

In Your Midst

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In Your Midst

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"I am in your midst as one who serves."

From the great oculus high above the altar of St. James Cathedral, these words of Jesus communicate His abiding presence among us. This inscription gave us the name for our Journal and continues to be our guiding inspiration.

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Boys of the Schola Cantorum, 1932

Mary Our Mother

Cathedral parishioners offer meditations on the Mother of God

Years ago I saw a lovely statue of Mary in a village church in Germany that caught my attention and stayed with me ever since. The statue was old – from the late middle ages. Somewhat precariously balanced on her right arm – as if she were offering him to the world – was the child Jesus; below her, gathered into the folds of her mantle that was spread wide were all kinds of people who had clearly found a home there, and a safe refuge. There were peasants and priests, popes, and just enough people to represent every one of us.

I thought of that beautiful statue as I read the following stories written by some of our fellow parishioners. It wasn't difficult at all to picture each of those parishioners carved into that old statue, sheltered under Mary's protective cloak, one of her children, part of her family.

No two stories are the same, of course. Each person's relationship with Mary is unique. But there is a common thread among them, as you will see.

The great St. Bernard of Clairvaux once wrote, *De Maria, numquam satis* (One can never say enough about Mary). He was right. Maybe after reading the thoughts of your fellow parishioners you will find yourself thinking your own thoughts about Mary and who she is to you. During these days of Advent and Christmas when Mary is such a central part of the



Schutzmantelmadonna, Markdorf, 1470

story may you come to realize in new ways how much she is part of your story.

Father Michael G. Ryan

Who is Mary to me? Mary, the mother of Jesus, has many images for me.

For most of my life, I have seen Mary as *Mater Admirabilis* – Mother Most Admirable – patroness of all Sacred Heart schools around the world. Mater is the depiction of Mary as a young girl before her call from God, as a peaceful and contemplative young woman. A Sacred Heart tradition is to write down special intentions and leave them in Mater's lap. While working at Forest Ridge I visited her regularly for my own prayers and the intentions of others who called or emailed me their prayers to be offered.

My other Mary, a more mature depiction, is the statue of Our Lady of Seattle in the chapel at St. James. Like Mater, my relationship with this Mary began with my grandmother, Marie-Louise, who years ago taught me to light candles and offer special prayers to Mary at St. James. Fortunately my new job across the street from St. James makes it convenient to take a break from work and visit Mary. In the first four weeks of my job I've had three phone calls from friends requesting that I run over to offer special intentions to Mary for them.

In December I remember another Mary, one who is not spoken of often: Mary the strong and brave. After having my own children I realized Mary was exceptionally physically strong. Traveling to Bethlehem by donkey and foot during the last month of pregnancy must have been unbelievably

uncomfortable, not to mention giving birth to her precious little boy in a stable. Mary's courage, confidence, and strength are qualities we should emulate.

I've always known Mary is near to help me make good decisions and offer solace whenever needed. I pray to her daily and have been grateful for her help through life's many challenges and joys.

Jeanne Flohr

When we asked our children about Mary, Tony and I received various answers according to their ages. Diego (age 6) loves the beautiful blue and white robe she wears in the statue in our home. JJ (15) thinks of a maternal figure and forgiveness. And of course, baby Miguel just smiled. Tony reflects on the fact that Mary always stood by her son, never wavering in her love and support when others abandoned Jesus.

For me, my earliest childhood memories are of the much repeated story of Mary's appearance to Juan Diego in Mexico. This was a great source of pride for my *abuela* (grandmother) since much of our family was originally from Mexico. She would tell me over and over about the miracle of the Sevillian roses, miraculously appearing in winter, brought to the bishop by the humble Juan Diego of Tepeyac. Upon receipt of this gift, he was asked to build a basilica on that very spot. As a lasting reminder, Juan Diego left his own *tilma* (serape) with the bishop, which had the image of Mary upon the rough fabric.

It was with my grandmother that I later visited the holy shrine in Mexico City and saw with my own eyes the *tilma* of Juan Diego emblazoned with her beautiful likeness upon it. I can still see the hundreds of people making their way to the basilica on their knees in supplication and reverence to the Blessed Mother.

Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe holds a special place in the heart of all Latinos, because she showed herself to an *Indio* and not one of the ruling Spaniard class. She looked like our mothers, brown skin, black eyes and the same sense of compassion and strength that defines Latin women.

In my own life, there have been two occasions our family absolutely needed her intervention and grace. On each occasion, she was there for us.

Mark Contratto

Dearest Mother Mary,
Remember the first time I became aware of your presence? It was just before I entered kindergarten, when my mother would take me to Our Lady of Perpetual Help church on Wednesdays for the 7:00 pm Mass and novena



Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Donald Sandoval, 1994.

prayers. How I loved watching my mother and the thousands of devotees praying and singing hymns with such tender devotion, their eyes closed and their heads tilted upwards pleading, thanking, praising you, our Mother, the Queen of Heaven and Earth. I knew even then that you are the Mother of Jesus, but I did not realize until much later just how much your intercession meant.

Then, there was our annual family pilgrimage to the Antipolo Church, sixty miles from where we lived in Makati—the church where you, the Patroness of Peace and Good Voyage, are venerated by your children. You looked very beautiful in your blue and white gown with the bright, diamond studded halo around your face. I never asked my mother why we went there every year, on her birthday, but from her excitement and her insistence on the annual pilgrimage,

I grew to learn that you were very much a part of her life.

Thank you for being part of my life also. You cried with me and comforted me in my moments of grief. I felt your presence when my children were growing up, patiently guiding me to be a good mother. And when I have to make important decisions, I turn to you for

inspiration and direction. I love praying the *Hail, Holy Queen* and the *Memorare*. Those two prayers have saved my sanity so many times!

What better lesson in humility than to know that the Mother of God, the Mother of the King of Kings, the Mother of the Messiah, gave birth to and raised her only Son in the most humble of surroundings! You never called attention to yourself. When I feel harassed, I remind myself of your quiet and serene support of Jesus. When I am angry or hurt and want to rant and wail, I think of you at the foot of the Cross, standing strong, and silent in the midst of His crucifiers. Two thousand years after you lived among us, you continue to be modest and simple.

Mama Mary, I want to share with you my joy at learning that my granddaughter will soon be baptized. This is the answer to my daily prayer to you since the day she was born four and a half years ago. My prayer is for you to be a living and loving presence in my granddaughter's life, as you have been in mine. I pray that your name will be on her lips the moment she wakes up and before she closes her eyes to go to sleep.

Your daughter, Alma Kern

Christmas is my favorite holiday of the year. There is nothing more special to me than being able to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ here at St. James Cathedral every December. As I write this reflection, one particular



image comes to mind as I remember a time when I attended 5:30pm Mass on Christmas Eve.

That year, I, along with several other children, was chosen to push the cart that carried Mary to the altar. I was so excited! What could be more special than being in charge of the cart of Jesus' Mother? The cart with the barn animals was certainly not as appealing to me, that's for sure. As the time to go up to the altar approached, I was nervous and eager all at once to do my part.

