



The Mike

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

By the Very Reverend Dan Justin

During the Sundays in Lent we have been hearing some of the great stories from the Gospel of John. We have read the story of Nicodemus visiting Jesus at night. In this story Nicodemus is told that those who wish to enter the Kingdom of Heaven must be “Born from above.” Jesus elaborates on this theme saying we must be born of “Water and Spirit.” The following week we read about the woman at the well. Jesus tells her that he offers “Living Water.” We read about a man born blind. Jesus heals him of his blindness and in that healing reveals that some people who think they can see are actually blind. The story is not really about physical blindness. The story is about spiritual blindness. In the end, Jesus gives this blind man new life.

New life—That is the consistent theme in all three of these stories found in John. What we are seeing are stories of salvation. God offers God’s people new life—we can be born again, we can drink living water so that we will never be thirsty again, and Jesus will open our eyes so we can truly see.

As I reflect on these stories this Lent, I cannot help but wonder—have you accepted the offer of new life Jesus brings? Have you had your eyes open to the things of God? Have you drunk deeply from the living water Jesus offers? Have you been born from above? Only you can answer these questions.

Now, before I go any further, I think it important to make one point. Even if your answer is “no” or “I am not sure”, I want you to know—God loves you just as you are. No matter where you are on your journey of faith you are God’s beloved. God’s love for you is not in question here. That is not the point. The point is that because of that love God is reaching to you in hopes that you will actively accept that love. God longs to bring us to new life. God longs to make us new creations. God longs to be in relationship with us; making us alive to things of the Spirit. But we can always resist that love. We

can turn away from that love.

But what will happen if we say “Yes” to that offer of love, life, living water, and new birth? What if we finally admit that we have tried things our own way? What if we finally admit that we have failed to live our lives in ways that honor God? What if we finally confess that we are sinners? Then, and only then, will we discover the true grace of God. Jesus came into the world to save sinners. Jesus lived a perfect and sinless life in order that we could see what it really means to be the human beings God created us to be. Jesus was willing to suffer death
See RECTOR, page 2



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Holy Week and Easter

at St. Michael and All Angels

Palm Sunday 8:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	April 13 Holy Eucharist Holy Eucharist with Palm Sunday procession
Maundy Thursday 6:30 p.m. 10:00 p.m.	April 17 Agapé Supper, Holy Eucharist, washing of feet, and stripping of the altar Compline
Good Friday Noon and 7:00 p.m.	April 18 Good Friday Liturgy and Stations of the Cross
Easter Eve 7:30 p.m.	April 19 The Great Vigil of Easter
Easter Day 8:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 11:30 a.m.	April 20 Holy Eucharist Holy Eucharist Easter Egg Hunt for children

Rector

from page 1

on the cross in order to take away the sin of the world. Jesus conquered evil and death at Calvary so that we might have new life. When we turn to Jesus, and believe in him, we are given new life. We are given his life. Our sins and failures are forgiven and forgotten and we are "born again." Our eyes are opened to the things of God. We drink of the living water. We are saved—saved from the life of selfishness; saved from the life of meaninglessness; saved from the power of sin which holds us captive. When we accept Jesus as our Lord and Savior our old life of sin dies and we are reborn to new life as God's sons and daughters. And all we have to do is say "Yes" to God. This new life is a free gift. We cannot earn it, we can only accept it. That is the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That is what we have been reading about this Lent.

So, the question stands—have you accepted the offer of new life Jesus brings? Have you had your eyes opened to the things of God? Have you drunk deeply from the living water Jesus offers? Have you been born from above? Now is the time to say yes to God.

Lent is coming to an end and we are about to enter Holy Week and celebrate Easter. Through the liturgies of Holy Week and Easter we become active participants in God's plan of redemption and salvation. The Easter Vigil on Saturday, April 19th is the most important service of the year. It is the central service of the entire Christian Calendar. We call to mind the great stories of salvation. We recall all that God has done to bring new life to God's people. In the center of that service we celebrate baptisms. Traditionally, adult converts are the ones who should be baptized at the vigil. Baptism is the outward and visible sign of the inward spiritual grace of new life and rebirth. If you are an adult who has never been baptized and are ready to say "Yes" to God's offer of new life you should contact me as soon as possible. I would love to have the opportunity to talk to you about what God is doing in your life. I would love to have the opportunity to baptize you at the Easter Vigil.

