



The Bells of Saint Mary

December 2014

Watching and Waiting
The Bells of St. Mary's for December 2014

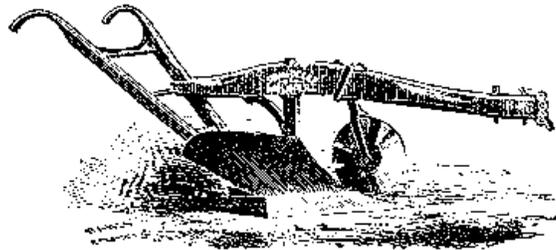
It is hard not to look back when you come into these weeks before Christmas. Rather than fight it, let me share a few of the things I am looking back at.

Deborah Dunn and I will be spending our 39th Christmas together this year. Our first one, in 1976 was spent at a house we lived in when we were working at the Great American Melodrama in Oceano. The house was in Halcyon, about five miles from the theatre. We had a dog named Didi and a cat named Godot. We were outrageously happy and had very few cares in the world. It is a memory that has never dimmed, and I can still see it in my mind's eye.

This Christmas, with so many years to look back at, we are still totally happy with each other, but our lives are so much more complex than they were then. Part of that has to do with owning things...like houses and cars and art and furniture...we still have a dog and a cat...Jack is our dog and Mao Ping is our cat.

Our daughter Sarah, who is the most wonderful of them all, is living with us and is about to be licensed as a massage practitioner and has this awesome positive outlook on her life ahead. She has worked hard to achieve that outlook, and we celebrate that, this Advent/Christmas time.

Our Son Simon, (who prefers to be called John, and that is almost impossible for me to do, but I am trying) is married now with a family of his own. He and his wife are pregnant and due in March. He is also father to three children from her previous marriage. They live near Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, and he continues in his service in the United States Army. We wish for him Christmas memories as sweet as ours.



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Some of the training materials Ray Gould made for the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for Saint Mary's were on display at his memorial service on November 23rd.

My father and mother are 88 years old now...and struggling to make it every day. My father is now over two years in a care facility outside of Austin, Texas and the effects of Alzheimer's continue to devastate him and his family. It is an awful disease and not something that anyone should have to live with. How my mother does it, is a testament to true love and commitment. They celebrated their 65th anniversary on December 2.

My brother Larry is a Saint. No other word fits. He takes care of both of our parents with a strong positive attitude and a "get it done" approach to it all. He is in my daily prayers of thanksgiving.

My oldest brother Dale, manages as best as he can the ravages of the disease on my father. It is particularly difficult for Dale to see our father fade away. Dale is also in my daily prayers, but most often for comfort is my prayer.

My adopted family, the Two Bulls, most of whom live in South Dakota, except for Bob and Ritchie and their kids Grant and Reed, are living these same dynamics of watching and waiting as all of us are. Advent is the same for all people, in that respect.

Dede, Deborah's mom, continues to be our best friend and companion. We see Dede every night for supper and time together. She gave up driving a couple of years back, and so taking care of groceries and such are less fun with me, I am sure, but she manages it all with a wry sense of humor and a strong resolve to keep on keeping on...which is very much the hallmark of Deborah's family. Dede is busy during this season getting everything ready for our Christmas.

Our Christmas this year will be on the Last Sunday of Advent. That is when Deborah's brother, Bill, also an Episcopal Priest, also in the Diocese of Los Angeles, and his wife and kids can manage to get to Lompoc. Like all clergy families, we will be tired, worn out, and still trying to figure out how to make it through the services coming in three more days for Christmas Eve...but that commitment to gathering the family is strong in us, and we will gather at Dede's house and celebrate family as best as we know how.

It seems to me that the season of Advent and its theme of watching and waiting is like that for all of us. We can only do what we can do. We can only celebrate as best as we know how. For many of us, that will be difficult and challenging. As we age, and our families get more and more dispersed, it is difficult to imagine those early years when all we were was carefree and outrageously happy...whatever age that was for you...but the trick is not to try and be that again...but rather to understand that where you find yourself this time of year is celebrating the best you know how. And that is a good thing. That is also enough for now.