When we slowly started moving, I just happened to look up at the statue of Mary for the very first time that night. She was kneeling and held a look of quiet contentment on her face. The artist's rendition was beautiful of course, but more importantly, it got me thinking about Mary's pivotal role in the Gospel and in my life.

To me, the image of Mary will always be the gentle mother. She is loving, caring and quietly looking after everything in the world. When I reflect on the words of the Hail Mary, I pray that she will guide me to follow in her footsteps from the big decisions in my life, to seemingly everyday actions.

So this year, when I walk into the pine scented chapel and see Mary kneeling in the beautiful nativity scene with her gaze upon little baby Jesus, I pray that she will help me focus on what is important and to welcome Jesus in any way I can.

Catherine Nguyen



Standing in a circle around the altar with the other Cathedral Choir men, I close my eyes in anticipation of the Marian antiphon about to begin:

*Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum;
benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus.*

As an adult convert to Catholicism, I am still learning about and exploring the resonance of Mary in my adopted faith. When I think of her, it still makes my head spin to reconcile the “mother of Jesus” and “Mother of God.”

*Maria dixit: Ecce ancilla Domini;
fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.*

The music swirls around my head as melody, harmony, and prayer converge. I am grateful to witness and participate in this community’s — my community’s — thankful offering.

Et verbum caro factum est et habitavit in nobis.

Singing of and for Mary reminds me of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. I have sung in Spanish of Juan

Diego’s vision and Mary’s message of love and compassion. I have sung in the native Celta language of Chiapas, Mexico, as well. I am continually amazed by the infinite ways Mary reveals herself to humanity.

*Sancta Maria, mater Dei, ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis,
nunc et in hora mortis nostrae, Amen.*

I am grateful that the antiphon compels me to ask for Mary’s prayers for myself. My needs are many, but I often feel that in a world of need, mine are unimportant. I am reminded that Our Lady of Guadalupe assured Juan Diego that she wanted him (“the smallest of my children”) to carry her message to the bishop.

Standing there, I can feel our voices rise and fall; moving forward and resolving in chords that lift the congregation’s prayers up into the rafters. Together, as children of Mary, we give musical voice to the prayers of our brothers and sisters: *Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum; benedicta tu in mulieribus, et benedictus fructus ventris tui Jesus.*

John Jarrett

On our wedding day, my husband and I received a beautiful statue of Mary as a wedding present. While I’m a “cradle Catholic” who has embraced my faith through most of my life, I had no idea how important — how symbolic — that statue would become. For you see, it accompanied me to the hospital for the births of my daughters...

In the summer of 1997, I whispered *Hail, Mary!* through each contraction as Isabelle Marie came into the world.

Dearest friends and family prayed *Hail, Mary!* when my daughter Lindy Marie was stillborn six years ago. As I grieved the loss of Lindy, I spent many hours so angry with God, but never with Mary. I felt somehow that she was making that journey of profound loss with me, as she had done with the loss of her son.

Finally, *Hail, Mary!* echoed through my pregnancy with Sadie Marie three years ago; I asked our Holy Mother to intercede and prayed that all would be well. *Hail, Mary!* — a prayer of joy as I lay in the hospital after Sadie’s safe arrival.

Mary is my mentor as I mother my children; their shared middle name is a tribute to her. My girls and I visit the Mary shrine at St. James nearly every Sunday to light a candle (taking care not to burn anyone’s hair in the process!). The Cassiopeia constellation painted on the ceiling of the shrine is the same constellation where Lindy has a star named after her. This

coincidence—or is it?—causes me to feel close to my daughter in heaven, reminding me that even in death, we are close to those we love.

It is a great comfort to me, knowing that Mary is with me through all of the joys and trials of my life. I am truly blessed.

Hail, Mary!

Katherine Berry

The prayers honoring the Blessed Virgin are simple, beautiful, and direct: we say, “Hail, Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with you! Blessed are you among women...” We call her Queen of Heaven and Star of the Sea; we ask her to intercede when we confess our sins. And Mary herself prays: “My soul magnifies the Lord...”

Set to music and surrounded by artwork and graceful statuary, these prayers in honor of Mary take on an even deeper dimension of reverence: they are themselves magnified, amplified, and enriched, carrying us even further into the mystery of the divine. So many times—as when singing Franz Biebl’s *Ave Maria* with the Cathedral Choir, or when processing out after the Sunday evening Mass with the unearthly sound of the Women of St. James Schola enveloping me from behind—I think, “This is it. This is really it. In this holy prayer I am in the presence of God.”

Of course, with Advent upon us and Christmas rapidly approaching, the prayer most prominent in my mind is Mary’s Magnificat. In it, Mary expresses her gratitude to God, for he has called her to bring into the world a perfect manifestation of the divine, God Himself in human form.

Sainthood, as Father Ryan has said, has to do with answering God’s call. It means doing all I can to be the person God intended me to be. It means resisting the temptation to give up when I am discouraged, and it means resisting the temptation to claim glory for myself when I succeed. Because of this, I have made Mary’s prayer my own: for who is not called to bring goodness, beauty, and truth into the world? And who would want more than to glorify the God who created us? Is this not what God calls each of us to do? As we manifest the Holy Spirit through our unique gifts, is not each and every one of us giving birth to Christ?

Ward Johnson



Mary has always been an important person in my life. I remember a gaudily painted statue of Mary that had a prominent place in my bedroom when I was very young—sometimes with scrunched up dandelions at her feet. The *Hail Mary* was one of the first prayers I remember saying—followed not long after by the *Memorare* which was often said by both my parents in times of need and of thanksgiving. The family rosary was important, especially during October, Advent, Lent, and May. We knelt around the piano bench because there was a statue of Mary, Our Lady of Grace, above. I remember being especially impressed by a family story of a cousin named Marian. Marian said the rosary every night before bed, and one particular night she died. When she was found a day or so later she was still kneeling upright with rosary in hand!

Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary have a very special relationship to Mary. We all received a form of the name Mary when we received our religious name—I was Sister Mary Leonore.

There was a beautiful statue of *Mater Admirabilis* in our Novitiate Room—a sacred spot where we laughed and cried, prayed, discerned, did our spiritual reading and darned our stockings. Mary was our model and “to Jesus through Mary” became a motto. The *Memorare*, so important in my childhood, continues to be an important prayer for members of our community. As SNJM’s, whenever we get into a car for even a short trip our journey begins with a prayer, “Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary...”

It was on December 8—Feast of Mary’s Immaculate Conception—that our foundress, Mother Mary Rose and companions, established our community and professed their Vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience. To this day, we Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary continue to renew our Vows on this great Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Now that I’m mostly retired I am very happy to have the time to just sit with Mary, my Mother.

Anne Herkenrath, snjm

Holy Mary, Mother of God, the portal, the chalice. Our Mother.

And as our Mother, Mary represents the fundamental dignity and nobility of every woman, and every woman a small mirror—a *magnificat*—of Mary. For through her *fiat* she brought Christ into the world, and through Him, the Church. And every woman chosen in Christ to bring new life into the world participates in nothing less than the extension of the mystical body of Christ—the Church—in space and time. For if we are His body—if we are the Church—then each new life ensures the Church’s expansion in perpetuity. And there, as it mysteriously stretches out forever, we encounter Mary once again in every woman.

