Between the Testaments: What Christians Should Know About the Apocrypha  
God in the Bible: tools for Faithful Living
- Oct 12 Books That Didn't Make the Bible and Why, Part 1: The Gospel Of Judas: Recent Discoveries, the Bible and Tradition
- Oct 19 Books That Didn't Make the Bible and Why, Part 2: Which Bible Should I Buy?
- Oct 26 Great Themes of the Bible, Part 1: Tools for Bible Study

- November 2 Great Themes of the Bible, Part 2: How to Study a Bible Passage
- November 9 Great themes of the Bible, Part 3: The Importance of Context
- November 16 Gratitude and Simplicity as Spiritual Disciplines
- November 23 Great Themes of the Bible, Part 4: Listening for God's Call

You will notice on both Sunday and Tuesday schedules that there is a break in the Bible studies to study "Gratitude and Simplicity as Spiritual Disciplines". This is to open our hearts and minds to focus on stewardship in preparation for New Consecration Sunday on November 21.

Advent begins on Sunday, November 28. During that season we will explore Celtic spirituality at both circles. The Tuesday evenings will return to our customary format of worship, a simple meal, and a learning experience. Worship will be enhanced with beautiful new prayers and songs from the Scottish Book of Common Prayer and the Iona community.



*Vacation Bible School class photo. Photo submitted by Trudy Ardizzone.*

# Financial Statement

(As of July 31st, 2010)

Undesignated checking/savings \$56,587  
 Designated checking \* \$48,616

Designated fund obligations \* \$48,616  
 Parish mortgage \$367,432

	Actual July 10	Actual Jan - July10	Budget Jan - July 10
Income	\$26,478	\$192,125	\$205,113
Expenses	\$30,959	\$218,642	\$217,861
Net income/(loss)	(\$4,480)	(\$26,517)	(\$12,748)

\* Includes BURN the MORTGAGE fund: \$19,177

## September Birthdays

- |                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Daniel Vordale         | 9/01 |
| Regina Lingl           | 9/03 |
| Jessie Sheldon         | 9/04 |
| Alice Drus             | 9/08 |
| Gary Larson            | 9/08 |
| Derek Kazianka         | 9/09 |
| Eleanor [Bits] Bowles  | 9/10 |
| Molly Gerald           | 9/11 |
| Beverly Anderson       | 9/13 |
| Owyn List              | 9/14 |
| Rachel Williams        | 9/16 |
| Charlotte Compton      | 9/17 |
| Kelsey McConnell       | 9/18 |
| David Anderson         | 9/19 |
| Lee Bowles             | 9/19 |
| Julie Esola            | 9/21 |
| Norma Anderson-Radford | 9/22 |
| Kelly Owen             | 9/23 |
| Peggie Gould           | 9/24 |
| Ruth Hicks             | 9/27 |



*Fr. Michael makes a point with the back-to-school backpacks at the Feast of Saint Mary's, August 15th. (Malcolm Anderson photo)*

## September Work Party

**If you are a member of Team Mark, it's your turn to help keep the church looking good on September 11th at 8:30 AM. Members are: Joe Gonzales (team leader), Peter Drus, Kathy Gonzales, Cory and Anne Gusland, Dan Hayes, Heidi Holdsambeck, Margie Coe, Frank and Jane Longley, and Donato Ricci.**

# The Vestry Speaks

Saturday, August 14, 2010

The vestry began their meeting by reflecting on Matthew 18: 15-18. This is Jesus teaching on how to treat a believer who sins against you. Considering that we are a family with God as our patriarch, there is no doubt we sin against each other from time to time. The reflection time helped us to understand better how to love one another even in hard times and set a good tone for a lengthy meeting.

We reviewed the Audit report that Jeanne Johnston and Jim Gibson performed. The report gave the vestry some very good suggestions that will require some additional effort on the vestry's part to implement.

There was a lengthy discussion on a presentation made to increase the salary for an Organist /Director. The vestry agreed that beginning September 1<sup>st</sup> \$1000.00 of the \$2000.00/mo. currently going to Buildings and Grounds Repair and Replacement designated fund will be used to supplement the new position. This will be for the remainder of 2010 and for all of 2011. As soon as income levels can sustain \$2000.00 per month, the R&R account will be re-established to that level.

The *Burn the Mortgage* campaign is going well, although it is not at the anticipated monthly level required to meet our goal. This is not surprising given that we started it in the summer when attendance is low. The vestry is confident that beginning in September giving to this campaign will increase.