That's what we will try to do with church this Advent and Christmas-time. We are going to celebrate as best as we know how. We are going to watch and wait and look for and be alert for the arrival of the Hope of all Humankind. We will be looking for the Shepherds among us who will tell us where to look. We will be keeping our eyes on the evening skies, scanning for that one Star that will show us the way. And we will do those things the best way we know how...confident that our God will come among us. Our Lord will be born, humble, poor, attended to by farm animals and shepherds...and a whole host of Angels, singing Glory to God in the Highest and Peace to All People on Earth.

So may your Advent be filled with patient and impatient waiting...with excitement and wonder...with a never ending sense of anticipation that you will see the Christ Child and that the Christ Child will smile at you!

With great love for each and every one of you,

Fr. Michael+



This crucifix, which Ray Gould made for Fr. Michael, was on the altar during his memorial service.

Advent Begins

Dear St Mary's Community:

Advent began this Sunday, November 30, and this Sunday's 10:00 service was led by our youth. The gifts just keep on coming.

Advent is the beginning of the church year. Michael let us know that the lectionary reading will be from Year B for Sundays and Year One for readers of the Daily Office. I don't know about you, but I can never reliably figure this out on my own.

I will forward an email from Episcopal Church Foundation. It has a great downloadable Advent Calendar.

Looking ahead:

This Sunday begins Christmas pageant activities. Adults and children are welcome and needed. Haven't you always wanted to be a donkey? Maybe a king?

Any Wise Men out there? Prop wranglers! Rehearsals will be after 10:00 church on Sundays until Christmas.

Bible Study on Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Choir: Let us swell the ranks of the choir for Christmas 'Midnight' Service . You do NOT need to read music to participate. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord. Talk to Chris Bowman.

Work Party Saturday 12/13 plus decorating/fellowship opportunities to be announced.

Christmas Eve Services

5:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant and Service

10:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Festival Eucharist



On October 12th, you did not need to be homeless to share the meal that Leah Olson and her team serve the first Thursday of every month.

*Jeanne Johnston
Communications Team*



*The Lego church was mysteriously transformed into pumpkins...and all sorts of other squash!
(Actually, dirt was mysteriously transformed into squash in a garden.)*

The Sin of Pride

The sin of pride is very hard to talk about because everyone has some measure of it; nobody likes it when they see it in others. And it is hard to recognize it in yourself when you have it.

To me, heaven is not a place but rather a condition of the heart. It is closeness to God, it is a state of grace, where you are in communion with God's love and is manifested through the love that you have towards God, all His peoples, and creation. When we sin we separate ourselves from God. St Augustine defined sin as a hardening of the heart, a loss of love for God, a disposition of the heart to depart from God because of inordinate self love. The greatest sin is that of pride.

Pride is an inward directed emotion that is used mean two different concepts. In a positive connotation, pride can refer to a satisfied sense of attachment towards one's own, or a group's accomplishments, values or choices. It is the product of praise, achievement or a fulfilled feeling of belonging. But it can also mean or become something quite insidious. All of us at some point in our lives fall victim to pride.

Pride is more than conceit, self-centeredness, arrogance or haughtiness; though those might be symptoms. It is enmity against God and against their fellow man. Enmity means hatred towards, hostility to, or a state of opposition. It is the opposite of the Golden Rule of loving God and loving your neighbor as yourself. It is putting yourself, your will, before God's.

When we are prideful we crave respect, honor and power. We look to others, to determine our self worth, constantly ranking our wealth, beauty, intelligence, athletic prowess or piety to determine our status. CS Lewis wrote “Pride is essentially competitive by its very nature. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only having more of it than the next man.” It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone.

Pride harms our relationships: It causes us to judge tone, inflection, intentions, and motives of others to determine how others value us. When we are prideful, we don’t receive counsel easily. We wrap ourselves in defensiveness to shield ourselves from criticism. If we are proud when we fail, we blame others or lament that world is an unjust terrible place.

When we are prideful, we act only in our self interest. We view others not for who they are but what they could provide us. We hold unrealistic expectations of other’s behavior. And when these expectations are not met, we become resentful. When we are prideful, we hold grudges and are slow to forgive, especially to loved ones. We would rather hold on to offenses to justify our injured feelings.

When we are prideful, we suffer alone, instead of turning to God or to others. We do not want to be seen as weak or not in control. However if we receive adoration about how well we are managing our affliction, we could wear our illness as a red badge of courage and exaggerate the ailments. When we are prideful we give to the needy only if it fits our goals, which is to exalt our status and position over another.