Is not Mary in this way a supernova in history, appearing on the scene inconspicuously enough, and yet through the Holy Spirit, acting as a lightning rod of God’s will and thereby altering the very fabric of the universe? Surely our Marian alcove at St. James places her under an azure firmament of golden stars, and the candlelight of so many “suns,” as if in symbolic testament to this truth? I like to think each woman, in seemingly so small a way, also arrives on history’s stage to enact that same will of God; like Mary, Elizabeth, Sarah, consenting to life, called to mystery.

Each time I pray the Rosary with my family, those words “Blessed art thou among women” leave me wanting to add “and every woman after thee.”

Matthew Bruno



“I don’t understand why Catholics worship Mary.” While she said this, her eyes darted back and forth over the table-top that separated us. She sat erect in the chair but fidgeted as if she were confessing something and hoped that I wouldn’t be offended. Clearly, this issue had been bothering her for a while, and she had been waiting for the right time and, perhaps, the right person with whom to address the topic of Marian devotion.

As an RCIA team member at St. James Cathedral, I hear statements like this frequently. My knee-jerk response was to unleash my inner-professor and give her a theological lecture contrasting *hyperdulia* and *latria* in an effort to convince her that the honor with which Catholics esteem Mary is very different from the worship we owe to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. However, I reminded myself that the RCIA process is not a theology seminar but an apprenticeship in faith. So, I began telling her about my faith journey and the role that Mary has played in it. I noticed her relaxing after she realized that her question was the same one with which I have struggled for years.

In the Baptist and Methodist churches of my youth, Mary was only mentioned in December. She was pulled out of the basement, dusted-off and propped-up next to a bearded Joseph amongst a menagerie of animals all gazing at the blonde-headed, blue-eyed infant Jesus wrapped in swaddling clothes and resting

in a manger. Sadly, the theological implications of Jesus' incarnation and Mary's very special role in it were never explored. On December 26, Mary was consigned, both literally and figuratively, to the church basement, and she was not to be heard from again until the following December. In the churches of my youth, Mary was definitely a bit-player.

Later in my life, I began to feel an emptiness, a "God-sized hole," that I have since recognized in the lives of many people in the RCIA process. The Spirit led me to embrace the faith of the Catholic Church. The sacramental life of the Church captivated me, and the Eucharist became and remains the center around which my life revolves. However, my view of Mary remained similar to that of my childhood: a bit-player in salvation history.

Later, as a graduate student in San Antonio, I began attending St. Ann's parish, which was a poor church staffed by Dominican priests in a predominantly Latino neighborhood. It was during this time that I began to question my assumptions about the role of Mary, who was called *Nuestra Señora*. I met women and men who were so devoted to *Nuestra Señora* that their enthusiasm could be overwhelming. And what stories they shared with me! I vividly remember a woman who told me of the years during which she dealt with her husband's alcoholism. Sometimes, she would awaken her children late at night and take them to her mother's house so as to shield them from his drunken rages. This revelation was shocking to me because she and her husband were very faithful parishioners who were each involved in several ministries. Her husband had stopped drinking seven years prior, and she credited his sobriety to the intercession of *Nuestra Señora*.

Her unwavering faith led me to question my "sidelining" of Mary. I was faced with the question, "Who is Mary to me"? My answer is still evolving, but over the years, I have found myself coming closer to *Nuestra Señora*.

To me, Mary is the primordial disciple, the perfect example of a human being who fulfilled God's will completely during her time on earth. Mary serves as a teacher of faithfulness who demonstrates to us how to cooperate with God's grace. Mary is also a teacher of prayerfulness and serves as the model *par excellence* of contemplation in action.

My journey to an understanding of Mary and her role in my faith has been long. I still do not feel a strong affinity for many popular Marian devotions. Perhaps this helps me to be sympathetic with those who come to the RCIA process uncertain about Marian devotion. Nowadays, I'm much better equipped to address the statement that began this essay: "I don't



understand why Catholics worship Mary." I can reply, "We don't worship Mary. We learn from Mary how to be more prayerful and faithful. Ultimately, we strive to imitate Mary in her closeness to God."

Nathan Standifer

In the Magnificat, Mary's joy is resplendent, light and full of challenge to all of us who feel our imperfections keenly, daily. Her leap to perfect joy appears complete, without struggle or doubt. In her prayer, Mary is describing the peace and joy at having made her decision to accept the Angel's message. The prayer does not describe the very human moments before her decision was made. Throughout the centuries, artists have worked to depict the perfect, yet human beauty of that moment of decision. From Giotto's painting of the Annunciation in the late 13th century, to Fra Angelico's Annunciation in the 15th century, we see deeper hints of the threshold that had yet to be crossed, a division between the waiting human Mary and the divine message being delivered. The moments before the Magnificat leapt forth from Mary's heart, were a singular threshold: first human—full of fear, doubt, pride, curiosity and then, having

crossed the threshold: fully divine—filled with wonder and joy. The humanity of her choice—to give herself up the words of the Angel or not?—is as human a moment as any of us experience in our daily relationship with God, as we recite the words of Our Father: “...thy will be done.”

As a smaller space within the whole of the Cathedral, the vastness of the Cathedral is left behind upon crossing the threshold into the intimate Marian Chapel. As visitors to the Chapel, we cross our own threshold, into the Chapel, where the lights from the tawny beeswax candles of the Chapel envelop us upon entry. We are surrounded by their flickering, ancient firelight, their translucent glow, their honey smell. But the humanity of that crossing is not left behind, for below, the earthen blackness of the floor resonates with the dim darkness far above to create a space of light that gathers around ourselves and Mary’s image. The lights’ richness within the darkness centers around us, around Mary’s image in the Chapel, to reassure us that Mary’s darkness was no less than ours, her light no more.

Susan Jones

My devotion to the Blessed Mother grew with my own motherhood. As a child I had put pink cherry blossoms in egg cups in front of a statue of Our Lady on my windowsill but, as I grew older, I lost this childish devotion and soon forgot about Her.

Even when my four children were small, I seldom gave Her a thought. The fact that Jesus was an only child, not to mention a perfect child, seemed remote from my own experiences and trials. There would have been no tantrums in the Holy Family, no disobedience or arguing, no refusal to share. It seemed to me that the Holy Mother’s vocation was a pretty sweet one compared to mine.

Then one day my husband and I received a phone call from a paramedic who was working on one of our teenage daughters. She had been in a head-on collision with another car and there was one fatality at the scene. As far as they knew, Helena seemed fine but could we meet them at Harborview Medical Center right away.

As it turned out, Helena escaped with minor injuries but she was kept in overnight as a precaution. The day we were to pick her up from Harborview, my husband and I attended the ten o’clock mass at St. James. After communion I went to the tiny Lady Chapel to say thank you for preserving Helena’s life



and to pray for the soul of the other driver. As I stood there in the womb-like dark of the chapel, warmed by the flames of Her votives and the innumerable gold stars in an azure firmament, I was suddenly overcome by an absolute conviction that the Blessed Mother was truly present, watching over my children and this poor, broken world. I experienced such a piercing stab of gratitude that I broke down completely.