Our cash reserves are getting dangerously low with our \$50,000.00 CD not maturing until November. The Vestry discussed what we could do in the interim. The decision was to let the finance committee determine the best course(s) of action at their September meeting, then make suggestions to the vestry at their September meeting.

We discussed outreach, newcomer incorporation, advertising in the bells and pastoral concerns before we adjourned at 9 PM.

That is all to report,  
Your Vestry



*Left: Michele Pittenger - Storytime at Lake Cachuma*



*Right: Mary Newcomb with VBS students.  
Photos from Vacation Bible School provided by Trudy Ardizzone.*

## Bede the Bat

Hi, it's me, Bede the Bat. Hope everyone at St. Mary's has had a good and restful summer, because now the work begins for real! (If you're not ready to work, please turn the page.)

But first, I have a question for you, especially for all you parents. Where did you learn your first lessons about being a Christian? Was it in Sunday School? Did Mom and Dad have a hand in shaping the basis that would translate into a caring, loving, giving young person? Or is it sort of like the "school thing" where you drop them off at school and only get upset with everyone when your child makes a bad grade? Is it the same with your family's Christian Formation? Do you drop them off and expect the Church to do everything?



The reason I'm asking these questions is that St. Mary's is on the brink of a new year of Christian Formation, and it's not just for the kids. What began when the children were born, and what you parents taught your children, is an ongoing lifetime commitment. And it's not just for the kids. Yes, St. Mary's offers a wonderful Sunday School.

But then there's confirmation, college prep classes for youth and Adult Formation classes for the older folks. Other offerings include Family Resources and Support, Education For Ministry, and seasonal activities, including the Advent and Lenten series. You can see from the list that there's really something for everyone, so what began at home with parents is reinforced by your Church.

When I was born, my Mother, who is very exacting in what is expected of young ones, tried her best to begin what she knew the Church would continue. (And, yes, Bat parents and children are very much like human parents, except that we are small, furry and ugly, but I don't care to discuss that.) My Mother would say things like "Don't talk with your mouth full!" and "Share that pear with your sister! And if you're not going to eat it just remember there are little Bats in Europe who are starving and would love to have that pear!" See, I told you that we're very much alike, and what Mom was doing was teaching us the first lessons in sharing and kindness and love and regard for others. When I went to Sunday School, I began to understand what Mom meant, and my Church helped underline everything she taught. So, you see, it just never stops, and the Church is a place to learn more about what we are to do and be, and parents are not exempt! You taught those first lessons in Christianity (bet you didn't realize that, did you?), and you need to brush up on those home truths yourself. Don't drop the kids off at the door. Take them by the hand and walk right through the door with them. They'll remember it all their life. Such a great memory.

Come to St. Mary's and learn more about your formation as a Christian. It's there for you and it's fun and all your friends will be there. Most important of all, God will be there.

See you at St. Mary's...Until then, blessings from the Bat in the St. Mary's Belfry.

## Parish Voices: First Things First

The following idea comes from Stephen Covey. It continues to be a reminder to me of how to focus on the most important priorities.

In the middle of a seminar on time management, recalls Covey in his book *First Things First*, the lecturer said, "Okay, it's time for a quiz." Reaching under the table, he pulled out a wide mouthed gallon jar and set it on the table next to a platter covered with fist-sized rocks. "How many of these rocks do you think we can get in the jar?" he asked the audience.

After the students made their guesses, the seminar leader said, "Okay, let's find out." He put one rock in the jar, then another, then another--until no more rocks would fit. Then he asked, "Is the jar full?"

Everybody could see that not one more of the rocks would fit, so they said, "Yes."

"Not so fast," he cautioned. From under the table he lifted out a bucket of gravel, dumped it in the jar, and shook it. The gravel slid into all the little spaces left by the big rocks. Grinning, the seminar leader asked once more, "Is the jar full?"

A little wiser by now, the students responded, "Probably not."

"Good," the teacher said. Then he reached under the table to bring up a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar. While the students watched, the sand filled in the little spaces left by the rocks and gravel. Once more he looked at the class and said, "Now, is the jar full?"

"No," everyone shouted back.

"Good!" said the seminar leader, who then grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it into the jar. He got something like a quart of water into that jar before he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, the jar is now full. Can anybody tell me the lesson you can learn from this?"

What's my point?"



An eager participant spoke up: "Well, there are gaps in your schedule. And if you really work at it, you can always fit more into your life."

"No," the leader said. "That's not the point. The point is this: if I hadn't put those big rocks in first, I would never have gotten them in."

