



The Bells of Saint Mary's

June 2015

Going On Mission

I first went on mission to Alaska. I was a lay person, working for the Bishop of Los Angeles, and did a lot of work in the small churches of our diocese in Congregational Development. I was encouraged by the Bishop to lend my gifts and skills to work in the broader church that would enhance my knowledge and experience so that I had more to offer to our diocese. Bp. Borsch was very supportive of that sort of thing. I had done a lot of work with the National Church office of Children's Ministry and was part of a liturgy team, organized through the National Church that did innovative work at conferences and meetings held throughout the country. It was through that work that I met Bishop Mark MacDonald, then the Bishop of Alaska.

My first trip to Alaska was a ten day journey, six of which were spent on a boat going down the Yukon River stopping at villages along the way where the Bishop, who was on the boat with us, would gather the people and worship in the village Episcopal Church. Circle, Beaver, Fr. Yukon and Steven's Village were the four I went to on that first trip. Everywhere we went, people were so happy to see us, and to greet us, and feed us and gather and tell stories of the



Inside this issue:

[Vacation Bible School](#)
[Miss Ella and the Window](#)
[Opportunities for Ministry](#)

[Rite 13 Invitation](#)
[Birthdays](#)
[Finance Report](#)

people. Such free sharing and love. It was remarkable to me, as I had never seen experienced such genuine warmth and excitement about church before. It was the beginning of a true call to work among First Nation and Native American people in the Episcopal Church.

I went back to Alaska four more times, each time going further out...either way up North, near the Artic Sea, or way out west, Kotzebue, where the Porcupine and Yukon Rivers meet, or way out east to Eagle, the first village on the Yukon inside Alaska. In between there were many other villages and experiences that left a print on my heart like indelible ink...there forever.

So...going to the tiny little village of Red Shirt on the Pine Ridge Reservation was something I was looking forward to in a big way, when Robert Two Bulls invited me to come in 2001. We were a small group of ten that went that first year. And yet, the fire inside me that was so happy with the ministry among Native people was kindled and burned from that first trip on.

Over the years, we have had a lot of young people go on mission to Red Shirt. I don't even know how many...but some groups have been as many as 30 young folks, and some as small as 10...but I do know, because so many of them are still in touch with me, that we are changing lives, one young person at a time. That is what going on mission does. It changes lives.

When I came to you, I brought with me my passion, my skills, and my willingness to work hard at being a good priest and a good preacher. Part of that dove-tailed easily into my love of hard work since there was a lot of work to be done. My need for renewal is something I have come to understand is necessary for the passion and the skills to stay free and strong. And renewal is not something to work hard at...it is something to release into. This too is a lesson for me.

Red Shirt is one of the places on earth that are renewing for me. It is why I am so passionate about it. The beauty is amazing. The people are so wonderful, so loving and generous. The work that we do is so appreciated by this folks who so desperately need so much, and we are the ones who have it to give away. Knowing this, I want to share it with our young people, so that they can appreciate more fully how richly they have been blessed by our Lord. Also, I have been active in youth ministry for a long time, and I know how important it is to have mentors who believe in youth, model for youth, and are not afraid of youth. Being someone who is not afraid to live their morals and beliefs is what most young people I have ever been active in ministry with are looking for. That, coupled with my strong belief that 99% of all the people in the world are good and loving and capable of showing their grateful hearts to another is what keeps me going back, keeps me raising money, keeps me enduring the hardships of going on mission to Red Shirt.

I know that you understand that what you are doing, by helping send kids on mission, is engaging the morals and life-lessons that we have learned ourselves, and are trying our best to teach to our children. I just want to make sure and tell you thank you. What you are doing is so im-

portant to me, because it is helping those who need us. Both our kids, and the people of Red Shirt Village.

I want you to know that yesterday I got an email telling me that the Red Shirt Project has been awarded \$3000.00 from the Bishop Stevens Foundation of our diocese. Previously, I got an award from a different foundation for \$4000.00. This means that as of this writing, we have close to \$8500 in our account, and still need about \$16,000 more. I am encouraged that we are a third of the way there. Please consider helping us make our goal, with whatever amount you can give. Checks can be made out to St. Mary's and write RSP on the memo line. It will be credited to your giving to the parish, and will appear on your annual statement.

Thank you for your support for this amazing mission work of our church.

With my hand on the plow,

Fr. Michael+



Dear parents:

As you know, Summer is coming soon. This year's VBS will focus on Noah's Ark and take place from June 22-26, 2015, from 9^{am} - 1^{pm}. As a special treat, this year we are planning to see the Alpaca ranch out on Cebada Canyon Road. On Sunday, May 31st, Christian Formation will have sign-up sheets and permission slips for the field trip out. We will also put out posters for proposed activities.

This year, we are adding a new wrinkle. The members of our youth group are aging out of VBS, so they have been offered the opportunity to participate as helpers. As helpers, their hours will be recorded and I will, as Missioner of Christian Formation, provide letters of recommendation for job and scholarship applications. Lists of proposed volunteer activities, expectations for volunteers, and sample time sheets will also be available for your perusal.