Blessings,

Dan+

Read the MIKE Online! Go to the St. Michael's website, www.stmikessc.org, and click on Newsletter. Back issues are available there as well.

Notes from the Music Department

by Kristen Toedtman

"O clap your hands, all ye people."

Word on applause—Each week, we in the choir prepare a piece of music to offer up as a prayer in our worship service. A time for meditation, I aim to choose music that will reflect the words of that week's scripture reading. In rehearsal, we work on technical nitty gritty so that when the time comes to sing, we can aspire to let the Spirit move us to send the words and notes up to God. That said, you, too, may feel the Spirit move you. When we sang *Down to the River to Pray* I know several of you were moved to sing along and boy am I glad you did. I also notice that when we sing a more boisterous piece, there is often applause at the end.

To applaud or not to applaud is a question that many parishes continue to ask after decades of debate (don't believe it? try a google search). I would like to share two strong beliefs of mine that may illuminate the question, if not answer it outright. I believe strongly in being moved by the Spirit. "I'm gonna sing when the Spirit says sing." If you are moved to say *Amen*, moved to sing along or even moved to applaud, there is no better time or place. Yet while some churches double as concert halls, when we are gathered for service I believe that our beautiful sanctuary is a place of worship and not entertainment. More to the point, you need not clap *for us*. Clap for God, clap for gratitude, but not out of courtesy to us musicians.

Your words of encouragement, gratitude, and feedback on the specifics of a piece are as

invaluable to me as they are heartwarming and enriching. Thank you! (Don't stop!) I know that in our society, clapping is how we express excitement. Unless you grew up snapping or waving your hands as gleeful expression, when you feel so moved, it is natural that you applaud. After all, I clap when I hear particularly good news. So if it is the Good News that brings your hands together, don't hold back! But if you clap out of habit or concern we'll interpret silence as disapproval, you need not worry. The silence following a moving piece of music or a moving sermon can become an extension of the prayer, a prayer we can bask in together.

So which is it, clap or don't clap? It's both. Let the Spirit move you. Don't worry if those around you clap and don't worry if they don't. Just know that we're praying *with you* when we sing and not performing *for you*.

Do you have a strong opinion on this topic? I'd love to discuss it more, it's a fascinating and many-faceted topic! Let's talk at coffee hour or feel free to write me an e-mail at kristentoedtman@gmail.com.

April Birthdays

Day	Name
	James Reber
11	Bradley Robertson
13	Marilyn Ballowe
18	Reeve Carney
	Trevor Vincent
19	Elisabeth Aukee
22	Zane Carney
24	Betty DuVall
25	Michael Mitchell
29	Liam Fields

April Anniversaries

Day	Name
9	Bill & Gail Wright

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

February 2014—Revenue and Expense Summary

	February Actual	February Budget	YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Total Revenue	\$ 32,927	\$ 36,067	\$ 96,785	\$ 72,135
Total Expense	38,444	36,065	76,117	72,131
Net	\$(5,517)	\$ 2	\$ 20,668	\$ 4



Lent is a 40 day period, which is a preparation for Easter. This period started on March 5th and continues through April 19th, Easter Eve. During Lent, Fr. Dan has invited us to focus on our relationship with God and to grow in faith.

One way he recommends to accomplish this is reading and reflecting on God's Holy Word. Every Sunday at 9:15am we have Adult Learning in the Ministry Center. We spend an hour studying a book in the Bible. This is a wonderful way to read and reflect on God's Holy Word, we would like to invite you to join with other members of the parish family at these enriching study sessions.



Palm Sunday is April 13th, Maundy Thursday is April 17th,

Good Friday is April 18th, Easter Eve (also known as the Easter Vigil) is April 19th and Easter Day is April 20. The parish family also is invited to attend and participate in all of these beautiful and sacred services.

Like the Resurrection of Christ, which it celebrates, the Easter Vigil begins in the darkness of the night of Holy Saturday. The Great Vigil of Easter is the very heart of the Christian year, the mother of all our celebrations and it starts at 7:30 pm. Easter Day we have two services, 8:00 am and 10:30 am. For the children, we have the Easter Egg Hunt at 11:30 am, immediately following the 10:30 am service.

We wish you a blessed and joyous Easter season.