When we are prideful, we suffer both as church-goers and non believers. In church we cloak ourselves in exclusiveness and legalism so that our faith is not open to question and we shun newcomers and new ideas. If we are prideful non believers, we avoid church because we don’t want to submit to God’s will. We make excuses why we don’t attend church because we don’t like the peoples’ judgments or we don’t need church to be spiritual, so we refuse to grow in faith.

In the beatitudes, Jesus said “Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.” If you look at the Greek translation it means submissive and is usually used referring to a wild horse that has been broken. So the connotation may have been referring to submitting to God’s will, not only the weak and lowly. Humility is the answer to sin of pride. We can practice humility in our daily lives to overcome our pride.

Give thanks to God for His creation, and for the blessings and talents He gave you. Pray for the people who give you strife. When you are wronged, forgive without condition. When you sin, apologize without justification. When you succeed be humble, when you fail, seek the lesson not the blame. Offer the good works you do to God without judging the recipient or for purpose of recognition.

Choose being kind over being right. Practice active listening. Listen to God to discern His will and listen to others ideas, needs and sufferings. Avoid sarcasm and hurtful rhetorical questions. And above all else, love God and love your neighbor as yourself.

Mike Munson

Angel Tree Gifts

The Outreach Ministry Team invites everyone to participate in the Angel Tree Gift project during advent this year. Beginning on November 30th, the tree in Fitch Hall will be filled with paper ornaments that provide gift ideas for needy children in the Lompoc community. The families are affiliated with Domestic Violence Solutions and the Good Samaritan agency (Marks House, Recovery Way Home, and the Bridge House).

The suggested expenditure for each child is \$30-\$50. Details about the project will be posted in Fitch Hall and Outreach Committee members will be on hand to answer questions on Sundays in December. For those who would rather make a donation and have the committee purchase the items for a child, donations are welcome.

Gifts need to be brought to the church by Sunday, December 21st, when they will be presented at the altar prior to delivery to the participating agencies. For more information please contact Molly Gerald at 737-1809.

Thank you notes received

Thank you for your \$300 donation. With your support we are able to continue our mission of providing Seniors with volunteer services, allowing them to continue living independently while maintaining quality of life.

*A. Payne, Executive Director
Community Partners in Caring*

Thank you for the lovely luncheon. What a wonderful thing you do each year. I always look forward to it. This luncheon was a delicious and delightful gathering.

V. Hayes

The Lord Sprayer

Our Father, who does art in heaven,
How didja know my name?
Thy kingdom come thy well be dug
Unearth as it is in heaven
Gives us this steak and jelly bread
And forgive us our trash baskets
As we forgive those who put trash in our baskets
And lead a snot into temptation
But deliver us email.
For wine is the kingdom
And the powder of glory,
Forever Old Men

Submitted by Mike Munson

Fourth Quarter Outreach Committee Donations

A total of \$1900 was donated to:

- ◆ Domestic Violence Solutions (food, shelter, support counseling)
- ◆ DeWees Center Senior Nutrition Program
- ◆ Good Samaritan - transportation
- ◆ Good Samaritan - Winter utilities program
- ◆ City of Promise Shelter

Happy Holidays from your Outreach Team: Bits B., Charlotte C., Norma A.,
Charlotte H., Barbara H., Molly G., Ron P., Sheryl M., and Linda E

CONVERSATION OVERHEARD AT COFFEE HOUR
BETWEEN A PERSON NEW TO THE CHURCH AND
AN ALTAR GUILD MEMBER:



"Hi! You look kind of sad. Can I help?

Oh, I guess it's nothing really important. I just expected to see that pretty green thingy that the Priest wears. I just loved that one. Why isn't he wearing it? Did something happen to it?

No.

Then why isn't he wearing it? I really liked it. I do a lot of sewing myself and so I pay attention to that sort of thing. So why did he change it?

Had to.

Had to? Why?

Tradition.

Tradition? But why?

It's always been done that way.

But I liked it. It's beautiful. I miss it. I don't understand.

Well, he changed it because it's time for another color. It's a rule. There are other colors. Trust me. You'll like those, too. They're nice and then someday, the green one will show up again. You'll see.

Who would make a rule like that?

(whispering) A Catholic did it.

In THIS church? A Catholic did it? Are you sure?