Since then, I always go and visit Her in Her beautiful, tiny chapel to thank Her and ask for Her protection over my children and the children of the world. I realize now that she is our Mother, the one who will never abandon us and will keep vigil in our lives until our death, as a loving mother sits with her sick child through the night. Because: “Never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, and sought thy intercession, was left unaided.” (*Memorare*).

Suzanne M. Wolfe



Pope John the Good's Good Idea

Remembering the Second Vatican Council

January 25, 2009, the Feast of the Conversion of Saint Paul, marks the 50th anniversary of the announcement of the Second Vatican Council. This is the first in a series of articles in our parish journal recalling the Council.

Angelo Roncalli, the Patriarch of Venice, was 77 years old when he was elected successor to Pius XII on October 28, 1958. He was widely known and respected for his warmth, his diplomatic skill, and his great personal holiness; and it was also clear that he would not be around forever. After the tumultuous twenty-year reign of Pius XII, people were ready for a short, quiet papacy. But those who expected John XXIII to be simply a transitional figure, an “interim Pope,” were in for a shock.

As the story goes, a story the Pope himself told many times, the idea of the Council came to him in a sudden inspiration several weeks into his pontificate. He was talking over the troubles of the world with Cardinal Tardini, his Secretary of State. The Cold War was at its height, and the Church behind the Iron Curtain was painfully silenced; there was so much division, so much injustice in the world. If only, said the Pope, the Church could do something concrete in the face of all these problems—a gesture of openness, of unity... “Suddenly my soul was illumined by a great idea which came precisely at that moment and which I welcomed with ineffable confidence in the divine Teacher. And there sprang to my lips a word that was solemn and committing. My voice uttered it for the first time: a Council!”

At least, that was how Pope John remembered it, looking back from the vantage point of 1962. The reality, as Peter Hebblethwaite has shown in his authoritative biography *John XXIII: Pope of the Century*, was even more amazing. The idea of the Council came to Pope John not in the first weeks but in the first *days* of his pontificate; he had mentioned the possibility to



Cardinal Ruffini as early as November 2—two days before his coronation! The timing is significant. “The Council was not ‘accidental’ to the pontificate or a kind of afterthought,” Hebblethwaite argues; “it was coterminous with the pontificate as a whole, and acted as its goal, policy, program and content” from the very beginning.

Not everyone was enthusiastic about the idea—in fact, quite the reverse. When the Pope asked his young secretary what he thought, Msgr. Capovilla raised many objections—the incredible challenges of

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organizing such an event, the potential for failure, even the age of the pontiff. The Pope replied, with a smile, "The trouble is, Don Loris, that you're still concerned with having a good reputation. Only when the ego has been trampled underfoot can one be fully and truly free."

But the project stayed with him, and Pope John became more and more convinced that the idea of the Council was indeed an inspiration of the Holy Spirit. ("The Holy Spirit doesn't help the Pope," he said; "I'm simply his helper. He did everything. The council is his idea.") Before the end of the year, he was reading up on Vatican I, paying particular attention to the logistical preparations that Pius IX had made. As he delved into the archives, he discovered that his two immediate predecessors had also given the idea of a council serious consideration. Pope Pius XI had seen a council as a possible instrument for reuniting the Church after the devastations of World War I; and for Pope Pius XII, a Council could be means of correcting "a mass of errors" that had arisen in the wake of Modernism. But for a variety of reasons, neither of these councils had materialized. In all, there had been just twenty ecumenical councils in the history of the Church, and Pope John XXIII explored them all as his idea for the twenty-first council took shape.

That first Christmas in the Vatican, Pope John XXIII revived an old custom of Pius IX, and astonished the world, by leaving the confines of Vatican City to visit orphans and prisoners in Rome. The children greeted him warmly, some of them mistaking him for "Babbo Natale," Father Christmas! The men at Regina Coeli prison knelt outside their cells to receive his blessing. A man convicted of murder wept as he asked the Holy Father



Interior of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, Rome. It was here, on January 25, 1959, that Pope John XXIII announced his plan for the Second Vatican Council.

whether there could be forgiveness for him. And as the tears ran down his own face, John answered him by raising the man and embracing him. It was a new papacy—a human papacy. An old custom had been revived and filled with life. It would be the same with the Council, which was simultaneously rooted in history, and utterly new. Pope John XXIII recognized that renewal *was* the tradition of the Church.

Pope John decided to announce the Council on January 25, 1959, at the conclusion of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity. After the Mass in the Basilica of St. Paul outside the Walls, the Cardinals gathered with him in the chapter-room of the adjoining monastery. And there he told them his plans. He made it clear that it would be like no Council before it when he extended a "friendly and renewed invitation to our brothers of the separated Christian Churches to share with us in this banquet of grace and brotherhood, to which so many souls in every corner of the world aspire."

The response of the Cardinals to all this was, in the words of Council commentator Xavier Rynne, "a devout and impressive silence." Not only was there no enthusiasm, there seemed to be no interest. "For all they appeared to care," writes Hebbelthwaite, "he



A relief on the doors of St. Peter's Basilica commemorates the Council. John XXIII is depicted at the far left.

might have been reading out his laundry list. He was bitterly disappointed." Later, John characteristically tried to put a positive spin on their reaction, suggesting that "they had been stunned into silence and needed time to gather their wits" (Hebbelthwaite).

Outside of the Roman Curia, though, the Council evoked considerable interest. "Pope John has a gloriously casual way of saying and doing the unexpected," wrote Father John Sheerin in *The Catholic World* for March of 1959. And while the mainstream press took relatively little notice of the Pope's momentous announcement, the Catholic press responded. In Seattle, the *Catholic Northwest Progress* provided extensive coverage of the announcement and of the entire period of preparation. On January 30, 1959, there were articles explaining exactly what a Council was ("ecumenical" means "universal") as well as detailed reviews of the last Council, which hastily defined the dogma of papal infallibility before the bishops were scattered by the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in 1871. There was already considerable speculation on what the Council would be about. Would it primarily aim at the unity of the Church? Or would it be a continuation of that interrupted Council, which had never formally been closed?

If it had been up to the Roman Curia, the Council would probably never have gotten underway. They dragged their feet for months, until the Holy Father took matters in hand, establishing a Preparatory Commission with Cardinal Tardini at its head in May of 1959. Pope John did not want to dictate an agenda

for the Council; instead, he wanted to let the bishops of the world to talk about the matters of greatest concern to them. And that made some of the curial Cardinals—the so-called *intransigenti*—very nervous. Wouldn't it be enough to send a questionnaire and get the bishops' responses? No, the Pope insisted. Let the bishops express themselves freely. And they did: responses from the bishops poured in from all corners of the world, expressing the fears and hopes, the concerns and priorities of the universal Church. By the end of 1959, some 80 percent of the world's bishops had responded. As the work of tabulating the 1,600 detailed responses began, Pope John XXIII announced that the Council would be called the Second Vatican Council. He hoped it would begin within two years.