What is a Eucharistic Visitor?

by Nancy Woods

You have probably seen Eucharistic visitors at the altar after the communion service for commissioning. The celebrant (Fr. Dan or Stefanie) says, *In the name of St. Michael and All Angels Parish, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts to those you serve so that they may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.* Then everybody responds, *We, who are many, are one body, because we share one bread and one cup. Amen.*

Just what does this mean? It means that Eucharistic visitors take blessed wafers and wine to parishioners who are not able to come to church due to various situations such as lack of transportation, illness, etc. It means that the Eucharistic visitors represent the St. Michael's congregation so that the people they visit will fully experience the community of St. Michael's.

Our current Eucharistic visitors are Betty Ferrell, Barbara King, Kathleen Taylor, Julie Meine-Bate, our seminarian Christopher Montella and Nancy Woods. Once a month we visit a parishioner and share what is happening at St. Michael's and we listen to what is going on in their lives. This leads into the communion service. Along with the communion kit which contains a small chalice along with the blessed bread and wine, we have a service leaflet that is an abbreviated version of the Sunday bulletin.

Sharing in the communion service and visit is a special time for everyone. We hear stories of people's lives—family, careers, and adventures and also learn about the early days of St. Michael's. Some of the visits are joyous while others can have a bit of sadness. All end with prayers and well wishes.

If you would like to be involved in this ministry or learn more about it, catch Fr. Dan or myself at coffee hour or call the church office at 818.763.9193 and make an appointment with Fr. Dan or with me at 818.769.2820.

The Triduum at St. Michael and All Angels

The Triduum, or The Three Great Days, is the annual celebration of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and the Great Vigil of Easter. This year the dates of this event are April 17th, 18th and 19th. You will find in this newsletter a schedule of times for each service.

The Triduum is actually one service which lasts over three days. It begins on Maundy Thursday. Here we remember Jesus celebrating the Passover with his disciples. The word "Maundy" is an abbreviated form of the Latin for "Mandate." It was during this last meal with his friends that Jesus commanded a perpetual memory of his life and sacrificial death in what is known as the Lord's Supper or communion. Jesus also gave his disciples the command that they be servants and showed the example of service by washing his disciple's feet. On Maundy Thursday we begin our service with an Agape Meal in the Ministry Center. We reenact this last supper of Jesus by celebrating the Eucharist and eating together. We then process to the church where we wash one another's feet. We then strip the altar and prepare the church and ourselves for Good Friday. There is no dismissal at the end of the Maundy Thursday service. The Triduum will continue the following day.

On Good Friday we hear the story of the passion of Jesus. We read of the crucifixion and we remember the sacrifice of Jesus' life for our salvation. This is the only service of the church year when communion is not available. Following the Good Friday liturgy we read the Stations of the Cross. Once again, there is no dismissal at the end of the service. The Triduum will continue the

following day.

The Great Vigil of Easter is on Saturday night. The service begins in total darkness. In the Meditation Garden a new fire will be lit and blessed. From that new fire the Christ Candle—known as the Paschal Candle—will be lit representing the light of Christ. That light is then processed into the church. Each member of the congregation lights their own candle from the Paschal Candle. We then listen to stories of salvation history and the mighty acts of God. A sermon is preached and baptisms are celebrated. The congregation is sprinkled with Holy Water so that they too may remember their own baptism. Finally, Easter is declared. Bells are rung and the church explodes with light as we remember how Christ burst from the tomb, conquering the grave and defeating death once and for all. We sing the joyful Easter hymn and once again celebrate the Eucharist. The newly baptized are the first to receive communion.

If you have never attended the Triduum, or if you have only ever attended one or two of the services that make up the Triduum, I encourage you to make plans to be at all services this year. The true power and glory of the Three Great Days can only be appreciated when you participate from beginning to end. I am certain that your faith will be deepened and your hearts will be touched. Please be sure to see me with any questions you may have about Holy Week or the Triduum.

Blessings,

Dan+

Soldiercare and the Spring PTSD Veteran Program

By David Rosenberg

St. Michael and All Angels' Soldiercare Project were honored to host a group of PTSD and amputee veterans for a weekend here in LA, Friday, March 21st and Saturday, March 22nd.

This is the third time SoldierCare has been asked to put together an LA trip, and it was extremely successful. This particular weekend, we were able to split the program component hosting with another San Diego organization, which will allow us to increase the number of events we can program.

