

Dear People of God:

Greetings in the name of our Lord.

*I have been asked to include my sermon of 22<sup>nd</sup> August in the Lantern, and here it is:*

The old South African Prayerbook states: "The Canonical obligation of a Communicant of the Church of the Province is to receive the Holy Communion three times at least during the year". It does also say however "It is the duty of the Communicant to receive the Holy Communion frequently, and especially at all the Great Festivals of the Church, of which Easter is to be one".

However, are we to say that the minimum level of our commitment as Christians is to receive Holy Communion three times a year??? Peter in his epistle says this, "as you come to Him, the living Stone – rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to Him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ .. (1Peter Ch.2:1-5) and then it goes on .. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light." (1 Peter Ch.2:9).

We are all priests, part of the royal priesthood of believers. Caroline, Anthony and I are Priests (with a capital P you may say). It is interesting to know that this word Priest (with a capital P) came into the English language in this way. The Greek word is Presbyteros, which was translated into the Latin as Priestos which was translated into English as Priest. You will notice, if you look at the Ordination Service in the APB on page 574, that it says that "The ordination of Deacons and Priests, also called Presbyters". Perhaps the word presbyter is more helpful to us than the word Priest with a capital P as this might lead to people thinking that it is only the Priests with a capital P who have access to God. However, such an understanding does not fit in with the understanding of the New Testament. Each one of us is a priest. I exercise my priestly ministry (that is, priestly with a small p) as a Priest or a Presbyter – you exercise a priestly ministry as a teacher or a scholar or a student in your relevant job – wherever you find yourself. To exercise a priestly ministry with a small p, means far more than attending Holy Communion three times a year or, for that matter attending holy communion frequently. I would suggest that there are five things that we have to do, as individuals and as a congregation, to work out our calling as priests of the royal priesthood. These are, and I will use the Greek words which are (1) KONONIA, (2) DIDACHE, (3) DIAKONIA, (4) MARTURIA and (5) LITURGIA. I would like to look at these in turn. It is the practice of these things that will help us "enter in by the narrow door".

### **1. KONONIA**

If one tries to find an English word that best describes KONONIA it is probably BELONGING. In the New Testament there are something like 114 different metaphors used for the church. At least half of these have KONONIA i.e. a sense of belonging, as an

important concept. We could say that KONONIA = FELLOWSHIP = BELONGING. What is often implied as one considers KONONIA is that we have a special sense of belonging when we get together with people like ourselves. However, the church should be a place where a stranger feels welcome. God, in Jesus, has welcomed us, as sinful as we are – and we as His people should re-enact this welcome. It is interesting that the followers of Buddha have a very similar story to the parable of the prodigal son – remember the son who goes off sowing his wild oats until he suddenly comes to his senses and discovers that he is in the "pig-pen" – however the prodigal is not welcomed by the father in the Buddhist faith, but is rather reprimanded and is instructed by the father to spend years in hard labour working off his delinquent behaviour. How different is the account in the gospel of Luke. The father rushes out and greets his wayward son and welcomes him back as one of the family. Jack Stewart, a professor of Congregational Studies at Princeton University, tells a story of how he and his wife were invited to church where one of his students was the pastor. The congregation consisted of about 20 people in a building that could seat 400. Jack was preaching and yet he saw a person come in late and proceeded to the pew where his wife was sitting. "You're sitting in my place," she said. No wonder the church had only 20 members. We need to be people who welcome others, even if they are very different to us in terms of race, class, gender or any other kind of way. Our church, this congregation shows signs of being a true church, i.e. a congregation that is faithful to God in as far as strangers are welcomed and accepted.

### **2. DIDACHE**

The word that is generally used to translate the word DIDACHE is TEACHING. However, this is misleading for it is not just head knowledge that is conveyed – a far better way to translate the word DIDACHE is to describe it as Discipleship. The aim of all our teaching in the Church should be to create more effective disciples of Jesus Christ. All education in the Church should have discipleship as it's aim.

