



The Circuit Rider

Life in the Big Bend Episcopal Mission – August 2007

Retreat House Open - Blessing August 12th

The Threshold retreat house, Casa de la Rosa, is finished and open for guests. Construction work was completed on schedule due to the extraordinary efforts of Tom Graf and Don Viator. Now in addition to monthly retreat days, the Casa de la Rosa is open for overnight guests Monday through Saturday. A per night donation of \$75 per person, or \$125 double occupancy is suggested. Three meals per day are provided and sleeping quarters include private baths. Guests are invited to participate in meals and worship services with retreat house residents, but the balance of the time is not structured. Suggestions are provided for making a “self-guided” retreat. Any formal



group activities should be arranged in advance. For details, contact Tom Graf at casadelarosa@wildblue.net, call 432-386-0777, or visit www.thethreshold.org.

Everyone is invited to a “retreat house blessing” on August 12, 2007 at 6:00pm. A reception will follow. Casa de la Rosa is located in Mano Prieto Estates between Marfa and Ft. Davis on the right side of Highway 17, 8 miles south of Ft. Davis.

Jack and Greta Murray - Celebration of Ministry

On Sunday, July 8, 2007 all the congregations in the Big Bend Mission came together for worship at St. Paul’s in Marfa for a celebration of the ministry of Jack and Greta Murray. Jack was ordained to the priesthood on September 21, 2002 and served the Big Bend Mission until he retired in March of 2006. Jack and Greta have made innumerable contributions to the spiritual and social life of the Big Bend Mission. In early July, they moved their residence to Las Cruces, New Mexico. However, they plan to keep their membership at St. Paul’s, and we expect to see them often.



Charles Blizzard Ordained to Priesthood

Charles Blizzard was ordained to the priesthood in the Diocese of Oklahoma on July 14, 2007. Charles, shown here in his wedding photo, is the Assistant Chaplain at Casady School in Oklahoma City. Charles was sponsored in the ordination process by St. James’ in Alpine. Congratulations Charles!



Threshold Officer Elections

At the June meeting of the governing board of the Threshold, Tom Graf offi-

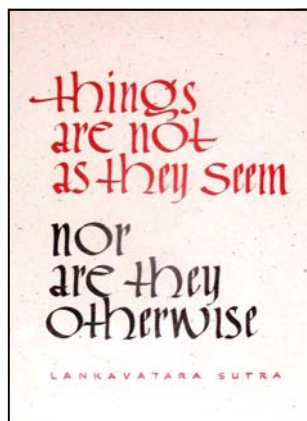


cially resigned as President of the Board of Trustees, and was subsequently elected as Executive Director of the newly completed retreat house. Aurie West was



elected board President. John Jennings (not pictured) has joined the Board of Trustees.

Perplexing Plaque



Recently, Melissa Williams donated this framed saying to Casa de la Rosa. There has been some discussion on just what this saying might mean. I guess that's exactly the point. Some things can't be pinned down objectively, and we just have to accept them the way they are.

Last Month's Question: Another good question from Ken Whitley; "Did Judas get a 'bad rap.'"

Answer: See this month's "Hard Questions" for an answer.

This Month's Question: Send your questions to Seth at seth@equimax.com.

Judy Probst Elected to BGCT Board

Judy Probst of St. James' was elected to the Board of Directors of the Boys & Girls Club of Terlingua in June. Judy has had a long standing commitment to the children



of South Brewster County. For many years she served as a third grade teacher at the Terlingua School. The BGCT board welcomes her dedication, creativity, and expertise.

Kellye Graham, another Alpine resident has also been elected to the BGCT board. Thank you, Kellye!

Boys & Girls Club Van Joins Fourth of July Parade

The traditional fourth of July parade in Terlingua included the usual collection of participants from serious to seriously outlandish. A group from the Boys & Girls Club of Terlingua and club Chief Professional Officer, Beth Garcia from Sts. Mary and Joseph's Church in Lajitas



joined the parade in the club van. The Boys & Girls Club is closed for summer vacation, but will reopen August 7th. Thank you St. James' for the snacks you provide to the kids.



Hard Questions

With the recent news concerning the Gospel of Judas, Judas has returned to a sort of limelight. Over the centuries, Judas has been the poster boy for sinners. It is hard to imagine any greater sin than betraying Jesus of Nazareth. Having a poster boy for sin takes the heat off the rest of us. We can conveniently vilify Judas and by doing so imply that we would never be THAT "bad." By giving Judas a "bad rap" we tend to feel better about ourselves. Perhaps we protest too much.

The Gospel of Judas, an early Gnostic writing, seems to imply that Judas betrayed Jesus because Jesus asked him to do so. It seems unlikely that Judas would have killed himself afterwards, if he was following Jesus' instructions. For whatever reason, the Gospel of Judas was left out of the New Testament. In any case, there seems to be universal agreement that Judas Iscariot betrayed Jesus. Contrary to popular tradition, this does not make him a poster boy for sin. Not one of us goes through a day, a month, or a year without betraying Jesus in one way or another. We have all fallen short of the glory of God. Judas may have the high profile crime where sin is concerned, but he does not deserve any more of a bad rap than we do. Fortunately, we have a savior. As we accept forgiveness for our sin and receive the love of Christ into our hearts, all of us, including Judas Iscariot, are removed from the poster and have another chance. -Seth



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