At the end of October, 1959, on the first anniversary of Pope John XXIII's election, syndicated columnist Patrick Riley wrote of the many surprises of the first year of the new papacy. He recalled the "electrifying effect" of the Pope's compassion for the poor—his visits to orphanages, hospitals, and prisons. He wrote of the new Pope's accessibility to visitors, his spontaneity, his sense of humor—and he wrote of the Council, the greatest surprise in a year of surprises. "A grateful world thinks back to that evening a year ago," Riley concluded, "when Cardinal Canali appeared on the balcony overlooking St. Peter's Square and announced, 'We have a Pope.'"

"How right the cardinal was. We have a Pope." ♦

The Year in Pictures

Looking back at a year of grace





Images of a Year of Grace. On the opposite page, top: children celebrate the Epiphany of the Lord and the Santo Niño—Holy Child. Second row: 4th graders from across the Archdiocese celebrate Mary during the month of May; St. James Cathedral hosts a special event at the Seattle Art Museum including a private tour of the Ghiberti “Gates of Paradise”; children toss flower petals at the Corpus Christi Procession. Bottom row: The Play of Daniel, Choir Camp 2008; Benediction at Corpus Christi. This page, top: Archbishop Brunett celebrates the Golden Jubilee of his priestly ordination; right, the Cathedral staff gather for their annual picnic. 2nd row: The Society of St. Vincent de Paul celebrates its 175th Anniversary; we remember the homeless men and women who have died on the streets of King County in 2008 at a special Mass November 3. Bottom: Children in our Faith Formation program dress up as their favorite saints on All Saints Day. Right: The Cathedral Choir sings Bruckner’s *Locus Iste—How awesome is this place*, November 9.

Simple Living at Christmas

Advent is supposed to be a time of spiritual depth and joy. But so many forces in our secular culture seem to be in overdrive in these weeks leading up to Christmas, leaving many of us frantic. There are so many demands on us: to shop too much, eat too much, drink too much and spend too much. And there are so many expectations: to make meaningful connections with our family and to reunite with old friends, all in the space of a few days. The Church tells us that we need to let Advent be Advent... and not celebrate Christmas until Christmas. It sounds simple, but we all know how difficult it can be to achieve.

Some years ago, in an effort to observe the season of Advent fully, I tried simply to block out all the Christmas frenzy “out there,” the tinsel, the lights, the mega-sales, the frenzied shopping. But I’ve found that the monastic approach is not really helpful either. I learned that preparing for Christmas doesn’t need to be an all-or-nothing proposition. I would like to suggest that there is a middle ground, a way to make this time of preparation faith-filled and joy-filled, and it is based on the principles of simple living. How can we bring a fresh approach to the holidays? I would suggest three expanding circles of care: care for ourselves; care for others; care for the planet.

CARING FOR OURSELVES COMES FIRST. When we fly on an airplane, we’re told that in the event of an emergency, we have to put on our own oxygen mask before we help someone else with theirs. In other words, we have to give ourselves some space to breathe before we can be effective in caring for others. It is the same when it comes to preparing for the holidays. We have to care for ourselves first. But that can be hard to remember when we’re so busy taking care of everyone we care about! So, during Advent, I try to be more careful to set aside time for prayer, to get enough sleep, to simplify my preparations so as to enjoy them more. Taking time for prayer is especially important in the midst of holiday frenzy, but I try not to turn this increased attention to prayer into another pre-Christmas task, itself another



How can we make sure we take time this Christmas to stop and wonder at the God who came among us as a little child, born in a stable and laid in a manger?

source of stress. Just a bit of quiet time each day is all that’s needed—time to reflect on the great gift that awaits us.

CARING FOR OTHERS. Of course, Christmas is all about care for others. We give gifts, send cards, entertain friends and family, all to show our love and care. But sometimes, our gifts can become too expensive, sending cards can become an impersonal chore, and even holiday parties can become too much! How can we simplify how we care for others? In a world with so much need, one good place to start is by giving less expensive, more personal gifts. A great example of this was the year my sister’s family gave their friends a copy of the best book they’d read that year. Another friend’s family creates a cookbook of their favorite recipes. These kinds of gifts are often

Patty Bowman is Director of Outreach at St. James Cathedral.

remembered long after more expensive gifts are forgotten or tossed out.

CARING FOR OUR PLANET. There are more and more opportunities to give alternative gifts—gifts that express our care not only for the people we love, but for our community and our world. In their 1991 statement *Global Climate Change*, the U.S. Catholic Bishops wrote, “Each of us should carefully consider our choices and lifestyles. We live in a culture that prizes the consumption of material goods. While the poor often have too little, many of us can be easily caught up in a frenzy of wanting more and more—a bigger home, a larger car, etc. Even though energy resources literally fuel our economy and provide a good quality of life, we need to ask about ways we can conserve energy, prevent pollution, and live more simply.” They also suggest: “Rejecting the false promises of excessive or conspicuous consumption can even allow more time for family, friends, and civic responsibilities. A renewed sense of sacrifice and restraint could make an essential contribution to addressing global climate change.”

This doesn’t mean we can’t exchange gifts at Christmas! We can give to good causes—like the Cathedral’s own Hunthausen Fund for homeless families—in lieu of traditional gifts. We can seek out fair trade items. We can also try to buy locally-made and American-made gifts. And instead of breaking our heads trying to come up with the perfect gift for someone, we can exchange gift cards so people can pick out their own gift—something that won’t end up in the closet!

Making this conscious effort to live more simply is not easy. Nor is it always simple. But over time, making these kinds of small changes can open up space for a more peaceful and joyous Christmas celebration. My prayer is that I, too, can slow down and really embrace Christmas this year, and make it truly a celebration of the God who “cast down the mighty from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly,” the celebration of a child born in a stable and laid in a manger.

Gracious God, when we feel overwhelmed by pressures to shop, decorate, bake, and cook, help us to find the true joy in Christmas. When money dwindles and expectations increase, help us to find the true grace in Christmas. When our calendars fill up and our patience runs down, help us to find the true abundance in Christmas. Help us to experience and celebrate a Christmas that holds a place for Christ’s promise of authentic joy and peace for all. ♦

Some Simple Ideas for Simpler Living

*Cathedral parishioners share their ideas
for keeping it simple*

ELIZABETH FALZONE: “In the past I’ve been prone to depression around the holidays. We’re bombarded with so much, it can overwhelm us. The commercialism is just nasty sometimes, and sometimes it’s made me nasty. My advice is to take some breathing space. Am I shopping more than I’m praying? If so, there’s something wrong. I keep telling myself slow down, pray more, shop less.”

MARCIA DITTER: “I have six little godchildren. I learned a great tip from their mother. She keeps an eye out for Christmas presents all year round, and finishes her Christmas shopping by October. That way both she and the children can really enjoy the season. So I follow her example, buy them presents during the summer months, and ship them off to her.”