Don't get excited. It was a long time ago and really had nothing to do with this church. Well, it did, but it didn't. I'll explain. It all happened in the 4th Century when a Pope named Innocent III decided that there would be five colors to symbolize the Seasons of the Church.

A POPE did that? But why?

Who knows. He just did. People do that. Anyway, he decided there would be five colors, violet, white, black, red and green. The Lutheran and Anglican Churches, who had emerged from the Reformation, decided they'd keep the colors, but then the colors kind of disappeared along the way along with most of the other rituals from the worship of the Reformed Churches. And then, during the 20th Century during the ecumenical Liturgical Movement, somebody said, "Aha! Look what we've been missing! Color! That's great and people will like that and, suddenly, everything old became new again! Confused yet?

Very! I still don't see why he had to get rid of that beautiful thing he wore.

Chasuble.

What?

Chasuble. That's what it's called. And the things that hang on the pulpit and lots of other things were that same color -- green.

Right. Green. I like green.

I like green, too, but it had to go. Let me explain something to you.

Please do.

Okay, stay with me on this. Colors express emotions. See how much you love the green thingy our Priest wore?

Chasuble.

Right! Chasuble. It changed to another color because the Church Season changed. For instance, these are the colors that are used in most Episcopal Churches. We've got Red, Blue, Purple, White, Black and sometimes Gold. We have the Green you like and it's used in what we call "Ordinary Time". That's the longest stretch of time in the Church Seasons. It's all about growth -- growth of the soul and the spirit, growth of knowledge. Some people call it "the green meadow" because it speaks of spring and "making all things new" and some call it "The Looong Green Season" and wish for a change and the change is always coming with another color.

Well, I like other colors, too. So what's next? I like Purple,

You're in luck! Purple comes along next.

Why?

Why what?

Why is it purple?

Because it's Advent and that starts on November 30 this year, and if it's Advent, it's bound to be Purple.

Oh.

You'll like Advent. On the First Sunday in Advent, the thingy the Priest will be wearing . . .

Chasuble.

Right. Chasuble. The Chasuble will be Purple and the hangings on the pulpit, all Purple. Purple is the color that speaks of royalty and the sovereignty of Christ. But, on the other hand, we might use Blue. Some people call it "Mary Blue" and it's beautiful, too. It represents the night sky and symbolizes Christ, who in one ancient Hymn is called the "Dayspring", and it also speaks of the night He was born. Blue is used more in recent years because it's easy to get blue dye now. There's a story in the Bible, I think it's in Acts, about a lady named Lydia, who was involved in the dye trade and she helped to finance St. Paul in his mission-

any work. Blue was very expensive and that's why Purple was used so much. Anyway, where was I? Oh, yes. Just as Mary waited for the birth of Jesus, so we view Advent as a time of waiting and anticipation. Some churches use Rose for the third Sunday in Advent. The third Sunday is called "Gaudate Sunday". Gaudate is Latin for "rejoice" and that's what we anticipate and wait for and rejoice about -- the birth of Jesus. We are preparing for the coming of the Kingdom of Christ. Advent means "coming" and that's what we're waiting for, His coming. Advent is an exciting time. There'll be an Advent Wreath with four candles to signify that Christ is the Light of the World. The third candle is Rose colored because

Because that's the Sunday that you use the color Rose.

Right! We light one candle each Sunday.

Because it's tradition.

Right. It's tradition. There's a lot more to tell if you're interested and there's another tradition that's dear to the hearts of all Episcopalians.

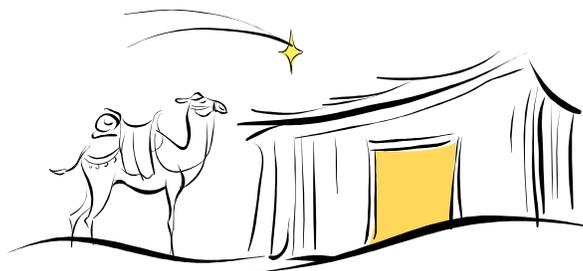
Another color?

Actually, it's coffee. Let's go get a cup and I'll tell you a lot more."