In both our business and personal lives, we have big rocks, gravel, sand and water. The natural tendency seems to favor the latter three elements, leaving little space for the big rocks. In an effort to respond to the urgent, the important is sometimes set aside.

What are the 'big rocks' in your life? A large project? Spending time with your family? Your health? Your finances? Your faith? Your personal development? Your dreams?

In his book "First Things First" Stephen Covey alludes that the purpose of life is to 'love, to learn, and to leave a legacy. When you organize your time, keep in mind what your principles are. We all have the same amount of time. Efficiency is not the secret of living well, it is a matter of choices you make. "Doing more things faster is no substitute for doing the right things" Stephen Covey calls us to let a compass of our values guide us instead of the click of the clock.

Mike Munson

Here it is. EFM is a seminar designed to help people grow into their ministry. Actually, that's pretty tame. EFM is designed to help adults define what their relationship to God really is, and what they want to do about it. Do you know what you really believe and how you are going to live it out? This is what we come to church for: to find out our mission and commit to it fully. In this seminar, you will find laughter and questions, and, maybe, even a few tears, but you will also find out how to live your love for God. If this sounds interesting to you, come check EFM out. *(See also Fr. Michael's article beginning on Page 1, and the invitation on Page 2 – ed.)*

Michelle Pittenger



*Lulu with Howard and Peggy Gould.  
(Ericka List photo)*

## Update of the "St. Mary's Memorial Donations" Book

In the Narthex of the Church there is a book which lists all of the donations of items given to the church, particularly in the memory of someone.

When we announced the generous donation by Harris Broderick and Robin Smith of our beautiful new grand piano; I realized that I had not updated that book since 2005! OOPS! Well, we all had a lot on our minds during that period.

I would like to update the donation book now. HOWEVER, there is no system in place currently for me to find out what has been donated recently. Only financial donations are listed in the Treasurer's books. We have no way of keeping track of gifts like the piano. So here is what I would like to do...

**Please let me know (preferably in writing) of any donations you have made to the church in the past five years:**

- 1. What was the item?**
- 2. In whose name was it donated?**
- 3. Who donated it?**

Samples:

- The big "Alleluia" Banners at Easter, donated in Jane Holland's Name, by Mary and Glen Newcomb
- The new Grand Piano, donated in thanksgiving for Robin 's time as our organist, by Harris Broderick and Robin Smith
- The new Altar Candle Lighter and stand, donated in the name of Bob Hicks, by Ruth Hicks and her children

Got the idea? PLEASE HELP US, now and in the future. Whenever you donate anything like these to the church, let me know.

Thank You and God Bless you for your donations.

Glen Newcomb

## More Christian Formation News

### Sunday School 2010-2011

After a wonderful community building experience with the children and adult tribe members this summer at VBS, we look forward to a rewarding and enriching year ahead. In response to parental concerns we are returning to a 10:00 A.M. starting time. Children will enter the service during the Peace, so that they are there for the entire Liturgy of the Table. We are blessed to have Jonatha Linn and Michelle Pittenger returning to shepherd the elementary school children. We have a small handful of preschool children. If their parents agree to bring them and we can find a teacher, we can have a small class for them at the same time.

Fr. Michael will be spending every second Sun-



*Julia Anderson with children at VBS.  
(Photo provided by Trudy Ardizzone.)*

day with the children. He will be using this time to teach the children about worship and their prayer life. We will be working with the children on developing their own prayers for Children's Worship. The last Sunday of every month is designated for a special Children's Worship at 10:00 A.M. The children will function as acolytes, ushers, LEMs, and readers. One family a month will have the honor of baking the bread for Eucharist. We believe this will help the children develop a deeper understanding and love for worship, so that they can be full and active participants when they move into Junior and Senior High.

On the remaining Sundays, the teachers will be

utilizing materials from "Weaving God's Promises". The Godly Play stories will be used for review and reflection days. ***Weaving God's Promises*** is a new, exciting, innovative Episcopal curriculum for children ages 3-11. Arranged seasonally (Fall, Winter, Spring), *Weaving God's Promises* broadly follows the Church year by focusing on the biblical story of salvation as told in the Old Testament and New Testament. Lessons also connect to the seasons of the church year, with Episcopal prayers, history, sacraments and traditions woven though out the materials each week. Special sessions are also provided to further explore the Episcopal perspective of reading scripture and worship in community. *Weaving God's Promises* lessons follow the pattern of Episcopal liturgy: Gathering, Story, Prayer, Sharing, Activities and Dismissal. This program works well for small Sunday Schools that can begin each week together in a multi-age group followed by breaking into age-appropriate groups for specific activities.