SUZANNE LESCANTZ: “I remember when my children were little. Christmas was—pardon the expression—hell! The only prayer I would say was, Lord, help me to get through this! Now, I find I can focus on the things I really want to do... not just everything I think I should do. It helps that the whole family has come to an agreement about Christmas gifts. We do an exchange of books, and not just any books! They’re used books and there’s a cap of \$7 apiece! It’s OK to be lavish and spend money on those we love. But why do it only at Christmas?”

DEREK EISEL: “I’ve been trying to eliminate the *shoulds* from my life. I realized that this Christmas what I need most is quiet time during those four days off. I want to go to Mass at Christmas. This means not going to California to be with family. It’s a tough decision to make.”

REENY OLSEN: “Growing up, our kids got three gifts. Just three. What was good enough for Jesus, was good enough for them.”

From the Archives

A glimpse of a golden age

On October 13, 1933, Bishop Gerald Shaughnessy was installed as the Bishop of Seattle in St. James Cathedral. After the Mass, the new bishop took the Cathedral's pastor, Monsignor James Gordon Stafford, aside to compliment him on the beautiful liturgy. The *Progress* reported the conversation: "The Bishop told Monsignor Stafford that he thought, when the Cathedral Schola began its sweet music, that only one boy was singing, so perfectly did the voices of the eight lads blend. 'That is the highest compliment you could pay the boys,' said Monsignor Stafford. 'It is the reward of many years of training.'"

This 1932 photo of the Schola Cantorum was recently given to Father Ryan by Mrs. Gwen Van Horn of Friday Harbor, the widow of John Van Horn (fourth from the right in the back row). On the back of the photo is a fascinating story, a treasured addition to the Cathedral Archives:

"This picture was originally the property of Theodore Sanger, the choirmaster at St. James Cathedral. The Schola Cantorum was Mr. Sanger's creation. While Dr. Palmer was the organist, the choir saw him only once a week at Sunday High Mass. Mr. Sanger was employed on a full time basis and was a very interesting person. English by birth, he was raised in the Choir School at Exeter Cathedral and was an accomplished musician. Under his direction the Schola, in addition to singing at the Cathedral's daily High Mass, weddings, and funerals, entered the Boys' Choir Competition in the British Empire Music Festival the year it was held in Victoria, British Columbia, and won second place in the event. The choir also sang at lunch time in the Georgian Room at the Olympic Hotel during the Christmas season. One of the Schola's favorite occasions was singing at the Bishop's annual



The Schola Cantorum, 1932. Charlie, Martin, Bobby, Mark, John, Albert, Joe, Bill, Billy, Emmett, Vincent, Wally, Mickey, and Guy, all under the able direction of Mr. Theodore Sanger, choirmaster. John Van Horn is in the back row, fourth from the right. Mary Van Horn (John's mother) couldn't look at the picture without pointing out that John's neck bow was crooked!

Mass for the Carmelite nuns at their convent. The reward for this was a huge breakfast prepared by the sisters and a chance to talk to them afterwards."

In 1935, Monsignor Stafford was reassigned to Assumption in Bellingham. He invited Theodore Sanger to come with him and start a boys' choir there.

John Van Horn relates the surprising and bittersweet sequel. "My parents were on a business trip to Vancouver and stopped at the Bellingham Hotel for dinner. To their great surprise, there was Mr. Sanger (by then quite old) dressed in a bellhop's uniform, carrying guests' luggage and running the elevator. He took my parents to his small room in the basement and gave them this picture so that it would be well taken care of. Everything else from his former life had been sold off."

The picture Mr. Sanger treasured now has a home at St. James Cathedral. ♦

Do you have a memento of Cathedral history? Please consider sharing it with the Archives. Information, Maria Laughlin, 382-4284.

The Hunthausen Fund

Some "real life" Christmas stories

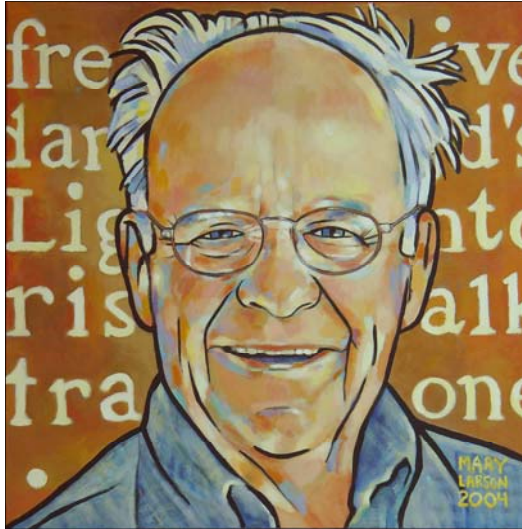
The Hunthausen Fund first began awarding no-interest loans and grants to help house the working poor in October 2001. The Hunthausen Fund "will actually open doors (real ones, not metaphorical ones) for some of our working poor and give them new hope," Father Ryan wrote in launching the fund. "We're calling our idea *The Hunthausen Fund* in honor of our retired Archbishop Raymond G. Hunthausen, who was a powerful and beloved champion of the poor and voiceless of this community."

Since that time, a total amount of \$243,716 has been distributed to upwards of 216 poor families. These average awards of \$1,120 each, have moved well over 600 men, women, and children from shelters and transitional housing into homes of their own.

The numbers alone are impressive. But these numbers represent a tremendous impact for good on real human lives. The following are just two stories of the Hunthausen Fund. These are real life "Christmas stories," the stories of families for whom there was "no room in the inn." Thanks to the generosity of our donors, they have found permanent housing and a fresh start.

THE SMITH FAMILY

Sean Smith writes: "Shortly after the birth of our daughter Estella, the bottom fell out for us. We lost our home and were struggling to find a place for our family of six. Every place we called that would take a family was full up and backlogged on entries. Every other place would only take Kristin and the children. We were faced with literally having to fragment our family to survive. Our best friends had a two bedroom condo and they opened their door to us. We were living on their living room floor. Our little four year old son would daily ask 'When are we going home?' It was heartbreaking to say the least, and we were at a loss to explain this to him. We prayed and cried nightly and



Archbishop Hunthausen by Mary Larson, 2004

just hoped that we would soon have a home. At last, a friend found us a rental home in Woodinville. Our joy was short lived as we now had no money to afford the costs of moving into the house. Our pastor contacted Catholic Community Services and secured us a Hunthausen Fund grant to cover those costs.

"Ten days before Christmas, we moved into our new home. We are still getting back on our feet, but at least now we are on our way to home ownership and that is due to the aid of the Hunthausen Fund. The charity of our parish and the

grant from the Hunthausen Fund kept our family together and we are stronger and much happier for the support."

THE HILL FAMILY

Caseworker Stacey Marron writes about the Hill family: "They have five kids and the two youngest are under three. They have a five year old who is autistic and so the mom, Elizabeth, had not been able to work since he was born. So they were in a difficult situation with not a big income to work with, yet needing a place big enough for all of them to live. The father, Norman, is in an apprentice program and is working, but it takes time for him to gain seniority. So they really needed a helping hand to get them back on their feet again.

"With the help of the Hunthausen Fund not only were they able to move into a house, but to move in quickly when it became available and they were accepted as tenants. Because of this they are finally able to get their autistic son into special services and are going to be able to put their four year old in Headstart. This family had spent nine months living in the Greenlake Motel, so they have really gone through a rough time. Now they have stability in their lives and a home.