Dede Dunn

St. Mary's Parish Family Sharing

One of the traditions at St. Mary's which we really love is the sharing of our family creches. Please consider bringing a creche to place on the green tables which will be in the big windows. They will be there throughout Advent and Christmas. You may bring them in at any time during the season. For more information, please call Glen Newcomb at 733-3811.



e-Mail Addresses:

Fr. Michael:
 rector@stmaryslompoc.org
 sensei1633@aol.com
 The Rev. Deacon Dr. Judy Lin
 revdrjlin@gmail.com
 The Rev. Deacon Paul Eustace
 deaconpaul@stmaryslompoc.org

Elizabeth: Parish Administrator
 admin@stmaryslompoc.org
 Michele Pittenger: Christian Formation
 formation@stmaryslompoc.org
 Wardens and Clerk:
 vestry@stmaryslompoc.org
 Bells Editor:
 john.beeler@verizon.net

Sunday Eucharist
 8:00 AM and 10:00AM

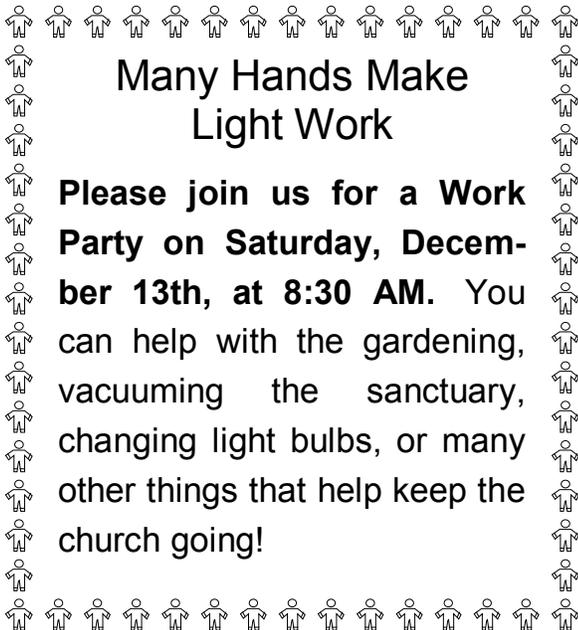
Church Office Hours
 Monday - Thursday 10 AM - 4 PM

Telephone: (805) 733-4400
 Fax: (805) 733-4405

www.stmaryslompoc.org



Virginia McConnell	12/01
Chris Frenk	12/02
Veronica Gasca	12/03
John Beeler	12/05
Jim Everly	12/05
Jeanne Johnston	12/06
Jeanne Macomber	12/11
Will Sharp	12/13
Jose Griffith-Montague	12/14
Stewart Johnston	12/15
Mary Alice Saladino	12/19
Ronald Pace	12/21
Kathleen Sipos	12/21
Rebecca Larson	12/22
Heather Roell	12/22
Trina Larson	12/24
Donato Ricci	12/27



Many Hands Make Light Work

Please join us for a Work Party on Saturday, December 13th, at 8:30 AM. You can help with the gardening, vacuuming the sanctuary, changing light bulbs, or many other things that help keep the church going!

Financial Statement As of October 31, 2014

Undesignated checking & savings \$88,587
Designated Checking \$47,408

	Actual Oct '14	Actual Jan - Oct '14	Budget Jan - Oct '14
Income (Including Faith Pledges)*	\$32,400	\$259,705	\$263,586
Expenses	\$25,362	\$257,100	\$267,823
Net income/(loss)	\$7,038	\$2,605	-\$4,237

*Faith Pledges as of Oct '14: \$18,006

Prayers of the People

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

Lord, open our hearts to your perfect will, that we may faithfully intercede on behalf of those we bring to you now in prayer:

**Gisele Boyd-Snee, Don and Irene Cunningham, Helen Down,
Isla Hill, Sheila Holley, Shelie Jackson, Stan Sheldon,
Richard Newcomb, Gerry Pittenger,**

And those serving in the armed forces remembered by our parishioners:
**Alana, Allan, Bill, Carl, Carlos, Eddie, Ericka, Gustavo, James, Jason,
John. Josh, Kevin, Kimberly, Matthew, Michael, Nicholas, Paige,
Patrick, Robert, Ryan, Virginia, and Whitney.**

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 Prayer Request slip or Pew card, submit via our website www.stmaryslompoc.org call any of our Prayer Ring members, or email Courtney Tan at Urquhart_tan@hotmail.com. Please indicate "Prayer Request in Subject." Thank you!

*"Whenever two of you on earth agree in prayer,
it will be done by My Father in Heaven."*

Matthew 18:19