In addition, we will have Sunday School through the summer. I will be teaching sessions about images of water in the bible. We will look particularly at how water is used in baptism and explore what Jesus meant when He offered living water to the woman at the well. I hope your children can join us.

Miss Ella and the Window

I get a bit sentimental when baseball season begins. I'm a fanatic. A few years ago, after saying that they would never do it in my lifetime, miraculously, my Boston Red Sox won the World Series and then, they did it again. They don't do it often and so it's a time of celebration for me, a lifelong fan. I'm also reminded that an Uncle, one of Mama's Brothers, taught me to play catch when I was five years old. He was a baseball coach and taught English at a high school a few miles from us. He was very special, not just because he taught me to play catch, but because of a great gift he gave me. These spring days remind me of those days and the way my little hands burned when he threw the ball to me.

He often came into Houston to see baseball games and once caught a pop fly as he sat in the bleachers with The Uncles and Grandpa. More than that, he gave the baseball to me! I prized that ball over every gift I was ever given. MY very own baseball that had been touched by a REAL PITCHER!

I showed it off to all the kids in the neighborhood and even to the adults who would take it and show me how to hold it to throw a slider or a knuckle ball. The other kids were envious, I could tell. One offered me fifty cents for it and one of the older boys said it was worth at least a dollar which he would be happy to give me in return for the greatest treasure since they opened King Tut's tomb. I told them that we could play with it, but no sale.

And so, on a warm, perfect summer's day, a game of work up was started. We always played in the green space between The Big House and Aunt Katie and Uncle Will's house next door. It was a perfect place for setting up wickets for a game of croquet or for The Uncles to play horseshoes or for serious games of baseball work up. Since it was MY baseball, I was allowed to stand far out in the field and run for the ball if it rolled out there. I stood very close to Grandpa's tool and wood shed that backed up to the Valenti house. And so the game began.

One of my cousins, who was visiting us, was at bat. He was fifteen and played baseball after school during the school year. He was a fearsome hitter. The pitcher wound up and my cousin swung and missed. He missed again and then, IT happened! He got a hit. He didn't just get any old hit. He got a hit that would have made Ruth or Gehrig proud.

The ball flew like a beautiful bird, high and soaring, way over my head. I watched it sail along and smiled and then there was a crash and a scream from the direction of the Valenti house! The "team" scattered in all directions, each to a hiding place. I stood alone by the wood shed, rooted to the spot, utterly terrified. MY BASEBALL was GONE! I didn't comprehend that a window had been broken until Mama Valenti came screaming from their back door, waving MY BASEBALL that appeared to be covered in some kind of goo.

From The Big House came Grandma, Irish Auntie, The Uncles and Grandpa. Mama Valenti was screaming that she was just about to "punch down" some bread dough that

she was making for dinner, when some vandal threw a ball through her kitchen window. She cried that it could have killed her and that it had landed in her bread dough. (So THAT'S what that goo was.) By now, everybody was out by the wood shed and Grandma had grabbed me by the arm and yelled, "How could you doing that? I'm telling your Mama that no good could come of you, a little girl, having a baseball! Shame! Shame upon you! You know what is happening to you now? God is not marked! (Irish Auntie said, "Mocked, Ella. Mocked!" As usual, The Uncles laughed.) But Grandma wasn't listening. When she was on one of her righteous rants, she was not to be deterred. "You are a bad girl!" Grandma was waving her arms and Mama Valenti was wailing and waving MY BASEBALL.

I finally found my voice enough to say, "I didn't throw the ball! I didn't throw the ball! Really I didn't!" I began to cry and retreated to my usual place of safety behind Irish Auntie's skirts. Grandma reached over and grabbed me again and gave me a good shake. Grandpa tried to intervene. "Ella, I don't think she's big enough to throw the ball that far." Grandma wouldn't listen and wouldn't let go of my arm which, by now, had grown quite numb, when suddenly, from all directions came the members of "the team". They crept forward mostly away from Grandma's direction. My cousin walked up to Grandpa and said, "I did it, sir. I hit the ball. I broke the window. I'm sorry. Don't blame her. It's her ball, but I hit it." One of The Uncles laughed and said, "That's quite a hit you got. A homer in anybody's ball park." Everyone laughed except Grandma and Mama Valenti.

Grandpa took the ball from Mama Valenti and took his bandana handkerchief from his pocket and wiped off the bread dough and handed it to me. He looked at "the team" and said, "From now on, if you're going to hit the ball that hard, you need to go down to Grody's Diamond to play. Okay?" They all nodded and scattered again.

I was relieved to have MY BASEBALL back again and grateful to my cousin for telling the truth. (He ended up having to mow the Valenti lawn for about two months and his Dad paid for the window.) As for me, I learned something that I needed to learn and that I hope is still true as I look at my country today. Truth, in all its glory and warts will finally come out. When it does, the liar will be shamed and the truth will prevail. I hope that's still the way things work. MY BASEBALL is long gone, burned in a house fire years ago. My cousin was killed during WWII. When I think of him, I think of that beautiful hit and the fact that he could have just kept his mouth shut and let Grandma exact her punishment reserved for "bad girls". But he chose the thing that would make him a hero. He told the truth. I wish there was more of it around today. Sometimes it takes a window to make a person see things more clearly, even a broken one. GO RED SOX!! YOU, TOO, ASTROS!!!

