



# The Mike

The Newsletter of St. Michael & All Angels Episcopal Church, Studio City, CA

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## Giving up & Giving Back: Reclaiming Lent

By the Reverend Dan Justin

**W**e have come to one of my favorite seasons of the church year—Lent. I know, I know. This is a bit odd. Most people dread the idea of Lent. One friend of mine is fond of saying “I have given up Lent for Lent.” He objects to the season so much he refuses to even acknowledge that it is happening. Lent is a season of penitence, self-denial, fasting and forgiveness. Color and decoration are stripped away from the church. It is no wonder that people are not really fond of Lent. But I don’t think of Lent as an opportunity for depression—I see it as an opportunity. I have heard Lent referred to as the bright sadness; the springtime for the soul. It is a time of new life and growth pushing up through the soil of our hearts—reaching towards the sunlight that will shine on it at Easter.

So how can we reclaim Lent this year? How can we make this season of the church year a significant part of our spiritual lives? First, stop giving things up for the sake of giving something up. Giving up chocolate, television, gadgets, Internet, fast food, or any number of other things that people give up just to say that you are denying yourself some thing is missing the point of the discipline. Lent becomes a season of inconvenience rather than a spiritual discipline. Giving things up for Lent with the ulterior motive of losing ten pounds or breaking some bad habit also misses the point. It makes the season about you rather than about your life with God. If that is what Lent has become then I agree with my friend. Let’s give up Lent for Lent.

I have found meaning in the idea of giving up and giving back. Let me try to explain what I mean through a few examples. Fasting is one way. Now, I am not much of a faster. I love food and to go a whole day without food is next to impossible for me. So during Lent I may choose to fast just at lunch time. I give up lunch but, and more importantly, I give that time I would have spent eating back to God. I take my lunch hour (or half hour, or fifteen minutes—whatever time I would have spent

eating) and I spend it with God—I pray, I read scripture, I read other sacred texts, I sit in a church or chapel in silence. The point is what I give up I replace with time spent with God. My fast itself becomes a feast—a feast of God’s gracious love and presence.



But I also remember that I am called by Christ to not just love God but also love my neighbor. To that end, I keep track of what I would have spent on that lunch. Each day that I observe my fast of lunch, spending time with the Holy One, I keep

track of what I would have spent on food. On Good Friday I donate that amount of money to Episcopal Relief and Development. This is just one example of a way to give up and give back. The important part of the discipline is that what I am giving up provides time to

spend with God in prayer, study or service to the world. Don’t want to miss a meal—how about giving up a favorite television show. Use that half hour or hour you would be watching television to read, study and/or pray.

I keep threatening to declare what I have deemed a “half-price fast” for Lent one of these years. My idea is that I determine what I would like to order off a menu and calculate how much I would spend. I then divide that amount in two—one half is mine to order from the menu. This will require changing my order and eating less. The other half of what I would have spent is then saved and sent to Episcopal Relief and Development on Good Friday. It is a half-price fast. I only spend half of what I would have on food during these forty days so that I can give the other half away. Each meal would provide an opportunity to remember that God calls us to care for those who are hungry in this world. This is just an idea that has been rattling around in my heart for a while. I may just try it this year.

See *RECTOR*, page 2

### Lent, Holy Week, and Easter

at St. Michael and All Angels

#### Sundays during Lent

8:00 and 10:30 a.m.

9:30 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

#### Palm Sunday

8:00 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

#### Maundy Thursday

6:30 p.m.

#### Good Friday

Noon and 7:00 p.m.

#### Easter Eve

7:30 p.m.

#### Easter Day

8:00 a.m.

10:30 a.m.

11:30 a.m.

#### February 26, March 4, 11, 18, 25

Holy Eucharist

Adult Forum

Children’s Sunday School

#### April 1

Holy Eucharist

Holy Eucharist with Palm Sunday procession

#### April 5

Agapé Supper, Holy Eucharist, washing of feet, and stripping of the altar

#### April 6

Good Friday Liturgy and Stations of the Cross

#### April 7

The Great Vigil of Easter

#### April 8

Holy Eucharist

Holy Eucharist

Easter Egg Hunt for children

# A Welcoming Sunday for the Rev. Dan Justin

by Margie Mullen

In 2000, when I was new to the Episcopal Church, I started going to All Saints, Pasadena. I was so overwhelmed by the beauty of the service, I cried almost every Sunday. However, there was one Sunday that touched my heart the most. All Saints calls it Welcome Back Sunday and it is a Sunday in the middle of September, when everyone is coming back from the summer.