The group of veterans, composed of current program participants in the PTSD program Veterans 360, a double amputee veteran from Orange County, and an amputee/wheelchair user—and young father—from Lancaster, were treated to a tour of Dreamworks Animation Studios with lunch, a Malibu horse ranch experience, and then ended the first day with dinner and a stay at the Sheraton Agoura Hills.



On Saturday, the veterans attended a bonsai class, where they each got to pick out a tree to shape and prune and take home with them. Teacher, and California Bonsai owner, Travis Goldstein noticed a remarkable shift in the attendees. "Bonsai requires a presence, a commitment to another living thing. It was a profound experience to see the guys get out of the voices in their heads." This quiet space was balanced with a trip-ending rousing LA Kings Hockey game.

For many, this was the first trip out in public, and strong friendships were developed. It is the hope that Saint Michaels can continue to partner with these remarkable young men, and be part of their circle of support.

Our next event is the big LA weekend coming up this summer. Please contact me at soldiercareprojectdr@gmail.com if you would like to connect to the effort.



St. Michael's Donates Icon to St. Joseph's Medical Center

After the completion of the Ministry Center renovation the parish ended up with one additional cathedral sized icon we were unable to use. The dimensions of the icon were a size larger than all the other icons being used in the Ministry Center. And so that extra icon of St. Joseph sat in a crate in the janitor's closet. Returning the icon was not possible. We attempted to locate other Episcopal Churches named St. Joseph's but those we found were not interested in our icon.

On a Sunday morning during coffee hour I mentioned the icon to Denise Schwartz. Denise has been employed at St. Joseph's Medical Center for thirty-nine years. She said that she would mention it to Fr. Mark, the priest and chaplain at St. Joseph's. Fr. Mark, who is a member of a Byzantine Order, was ecstatic to learn about the possibility of this donation. He promptly called me on the phone to discuss the icon. I shared with him the dimensions and told him that we would

be happy to donate the icon to the hospital. All they would need to do was come pick it up. I also spoke with our donor here to make sure they would be happy with the extra icon going to St. Joseph's. They were also thrilled.

The entire process took about a week. Employees of the hospital arrived at St. Michael's with a truck large enough to transport the icon. I received a call from Fr. Mark at St. Joseph's. He told me that they had found the perfect place to hang the icon. He also invited me to attend Mass and participate in the blessing and dedication of the icon on March 19th—the Feast of St. Joseph.

The icon is prominently displayed just off the main lobby of the hospital. It looks beautiful in its new home. I had the opportunity to meet the administrators of the medical center who



wanted to thank me for the donation.

So the next time you are walking through the lobby of St. Joseph's Medical Center (hopefully as a visitor, not a patient), be sure to keep an eye out for the icon your parish donated.

Blessings,

Dan+



The Calendar

April 2014

Sunday Schedule • *Sunday Services are 8:00 am (no choir) and 10:30 am (with choir) in the Sanctuary.*
 • *Adult Learning Opportunity begins at 9:15 in the Ministry Center*
 • *Sunday School begins at 10:15 with Family Sing in the Ministry Center; 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

Locations:

- CO Church Office
- MR Music Room
- FR Fireside Room
- MC Ministry Center
- L The Loft (formerly the stage)
- S Sanctuary

1

2

7:30 pm Young Adults Group (L)
7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

3

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

4

5

6 Lent 5

12:00 noon St. Michael's Outreach (Parish Office)
12:00 noon Youth Group (L)

7

8

7:00 pm Finance Committee (Parish Office)

9

7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

10

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

11

12

13 Palm Sunday

11:30 am Second Sunday Sack Lunches (MC)

14

15

7:00 pm Vestry (L)

16

7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

17 Maundy Thursday

6:30 pm Agapé Supper with Holy Eucharist, Washing of Feet & Stripping of the Altar (MC, S)

18 Good Friday

12:00 noon Good Friday Liturgy (S)
7:00 pm Good Friday Liturgy (S)

19 Easter Eve

8:00 am Men's Group (MC)
7:30 pm Great Vigil of Easter (S)

20 Easter Day

21

22

23

7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)
7:00 pm Women's Group (FR)

24

7:30 pm Choir Rehearsal (MR)

25

26

27 Easter 2

11:30 am Prayer Shawl Ministry (MC)
12:15 pm Young Adults Group (Panera, 12131 Ventura Blvd)

28 Saint Mark the Evangelist

29

30

7:00 pm Handbell Choir Rehearsal (S)

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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.