The success of our Sunday School is totally dependent on the support and cooperation of our parents. We are counting on you to get your children here regularly and on time so we can maximize our teaching opportunities. We realize that the time we spend with the children in Sunday School is a small drop in the bucket of a child's faith formation. Parents are always the primary and most important faith teachers for their children, by their example and by their leadership. It is our sincere hope to partner with you in this most sacred of ministries. Please look to us for support, guidance and resources. Let me know directly how I can be of help. That is why I am here.

### Youth Group

In the life of every church there is an ebb and flow to their children and youth programs. Populations shift. Some times there are large cohorts of children the same age and sometimes not. It does a congregation no good to bemoan the glory days of a group that has moved on. What can look like fallow years is merely the time when the Holy Spirit is growing the seeds of faith in younger children who are getting ready to take their place in the life of the church. Patience and prayerful support must pre-

vail. Unfortunately many secular activities compete for the time and attention of our youth. For many reasons their parents support these choices. We cannot make a viable youth group with one or two **lone teens. The dynamics just don't work. What I** would like to see is our teens taking a more active role in worship through serving at the altar and singing in the choir. I am optimistic that our new organist/ choir director will support this.

On Sunday August 22 I met with our teens and their parents to ask about their current needs, wishes and commitments. They continue to be pulled in many directions. One new parent made the suggestion of retreats as possible periods of concentrated learning. This was well received. The teens agreed they would participate in two retreats **a year, one at St. Mary's and one away. Trina Larson** will coordinate available time slots. Becky and Jenna agreed to help with the Christmas Pageant and to be readers at the monthly children's worship. Everyone liked the idea of "Fifth Sunday Book Club". Ryan Daley agreed to check with Nic Hay and submit some possible dates for "God's College Prep Course".

The youth are also welcome to participate in the Sunday Morning Learning Circles. For anyone seeking Confirmation, or guidance on any faith matters, I am always willing to meet individually.

### **Kick Off Sunday**

On September 12 we will once again be celebrating Kick Off Sunday. There will be a commissioning service at the 10:00 worship for all those serving in an educational leadership role. We are also **kicking off our "Acorns and Oaks" program. for a special "Apple Tree" on the patio. Pick the apple of a child or youth you would like to pray for and support this year.** Francis the Clown will be entertaining the children with face painting, balloon animals and magic tricks. The children will need a special ticket to attend the show. Their parents need to visit our Sunday School Open House in the Annex. While there, they will check on registration forms, take individual and family **photos for our "Church Family Tree", preview curriculum and visit with the teachers.** Special treats will be available for the children there. This is how they will get their clown show tickets.

Adults will meet with Tom Gerald and Ron Pace in the little church area. Previews of our adult curriculum will be available. Those who plan on attending the Learning Circles can prepare their own inspirational folder for class materials. Sign ups for both the Sunday Morning and the Tuesday Evening Circles is appreciated so that we can print out enough lessons. You can also download them on your own from The Thoughtful Christian. *(see box on page 4)*

Look for root beer floats and pizza to round out the celebration.

Trudy Ardizzone,  
Missioner for Christian Formation

### **Gutenberg and the Children's Sabbath**

*I am sharing with you an article I wrote in November 1999 for the newsletter of St. Peter's Church in DelMar, Ca. It seemed particularly relevant as we embark on a season of study about the origins of our Bible.*

Perspective is one of those perks of middle age. It is the ability to see the bigger picture, to be calmer about the present or the future because of the knowledge of your experience. Perspective is also available to those wise enough to actually pay attention in History Class. So, from my own middle aged view point, it both pleased and amused me to view one of the more intriguing offerings amidst the millennium hype. The Arts and Entertainment cable television channel was doing a series on the top one hundred people of the millennium. How interesting! How nineties to rate and rank the panorama of history like tunes on a pop chart. I watched with anticipation and cheered to find Martin Luther and Galileo in the top ten. I wracked my brain, but could not think who could possibly be left to be number one – the most influential person of the millennium.

It made perfect sense upon revelation, Gutenberg, the inventor of movable type, the printing press, namesake of the Gutenberg Bible. Wisdom has always been available to those open to the grace of reflection and insight. But knowledge had been a precious commodity hoarded by a privileged few, dispensed sparingly. Reading was not always fundamental as they say in our country today. **The average person in Gutenberg's day was totally**

dependent on the clergy to hear the word of God. I thought gratefully of all those monks laboring in their cells, lovingly copying and recopying Scripture by hand. I wondered how many drops of sweat may have blurred or changed a word. For awhile, even printed books were still a precious and privileged commodity. But the implications of Gutenberg's printing press were revolutionary and the rest, as they say, is history.