To me, what is so special about that day is the procession of all the ministries, with two members of each ministry carrying a colorful banner down the middle aisle of the church. I was a puddle of tears by the end of the procession and these puddles appeared each Welcome Back Sunday in the four years I attended.

Fast forward to February 5th, the Rev. Dan Justin's first Sunday. To me, it was extremely important that our community of St. Mike's welcome Fr. Dan as Rector in the same way All Saints welcomes its congregation back from summer. Although we had organized a ministry procession during Henry Atkins's time here, the Vestry agreed that February 5th was a great day to again break out the ministry signs.

There have been a number of changes in the parish composition during the past few years. Some ministries had died and others had been born. It was important that we, the congregation, see that life at St. Mike's exists in a new and vibrant way. Our seeing that vibrancy is just as important as Dan Justin seeing it. Actually, perhaps we need to see it more. He probably already knew it.

So there we were, that February 5th, with 20 different parishioners, each carrying a different ministry sign, showing ourselves and the new Rector, that we are ready for a new era. If you were not there that day, but want to involve yourself in St. Mike's, there is a ministry that is just right for you and here is a list of a few of them: Stewardship, Children's Church, Finance



Committee, Lectoring, Food Pantry, Healing Prayer, Wig Washing, Altar Guild, Ushering, Acolyting (at the 8:00) or Master of Ceremonies (at the 10:30), Youth Group, Community Outreach, Book Discussion, Soldier Care, Solar Outreach, Pastoral Care, Hospitality, and PRISM. There is a place for each of us. We just have to find it.

See more pictures of the day on page 5.

## Rector from page 1

The point is this: Lent should not be the season of inconvenience nor the time to give something up for the sake of giving something up—or worse—giving something up for self gain. It is the bright sadness; the springtime for the soul. It is the season we focus on our life with God and our call to serve the world. It is the preparation for the feast of feasts we will celebrate at the Great Vigil of Easter on April 7th.

How will you reclaim Lent this year? What will you give up and how will you give back?

## March Birthdays

Day	Name
3	Jay Hathaway
4	Gail Green
10	Stephanie Dunning Oliver Helmink
15	Betty Ferrell Dennis Vasquez Samantha Rupnik
21	Gwynneth Renton
23	Margaret Renton Jackson Prybil
27	Steve Wright
28	Chris Long Jade Jacomb
29	Leslie Chapman-Rose Austin Baggett JD Adams
31	Loretta Coha

## March Anniversaries

Day	Name
3	Ron & Denise Schwartz
10	Julie Meine & Dick Bates
16	Paul & Lois Vaughan
25	Margie & Liz Mullen

**Should you be listed here?** Or, if you wish to leave your birthday or anniversary unpublished, give the church office a call or e-mail (administrator@stmikessc.org) to let us know. *Please Note: Birthdays and Anniversaries will be celebrated on the last Sunday of each month.*

## As you do your weekly grocery shopping, remember these items that are always needed by the North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry

*Canned fruit and vegetables.  
Baby food in plastic jars.  
Tuna.  
Peanut butter in plastic jars.  
Powdered milk in individual packets.  
Individual size snacks.  
Bags of dry beans and rice.  
Plastic and paper shopping bags.  
Diapers and feminine hygiene items.  
Travel-size soap, toothpaste & disposable razors.  
And money!*

## Treasurer's Corner

### January 2011—Revenue and Expense Summary

	January Actual	January Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenue	\$ 23,141	\$ 23,141	\$ 23,141	\$ 23,141
Total Expense	33,910	49,425	33,910	49,425
Net	(\$ 9,990)	(\$ 26,284)	(\$ 9,990)	(\$ 26,284)



**A**lthough 2012 began on January 1st, the year for St. Michael's really began with the Annual Meeting. On Sunday, January 15th our Annual Meeting was attended by a significant number of parishioners. We shared a wonderful potluck lunch and we were able to reflect on the many successful worship and outreach activities we had in 2011. One of the many reasons why we look forward to the Annual Meeting is that it gives us the opportunity to recognize and thank the many folks who contribute time, talent, and energy to making St. Michael's such a warm and welcoming community. And, of course, an Annual Meeting is not complete without a plumbing problem adding to the day's festivities. (The plumbing problem turned out to be very minor and the Sunnyside Preschool offered to pay for the repair.)

