



The Circuit Rider

Life in the Big Bend Episcopal Mission – July 2007

Al and Thelma Hoyle Celebrate 50 years



Saturday June 23rd marked 50 years of marriage for St. James' parishioners Al and Thelma Hoyle. The congregation at St. James' provided a celebratory meal after church services on Sunday the 24th. John VanDreumel reminisced about the many contributions Al & Thelma have made to church and community over the years, and Judy Probst presented the Hoyles with a congratulatory certificate from the Big Bend Mission. The Hoyles moved to Alpine from Massachusetts in the early 1990's. Al is retired from chemi-



cal engineering and Thelma from 40 years of teaching school. Both are members of the Order of St. Luke and have been instrumental in maintaining the weekly prayer fellowship at St. James'. Thelma is also a member of the Daughters of the King. The Hoyles live in Sunny Glen with their dog Rex. Many thanks to everyone who helped make the Sunday celebration of their anniversary so successful.



Vicar Attends Retreat in Maine

During the first week of June, Judy attended a women's retreat at the home of Sherry and Sandy Flint on the coast of



Maine. The retreat was led by a Roman Catholic nun from Colorado and focused on the spirituality of aging. The retreat was by invitation and was part of a birthday celebration for Sherry. The women attending the retreat came from a wide variety of backgrounds and locations. Judy reported that the retreat stressed "growing in to love." Sherry and Sandy spend time in Alpine in the winter and we look forward to seeing them again next winter.

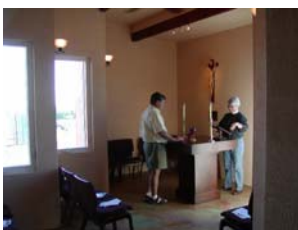
St. Francis Slips in Unannounced

Recently, a new statue of St. Francis appeared among the blue bonnets at the side



door of St. James'. The statue is a gift from Judy Probst in memory of her late husband Jack Probst.

Threshold Hosts Retreat Day at Casa de la Rosa

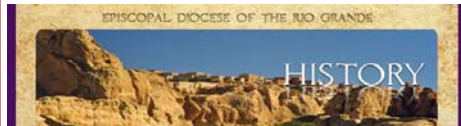


The Threshold quiet day has been restyled as a "retreat day." Services in the new chapel at Casa de la Rosa on the first Saturday in June were nearly standing room only. Time for quiet reflection is still a major part of the monthly gatherings, but gentle conversation has been added as an option in some areas of the retreat house for those who wish. The next retreat day will be on Saturday July 7th.



Learn the History of the Diocese of the Rio Grande

The Big Bend Episcopal Mission is part of the Diocese of the Rio Grande. The diocese has a colorful and interesting history.



Visit the new diocesan web site at www.dioceserg.org and click on "History" to read about the attempt by Padre Jose' Antonio Martinez of Taos to ally himself and his Roman Catholic congregations with the Episcopal Church in the 1860's, the arrival of Bishop Randall in the 1870's, and how the current boundaries of the diocese were created in 1874. See where we have come from as a diocese. It has been an interesting road.

Last Month's Question: What have you always wondered about? Send your question to seth@equimax.com or tell Seth. He will research the answer and print it here next month.

Answer: See this month's "Hard Questions" for a question from Ken Whitley.

This Month's Question: Did Judas get a "bad rap." Give us your thoughts.

Out of the Mouths of God's Kids

Mom was making pancakes for breakfast, and five-year-old Timmy and four-year-old Billy were arguing over who should have the first one. Mom saw this as an excellent opportunity to provide a lesson in sharing and said, "Wouldn't Jesus say 'Let my brother have the first pancake?'" Timmy turned to his little brother and said, "Billy, you be Jesus."

Dorothy Derrigan-Deluyck
Colonial Heights United Methodist
Knoxville, Tennessee

Question:

What do you get when you cross an insomniac, an agnostic, and a dyslexic?

Answer:

You get someone who stays up all night and wonders if there is a dog.

via Pastor Sam Laswell
Redford, Michigan

St. James' Sacristy Gets New Tile

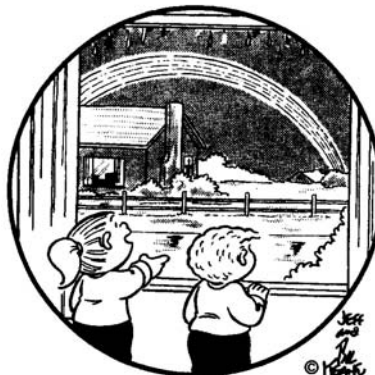
The counter tops in the St. James' sacristy got a make over recently, much to the relief of the Altar Guild. The old surface is rumored to have been installed when the church was built in the 1950's. The Altar Guilds of the Big Bend Mission are not thanked often enough for their tireless work behind the scenes. Many thanks to you all for the laundering, ironing, and for setting up the church on service days.



Hard Questions

Ken Whitley sent the following question: "I wonder why after five centuries, we still differentiate Christians as Protestants and Catholics. Seems we should have gotten over that by now." Church unity has been an elusive goal since the beginning. The reasons the church is so fragmented are complex, and it is difficult to be definitive about the underlying causes. To quote Richard Rohr we are basically "willful people, trying to make the world fit our needs." One of our needs is a need for God, and we try all manner of worldly things to fill that need. Shopping, drugs, sex, money, power, you name it. Practically everything has been used at one time or another as a substitute for a healthy relationship with God. Not surprisingly, the institutional church is on the list. The institutional church can be used as one more substitute for a healthy and productive relationship with God. It's a very handy substitute, because we can immerse ourselves in the activities of the institution and feel very "spiritual," all the while avoiding God in our personal lives. Some clergy and church leaders are particularly vulnerable to this trap. Because the desire is to make the world of the church fit OUR needs, we become upset when the church parts ways with our way of thinking. In extreme cases we band together with others who think like we do, separate ourselves from those who disagree, and start a new subgroup or even a new denomination. Perhaps the problem is that we are trying to fill our need for God by asking the institutional church to agree with us, instead of asking God to transform us. -Seth

THE FAMILY CIRCUS



"The rainbow is Mother Nature's way of saying she's sorry for the bad storm."

from *JoyfulNoiseletter.com*
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