"Elizabeth and Norman are so grateful for the help you gave their family when they finally had a second chance. Your fund is a great blessing for our families." ♦

If you are interested in making a gift to the Hunthausen Fund, contact Maria Laughlin, 382-4284.

The Pew Next to You

Meet Michele Ferguson, Christa Galioto & Tom Tamada

Michele Ferguson and Christa Galioto are two parishioners who keep the spirit of Christmas alive all year round. As members of the St. James Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, gift giving is what they do week in and week out!

Michele and Christa go out each week to visit people in their homes in need of assistance from SVDP. They have been doing this together for over 17 years.

Michele and her husband Ken moved here from Long Island in 1990. When filling out a registration card at St. James Cathedral, Michele checked off St. Vincent de Paul Society as a program she would be interested in volunteering in. Soon, a call came the St. Vincent DePaul office and Michele had an unexpected new career. She had been working from home as a technical editor, but had her afternoons free. After going out on a few home visits, she knew she was hooked. I asked her what she meant. "A sense of doing something that was important for someone else. It's rewarding," she said.

Christa and her husband Tom arrived in Seattle not long after the Fergusons. Tom had retired from the Air Force. They had met in Christa's hometown of Ulm, Germany. Tom's Air Force career kept them in Europe where they raised their children, Andrew and Annette. They lived a year in Dayton, Ohio before following Andrew and his family to Seattle. They settled in an apartment just a few blocks from the Cathedral. They soon met a condo neighbor, Jeanne Murray, a very active member of SVDP. Jeanne wasted no time in inviting Christa and Tom to consider volunteering. They did, and continue to do so today.

Michele explained how the St. James Conference of St. Vincent DePaul Society operates and what volunteers do. The main aim of the program is to assist people in remaining in their homes. They provide assistance for utility bills, rent, some furniture (mostly beds and mattresses) and occasionally some medical



Christa Galioto and Michele Ferguson, St. Vincent de Paul partners for 17 years

aid and food. In cases of domestic violence, they will assist in finding secure housing and help.

Persons seeking assistance have to live in the geographical boundaries of St. James Parish. As this area is so dense in population, there are two conferences in the parish, the St. James Conference and the Blessed Rosalie Rendu Conference. Those asking for help do not need to be Catholic. The only requirement is that they live at an address within the boundaries. All requests are made by phone through a central routing office. The requests are sorted out and sent by e-mail to the correct conference throughout the city. When Christa and Michele receive an assignment, they contact the persons or family and make an appointment to meet them in their homes. The home visits are important for several reasons. Personal contact is made which is beneficial to the recipient as well as the team. It verifies that the situation is indeed what had been described by phone. And the team can work with the people to see if further assistance can be provided by other agencies.

Michele does much more than home visits. She helps at the central office in sorting out the phone calls, faxes, e-mails and does the same for the St. James Conference.

When Michele is away on vacation, Christa and her

Joan McDonell is a Marriage Tribunal Advocate and a regular volunteer in the parish office.

husband Tom make the weekly home visits together. Tom also keeps busy as the treasurer of the conference.

So when Father Ryan reminds us on the third Sunday of the month that “the ushers will be at the doors today to accept any contributions you are able to make for the St. Vincent de Paul Society,” think of Michele and Christa!

Tom Tamada has a special spot reserved for him every week at the 10:00am Mass. There’s not much of a view, but you can hear every word, clear as a bell!

Tom is a one-of-a-kind volunteer: he records the Sunday 10:00am Mass for the homebound. More than twenty years ago, Sister Anne Herkenrath approached Tom for help with this vital yet little-known service for parishioners who, because of age or illness, are unable to join the community for Sunday Mass.

In those twenty years, technology has changed a lot. Tom has seamlessly made the transition from cassette tape to CD and has been through countless upgrades of the Cathedral’s sound system. In his years of ministry, he has helped hundreds of homebound parishioners feel connected with their community as they are able to experience the Sunday liturgy – the power of the word, the preaching, and the music.

Tom’s ministry begins about 9:30am each Sunday morning. He sets up the sound board and connects it to the Cathedral’s complex sound system, effortlessly finding his way through a daunting array of cables and plugs. Each track on the sound board corresponds to one of the Cathedral’s microphones – the ambo, the altar, the presider’s microphone, the cantor’s microphone are all recorded on separate tracks. Additional microphones record the organ and choir in the East Apse. Throughout the Mass, Tom monitors the recording, jotting down notes on his Order of Celebration about timings and places where he’ll need to make cuts or adjustments.

The real work begins when Mass is over. First Tom must edit the recording to fit on a standard CD (while Mass may run short or long, the CD cannot be more than 74 minutes!). Once these adjustments are made, he listens to the entire recording again, mastering it in ‘real time.’ Only then is it time to transfer the recording to a CD which can be duplicated for our homebound parishioners. The whole process takes about four hours!

Tom is very quiet about his ministry. “It’s a very interesting job,” he says. “It requires you to listen very closely and think about how you want the finished product to sound. I like the challenge, and I like the fact that I am contributing something useful to the



Tom Tamada at his “reserved seat” in the Cathedral’s south sacristy

parish – the shut-ins are able to feel connected to the Cathedral community. Those two things make it feel worthwhile to me.”

And for those who love the Cathedral but can’t take their place in the pew, his ministry means a lot. Bob Taylor receives the CD each week at home. “Thank you so much for sending me the CD,” he writes. “While it wasn’t quite like being in St. James, I still felt a part of the great cathedral. I would close my eyes and visualize the organ behind the section we usually sit in, singing with the members of the parish. (I don’t sing well, but in the cathedral with all the great voices we have, no one really hears me, except my wife. I remember once in grade school our music teacher asked if I could sing B-flat. I told him, ‘I can sing flat in any key!’) It was also great hearing Father Ryan’s homily again.

“One thing I can do at home that I can’t do in church is that at home I can actually whistle to the hymns!”

Thank you, Tom! ♦

Cathedral Almanac

Snapshots of life at St. James Cathedral, August – November, 2008

August

3. Father Ryan was invited to preach this morning at **Saint Mark's Episcopal Cathedral** on Capitol Hill. Rev. Ralph Carskadden writes of this visit: "Father Michael and I first met over forty years ago when we were young priests working at parishes in north Tacoma. He is a beloved pastor who has a heart for justice and peace and a love for the worship of the Lord in the beauty of holiness. I know that many members of Saint Mark's have taken part in peace marches which have linked our two cathedrals over the decades. I am so delighted that he accepted my invitation to preach at Saint Mark's."

10. We were privileged to welcome **Archbishop Harry Flynn**, retired Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis, to preside and preach at the Noon Mass.

11. Our week-long **Choir Camp** began with more than 80 campers. Their theme this year was from St. Paul's letter to the Colossians, "Run so as to win!" The week culminated with a presentation of the medieval *Play of Daniel*, complete with Daniel in the lions' den, Queen Esther, satraps, wizards, evil counselors, and much more!