We also had the opportunity to thank our two outgoing Vestry members, Gail Green and Norma Johnson, for

their outstanding service on the Vestry. We welcome two new Vestry members Peter Juzwiak and Mary Ann Jacobson (both have previously served on the Vestry). We look forward to the addition of their leadership skills to the St. Michael's Vestry. Betsy Hailey and David Connors were elected to full three-year terms (both were eligible as they had been completing a term to which someone else had been originally elected).

On Sunday, January 29th we celebrated Mark Shier's last Sunday with us as our Interim Priest. At the Coffee Hour after the 10:30am service we had the opportunity thank Mark for his wonderful dedication and service to St. Michael's. We presented Mark with a Memory Book, a gift certificate to Amazon.com and an icon of St. Michael. We hope that he can enjoy more of his retirement now and we look forward to visits from him in the future!

On Sunday, February 5th we welcomed Dan Justin, our new Rector. We had one service that morning so that all parishioners could celebrate Dan's first service as one community of faith. Vestry members and Committee Chairs participated in the Processional. After the service we had a celebration in the Parish Hall festively decorated by Ging Molera. Dan has been with us for three weeks and his passion, enthusiasm, and love for St. Michael's is absolutely incredible to behold. We are very thankful that God has brought us together!

The Vestry will have an all-day retreat on Saturday, February 25th. This will be an opportunity for Dan and the Vestry to begin working together as we learn more about our individual faith journeys and determine Vestry liaisons for the various parish ministries. As we begin this new year in earnest, we are so excited about all the opportunities that lay before us.

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## Adult Formation at St. Michael and All Angels

### Sunday mornings at 9:30

by Dan Justin

**T**his spring we have begun a new conversation at 9:30 am on Sunday mornings. Our discussions are designed to explore the beliefs and practices of the Episcopal Church. The Diocese of Chicago has developed a wonderful tool to help people explore what it means to be an Episcopalian and how that looks in their lives.

Episcopalians have been defining themselves by what they are not for a long time. Being Episcopalian is a very unique way of being Christian. Sometimes it is easier to tell people what we don't believe in hopes of distancing ourselves from other Christian traditions. We are not Roman Catholic—we don't believe only men can be priests. We are not Fundamentalists—we don't believe the scriptures must be taken literally and without question. We are not like others who argue that only a few are welcome to receive communion.

I believe it is time to change the conversation and begin claiming who we are more than who we are not. We welcome all people because we believe Jesus models that behavior. We do have strong beliefs and those beliefs lead and inform our actions in the world.

This conversation on Sundays at 9:30 am, entitled Episcopal Beliefs and Practices, is a wonderful way to explore this topic and discover who we are, what we believe and how that looks in life. If you are free at 9:30 am on Sundays, I invite you to join the conversation!

## Pizza Pizza Party!

by Paul "Radar" Reese

**W**e had great turn out on Sunday February 12th, for The Good Shepherd-Angel Guardian House Valentine's Day Party. St. Michael's Community Outreach Projects supports this worthy cause that provides housing and access to services for homeless women and their children. Many enthusiastic volunteers and children spent a couple hours in the afternoon making Valentines for their friends and moms, decorating cupcakes, and assembling their own pizza (don't worry the adult volunteers did the actual cooking part). St. Mike's was well represented with generous donations and financial support, and awesome volunteers including the Basta Ladies, the Wilson Family, and Meredith Reese. We were also fortunate to have a lot fantastic volunteers from outside the St. Mike's Community. Special thanks to Ebbie and Steve for keeping the kitchen running efficiently, and preventing me from setting myself on fire. Everybody got plenty of goodies to eat, and there was even left over pizza (Can you believe it?). Beyond a few minor stove burns (among the kitchen volunteers), and a few glue eating incidents (oddly also among the kitchen volunteers) everything went pretty smoothly, and most importantly the kids had a great time.

P.S. We even have some leftover funds from this event and I thought it would be nice to provide some more long-term supplies for Good Shepherd-Angel Guardian. When I was in the kitchen I noticed the house is running low on silverware. They accept all types of donations for their women's shelter and children's playroom. They informed Meredith and me that they are in particular need of books for teens. Contact Meredith Reese to donate. Bless you!