My vantage point fast forwards to Sunday School 1999. It is once again time for the National Children's Sabbath Observance. The theme this year is "*Wonderfully Made: Preparing Children to Learn and Succeed.*" The Bible lesson is based on the scripture "*The child Jesus grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him.*" [Luke 2:40] I am talking to the children about how they learn and what factors and people have helped them. We are comparing their experiences with the childhood of Jesus: learning a trade from his father, sitting on the floor in the synagogue, writing on a clay tablet, reading from the Torah written on scrolls. All the children raised their hands when asked who has books in his home, a computer, a television, who went to preschool, who has somewhere safe to go after school, who has access to nutritious food, medical and dental care and well equipped safe schools. We conclude that they are amongst the most privileged children in the country. We pray for children less fortunate and think about ways we can help them. We offer thanksgiving to God for our abundant blessings.

About the time when I am wondering to myself how much the children really realize how fortunate they are, the Confirmation Class has let out. They are literally tossing their Bibles back into the Youth Center where I am teaching. In contrast, I remember attending an interfaith Thanksgiving Service. The rabbi presented a Torah that had been rescued from the Nazis in Czechoslovakia. It was lovingly unwrapped from its beautiful cloth casing, unfurled with great reverence and read with great respect and awe.

The rest of the week these questions remained with me. Do we stop valuing that which we have easy access to? Can treasures not worked for maintain wonder and meaning for us? Do we have too

much of everything to appreciate anything? Will the Word of the Lord pulled up in sound bytes on a computer screen and stored on a CD-ROM truly resonate with the next generation? And for me, as an educator, the question is this, if the vessels no longer matter, where then must we carry our knowledge? Scripture still holds the answer.

*"I will put my laws in their minds, and write them on their hearts." Jer.31:31-34*

*Trudy Ardizzone,  
Director of Christian Education, Nov. 1999*

## **What Matters Now in Children's Ministry**

Liz Perraud is a Regional Advisor for The Logos "*What matters now in children's ministry?*" was a question posed to thirty five leaders in the field. Their responses were compiled and distributed by "*imago-reimagining the way we gather, learn and worship*". This is an organization that helps church leaders develop and produce innovative events and media. The Sunday School teachers and I found it very inspirational. We selected several offerings as guiding values in our work this year. Each month we will share one with you.

### **Community**

All the Bible stories, catchy songs, classroom creativity, and fun snacks don't mean a thing without healthy Christ-centered relationships that connect our children to one another, to adults who care about them and to the God who loves them.

When children are part of the community that models unconditional love and acceptance, they have a glimpse of what it means to be loved by God. When children trust and commit to people whom they can see, then they can begin to trust and commit to **God whom they can't see.**

Adults have a serious responsibility as part of the community helping to nurture children into a relationship with Christ. We are always teaching children whether we've "**signed on**" to teach or not. We teach children when we do something as simple as learn their names [or not], when we include them in the worshipping community [or not], when we surround them with adults who are gifted and called to work with children [or not].

Community has never been a greater need for **children because of this "hurry up and fit it all in"** culture. The church needs to do community well for it to make a difference.

## Prayers of the People

We ask that you hold these persons in your Daily Prayers.

*Lord, open our hearts to Your perfect will and to Your loving prayerful nature; that we can faithfully interceded on behalf of those we bring to You now in prayer:*

**Bill & Denise Deem, Daisy Merrick, Marcelle Lo Cicero, Catherine Gibson, Ron Davis, N. Joyce Crenshaw, Stan Sheldon, Sheila Holley, Lee and Isla Hill.**

AMEN+

Please Note:

**Prayers of the People will be updated monthly.** If you would like to add or continue a name to the POP, please fill out a Pink Prayer Request slip or Pew card, submit via our website [www.stmaryslompoc.org](http://www.stmaryslompoc.org), call any of our Prayer Tree members, or email Stephanie Bastian at [jeffnsteph95@msn.com](mailto:jeffnsteph95@msn.com). Thank you!

*“Whenever two of you on earth agree in prayer, it will be done by My Father in Heaven.”* Matthew 18:19



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***“To serve God and all  
people, wherever they are  
in their journey of faith.”***

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