September

3. Father Ryan presided at a Votive Mass of the Holy Spirit as **O'Dea High School** began their new school year.

4. The **Cathedral Choir of St.**

James returned in all its glory from its summer hiatus.

14. We celebrated the great feast of the **Triumph of the Cross**. In his homily for today, Father Ryan said:

"Whatever we believe about the violent use of force – about wars, just or unjust, provoked or preemptive or, for that matter, about the state-sponsored killing that is capital punishment, we Christians must do our thinking and form our consciences with one image



Top, Father Ryan preached at St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral on August 3. Middle, more than 80 young people "Run so as to win!" at Choir Camp. Below, Chris Koehler, Director of our St. James ESL Program, gives a talk at the White House on September 17.

squarely in our line of sight: the image of the cross – the cruel instrument of torture and death made holy and triumphant by the One who could have struck back but didn't... As Christians, the cross is our answer... the *only* path to life and peace!"

15. Father Ryan wrote a letter to the parish about the importance of **Sunday Mass**: "You know me well enough to know that I am reluctant to emphasize the aspect of obligation. I much prefer to appeal to your faith and to your understanding of the central importance of the Eucharist in our lives. Without the Eucharist, we die. It's as simple as that. It may not happen in a week or a month, but it will surely happen. That's because the Eucharist is the source of everything we do as believers and it is also the summit of our Christian lives, the closest we come on earth to the great Liturgy of heaven."

16. The Cathedral's Health and Healing Ministry sponsored a **Blood Drive** at the Pastoral Outreach Center.

17. Chris Koehler, director of the St. James ESL Program, was invited to speak at the **White House** on how faith-based and community organizations can best respond to the needs of refugees and immigrants. In attendance were about 100 representatives from legislative offices, various government departments concerned with immigration, advocates, and people working in the field.

22. The Twelfth Annual **Hunthausen Charity Golf Tournament and Benefit Dinner** was held at the Golf Club at Newcastle. The weather was beautiful and we were privileged to have both Archbishop Hunthausen and Archbishop Brunett play eighteen holes of golf! The tournament raised more than \$70,000 to support the Cathedral's outreach ministries.

27. On the memorial of St. Vincent de Paul, the

liturgical ministers of St. James Cathedral gathered for "**Liturgy Day**," a chance to get renewed in their ministries and to celebrate the Eucharist together.

October

2. In the evening, **Sister Helen Prejean**, CSJ, gave the 2nd Annual St. James Cathedral Lecture: *Dead Man Walking, the Journey Continues*. More than 300 people packed Cathedral Hall for her riveting and powerful presentation. It was a great privilege to welcome this modern-day prophet to St. James Cathedral.

6. On this first Sunday of the month, the children of our **Children's Faith Formation** programs received a special blessing at the Noon Mass, along with their parents and catechists.

11. Archbishop Brunett presided at a special Mass in honor of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the **Society of St. Vincent de Paul**. Representatives of more than 80 conferences from around the Archdiocese of Seattle participated in a festive entrance procession.

26. We welcomed **Father Ron Rolheiser**, OMI, who gave a talk in the Cathedral on spirituality and aging, a special event sponsored by Catholic Community Services.

November

1. We celebrated the **Solemnity of All Souls** with the glorious music of Mozart. In his homily for today, Father Ryan said: "The Church invites us to come face-to-face with mortality—to make friends with it, strange as that may seem. The Church invites us to do as St. Francis of Assisi did, to come to the point where we think of death as *Sister Death*—where we look upon the hour of its arrival, known only to God, as a gift which God will give in his own good time, a



From top to bottom: 12th Annual Hunthausen Golf Tournament at Newcastle; Sister Helen Prejean gives the 2nd Annual St. James Cathedral Lecture on October 2; our annual Ministries Fair on November 9; Father Ryan congratulates Todd Strange during his ordination to the Diaconate at Hales Corners, Wisconsin, November 22.

most surprising and paradoxical gift because, while it looks like the end, it is really only the beginning—the very path to life in its fullness. It was for Jesus and it will be for us."

3. On the Feast of St. Martin de Porres, we gathered for our third annual **Mass in memory of the homeless men and women** who have died on the streets of King County in the past year. At the conclusion, all gathered in the Cathedral courtyard as the Cathedral's "Thomas" bell was tolled eighty-nine times, once for each person who died.

9. Our annual Sacrificial Sunday coincided this year with the Solemnity of the **Dedication of St. John Lateran**. Parishioners Becky Brauer and Rex Wardlaw gave the witness talk this year. The morning Masses were followed by our annual Ministries Fair, a chance to explore the rich variety of ministry opportunities (more than 40 strong!) of St. James Cathedral.

22. Our own parishioner **Todd Strange** was ordained to the transitional diaconate in preparation for his priestly ordination, to take place June, 2009. The ordination took place at Sacred Heart Seminary in Hales Corners, Wisconsin.

23. The Solemnity of **Jesus Christ the King** marked the end of the liturgical year. Father Ryan said: "The king, the Christ, is the very least of our brothers and sisters—the very least: the least likely, often the least likable and the least likely to succeed.... This isn't my gospel, nor is it some left wing social manifesto. It is the Christian gospel, the only gospel we have."

27. Mass was the perfect beginning to the celebration of **Thanksgiving Day**. At this beautiful celebration, all were invited to bring gifts of non-perishable food items for the poor, which were placed around the altar at offertory time. ♦

Image of the Divine

In this latest addition to the Cathedral's collection of icons, iconographer Joan Brand-Landkamer has borrowed from the splendid icons of the Coptic Orthodox Church, which are set apart by their simplicity of design and vivid use of color.

Peter and Paul are twin pillars of the Church. Tradition tells us that they were martyred on the same day, and they share a feast, June 29. And yet the scriptures bear witness that Peter and Paul did not always agree. Paul respected Peter greatly, and acknowledged his special role of leadership, but did not hesitate to challenge him. When Peter seemed to be backpedaling on the issue of Gentile believers—who, Paul insisted, did not need to be circumcised, and thus bound to obey the entire Mosaic law—Paul spoke his mind. "I opposed him to his face because he clearly was wrong," Paul wrote in his letter to the Galatians; for he was "not on the right road in line with the truth of the gospel" (2:10, 14). Peter backed down—and the Church was born.



In icons, Peter and Paul are often shown together, exchanging the kiss of peace. It is a powerful reminder that from the beginning there were conflicts in the Church—conflicts that were resolved through open dialogue and, even more important, humble openness to the Holy Spirit. The icon of Peter and Paul is an icon of Church leadership at its

best; it is an icon of unity and peace.

This new icon will be the centerpiece of the **Citywide Prayer for Christian Unity**, which will take place in the Cathedral on Wednesday, January 21, at 7:00pm. What better way to celebrate the Year of St. Paul than by coming together with people from across the Christian family in prayer? (Bring a non-Catholic friend with you!)

Saint Peter and Saint Paul, pray for us, that we may overcome our differences through give-and-take, through dialogue and understanding, and come at last to the unity Christ wills for us. ♦

ST. JAMES CATHEDRAL

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