Dede Dunn

Opportunities for Ministry:

As the Vestry Liaison for the Inreach Ministry Team I have run across several opportunities for exercising your ministries for both Out Reach and In Reach. Please read on and see if any of these speak to your calling.

1. Outreach: An Elizabeth Arroyo called and talked with Elizabeth in the office about opportunities for anyone in our parish who might be interested in helping out with short term Foster Care for children and particularly babies who come into the system. Ms. Arroyo is with the Santa Maria Foster Care Agency. These little ones NEED someone to care for them and love them until permanent homes can be found for them. If you are interested in finding out more about this, Please call Ms. Elizabeth Arroyo at (805) 215 3464.

2. Outreach: Elizabeth got a call in the church office from a Patricia Kelly with the national Food for the Poor organization. This is a national charity which helps feed the poor all over the world, but particularly in the United States. Their organization had somehow heard of St. Mary's and our help with the " First Nation's Kitchen" in Minnesota and our work with the Lompoc Ministerial Association "Feed the Hungry" that we do each first Thursday of the month. If you wish to find out more about this group, you may call Patricia Kelly a (877) 654-2960 extension 6155. OR talk with Glen and Mary Newcomb, we donate monthly to this group.

3. Inreach: We have had several parishioners sign up to help with the Team's "Driving St. Mary's" to take persons to doctor's appointments etc. But no one has volunteered to be the CONTACT PERSON for that ministry. We need someone who is willing to be the co-ordinator to whom Elizabeth in the office or Fr. Michael can call to find a driver from our list to help out with requests for transportation. This does not mean that you always have to be the driver. Please let Glen Newcomb know if you are called to be this contact person.

4. Inreach: We have had several parishioners sign up to help with placing prepared meals into our freezer to be given to parishioners in need of a meal or two when they come home from surgery or the like.

But no one has volunteered to be the CONTACT PERSON for that ministry. We need someone who is willing to be the co-ordinator to whom Elizabeth, Fr. Michael or other Ministers can call to get more people to donate meals and to get the meals out to persons in need of those meals. Glen has organized the freezer and thrown out several meals from 2012. Please let Glen Newcomb know if you are called to be this contact person.

Dear Parents of St. Mary's:

*Your teenager is a member of the Rite-13 Sunday school class at St. Mary's. Rite-13 takes its name from a special liturgy designed for your son or daughter as an important member of St. Mary's. I want you to be aware that during the next few weeks we will be preparing for this important liturgical rite of passage called "**The Celebration of Manhood and Womanhood**". The ceremony will take place during our normal **10:00 a.m. Eucharist on June 7, 2015.***

This ceremony is the liturgical cornerstone of the Journey to Adulthood program and it is a wonderful way to acknowledge the changes happening in your teen. Journey to Adulthood gives teenagers a safe place to wrestle with these changes. It also offers ceremonies that serve as Rites of Passage. In our culture, the line from childhood to adulthood is blurry at best and it's hard to know when we are "grown up". The Rite-13 liturgy is designed to welcome teens to the journey of becoming adults, and to celebrate publicly, and in the midst of our worship, God's gift of manhood and womanhood. This liturgy recognizes the holy power of creation that God gives to each one of us.

We often take it for granted that our teens feel accepted and appreciated at St. Mary's, but during these years of adolescence—this time of change and uncertainty—our young people need to hear from us that they are extraordinary. We want to affirm the unique and wonderful gifts of each teen involved. To that end, the names of each teenager will be mentioned in the prayers of the people the month prior to the celebration. We'd also encourage you to pray specifically for your teenager and their peers as they stand on the brink of adulthood.

*In order to prepare for this important event, we'd like to invite you and your Rite-13 teenager to share a special dinner with us the night before. We'll gather in Fitch Hall on **Saturday night, June 6, 2015, from 6:30-8:30.** Please wear party clothes and join us for a wonderful dinner in honor of your teenager. This will be like a rehearsal dinner before a wedding—a time to reflect on where we've been before we take a big step into who we will become.*

I hope you will make plans to join us. Please call me in the church office at 805-733-4400 to reserve your place.

*In His Peace,
Michele Pittenger*

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Sunday Eucharist
8:00 AM and 10:00AM

Church Office Hours
Monday - Thursday 10 AM - 4 PM

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Sharon LeRoy	06/02
Charlotte Hayes	06/03
Jeanne Kendall	06/07
Ron Fairbanks	06/09
Neiko Pagaling	06/14
Alicia Hamilton	06/17
Kira Munson	06/19
Stan Sheldon	06/19
Sheryl Murray	06/22

**Many Hands Make
Light Work**

**Please join us for a Work
Party on Saturday, June 8th,
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 go-
ing!