# Around St. Michael's...

## Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



## Parish Cleanup Day

During the parish cleanup, Denise Schwartz planted flowers in the planters on the east side of the quad. On Sundays, perhaps parishioners will adopt a planter and keep these new plants watered and looking beautiful. Your help is appreciated in maintaining the parish property.



Before



and after!



# Father Dan's First Sunday





# The Calendar

March 2012

**Sunday Schedule** • *Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.*  
 • *Adult Forum begins at 9:30 am.*  
 • *Sunday School begins at 10:30 and the children are brought into Eucharist for the Peace.*  
 • *Coffee Hour immediately follows the 10:30 am service unless otherwise noted.*

**Locations:**  
 CO: Church Office  
 CR: Choir Room  
 MR: Music Room  
 FR: Fireside Room  
 PH: Parish Hall  
 UR: Upper Room  
 YL: Youth Lounge  
 S: Sanctuary

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				<b>1</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR)	<b>2</b> 12:00 Fourth Quarter Luncheon (PH)	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> Lent 2 12:00 Healing Prayer Gathering (FR) 12:15 PM SMCOP (YL)	<b>5</b> 6:15 PM Book Discussion Group	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> 8:00 PM Lit.Up! (PH)
<b>11</b> Lent 3 Daylight Savings Time begins	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 7:00 PM Finance Committee (CO)	<b>15</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR)	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18</b> Lent 4 12:00 Healing Prayer Gathering (FR)	<b>19</b> Saint Joseph	<b>20</b> 7:00 PM Vestry (UR)	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>25</b> Lent 5	<b>26</b> Annunciation	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR)	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>



# The Calendar

April 2012

**Sunday Schedule** • *Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.*  
 • *Adult Forum begins at 9:30 am.*  
 • *Sunday School begins at 10:30 and the children are brought into Eucharist for the Peace.*  
 • *Coffee Hour immediately follows the 10:30 am service unless otherwise noted.*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> Palm Sunday 12:00 Healing Prayer Gathering (FR) 12:15 PM SMCOP (YL)	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Maundy Thursday 6:30 PM Agapé Eucharist (PH)	<b>6</b> Good Friday Parish Office Closed 12:00 Good Friday Liturgy & Stations 7:00 PM Good Friday Liturgy & Stations	<b>7</b> Holy Saturday 7:30 PM Easter Vigil
<b>8</b> Easter Day 11:30 AM Easter Egg Hunt	<b>9</b> Parish Office Closed	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> 7:00 PM Finance Committee (CO)	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> 12:00 Fourth Quarter Luncheon (PH)	<b>14</b> 8:00 PM Lit.Up! (PH)
<b>15</b> Easter 2 12:00 Healing Prayer Gathering (FR)	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> 7:00 PM Vestry (UR)	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 7:30 PM Choir Rehearsal (MR)	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> Easter 3	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Saint Mark	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> Easter 4 12:15 PM Pastoral Care Committee (FR)	<b>30</b>					

Locations:  
 CO: Church Office  
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 PH: Parish Hall  
 UR: Upper Room  
 YL: Youth Lounge  
 S: Sanctuary

## St. Michael and All Angels Church

3646 Coldwater Canyon Ave., Studio City, CA 91604

phone • 818.763.9193

fax • 818.763.2172

general e-mail • mail@stmikessc.org

web address • www.stmikessc.org

### ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



### VESTRY

Anne Kelly, Senior Warden

David Connors, Junior Warden

Peter Juzwiak, Treasurer

Alex Morales, Clerk

Diane Collins

Sarah Cook

Scott Fuchs

Betsy Hailey

Mary Ann Jacobson

Hank Meiman

Meredith Reese

Amador Rondilla

Ron Schwartz

### PARISH STAFF

#### Rector

The Rev. Dan Justin (rector@stmikessc.org)

#### Parish Administrator

Duane Steadman (administrator@stmikessc.org)

#### Director of Music

Kristen Toedtman (kristentoedtman@gmail.com)

#### Organist

Emil Iliev (emil\_iliev@yahoo.com)

### THE MIKE STAFF

#### Publisher

Duane Steadman

#### Editor Emerita

Soni Wright

### Vision Statement

*We are a welcoming and evolving community of conscience engaged in the renewal of our faith by embracing diversity and encouraging growth through prayer, scholarship, social action, and artistic endeavor.*

### Our Mission Priority

*Our mission priority is to focus on the United Nations' First Millennium Goal: To eradicate extreme hunger and poverty.*