Our theological colleges should not just be places where students can acquire 'head knowledge' of Jesus or about Jesus. The education at theological college should be to make students better and more committed disciples of Jesus Christ. If one thinks of the story of how Jesus responds to the woman at the well – John's gospel, chapter 4 - we have a masterful exercise of discipleship. Jesus and the woman at the well could not have been more diametrically opposed. He was a Jewish Male, she was a Samaritan woman. (Jews and Samaritans were enemies). She was poor – she was a hewer of wood and a bearer of water – and carried water and wood for people. Jesus would have been from the middle class as a carpenter. She was immoral -Jesus was the most perfect man. Yet as Jesus talks to her, he enables her to see Him as a Male, a Jew, a Teacher, a Prophet and eventually as Messiah. He takes her through a process of discipleship so much so that she eventually goes and tells her friends about Jesus and invites them to come

and see. We all need to be discipled and in a process of being disciples. We can do this by means of things like:

1. the Alpha Course
2. Joining a House Group
3. Joining the Foundation Course in Centering Prayer
4. Go on a Walk to Emmaus
5. Reading books about Jesus and His faithful followers
6. Ask one of the five people who attended the course on spiritual direction at St. Joseph's earlier this year i.e.: Caroline Beech, Sue Britton, Vivienne Pyle, Penny McClennan and John Green – or some other Christian person to accompany you on your spiritual journey. Of course, the most important way to the way of discipleship is by reading the Word of God.

These are just some of the ways by which we can grow our discipleship. There are also many others.

### 3. MARTURIA

This is a Greek word which comes from the Greek legal system. Associated with this word are the concepts of remembering and giving testimony and these are linked to the integrity of the person. What is required of a witness in court is that they can remember what they saw and can give testimony to it. They will be disqualified for not being people of integrity.

Almost always, but there are exceptions, God comes to people through other people. So we need to lead lives and have lifestyles in and through which people can see God. This is what the incarnation of Jesus Christ was all about – God became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory (John 1:14). God was made flesh, made real through His incarnation. By His life and actions people could see God made flesh.

We are witnesses of Jesus as we remember what God has done in Jesus Christ i.e. how He saved a wretch like me through His grace and give testimony to it i.e. that I show by my life and actions that I am a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Our witness is worked out in our vocations. Being witnesses means that we can bear testimony to Jesus Christ by showing what He has done for us in our place of work – as a schoolteacher/an accountant/a beauty therapist/as a farmer. One of the most exciting things for me is to visit my wife, Gill's, classroom. As I walk in I realize I am walking on Holy ground. This is the work that God has called Gill to and this is where she bears witness for Christ. Our work as clergy and teachers is to help you so that you can be witnesses as you follow your vocations in life. Our task as clergy and leaders is to support you so that you can be witnesses. In many churches, the congregation has been led to believe that their primary task is to support the minister. But the work of the church is done only if the members share in the work of witnessing. With this there is remembrance of salvation in Jesus and testify to salvation that Jesus brings both by word and action. The ordained

ministers are to equip people in the congregation. The ordained ministers should be primarily for the people of God and not the other way round.

### 4. DIAKONIA

DIKONIA can be defined as the practice of SERVICE. DIAKONIA is rooted in the agape love of God, the self-giving love of Jesus which he showed on the cross by dying for us. We do not deserve God's love and yet He lavishes it on us. DIAKONIA, or SERVICE, gets its direction from the Reign of God. In the church people should get a glimpse of what the Reign of God is like. The church should be a sign of hope and not despair.

This DIAKONIA ministry is modeled by Jesus when He took up a towel and a basin of water and stooped to wash the feet of His disciples. Jesus said that He came among us as one who serves. We serve in diakonia as we act in compassion to meet the needs of the poor and those who are hungry, or cold or forgotten. We need also to enter into the systems of society so that the needs of people can be met at the source. It is often systemic faults that cause so much pain to people e.g. the removal of the laws of apartheid has led to people becoming more humane. The world is in so much need, and we are meant to try and meet the needs of the world. It is when we serve others that we show signs of what it means to be a Christian. It is when we as a church serve others that we really begin to show what it means to be the church, that God is always glorified. We are called to make acts of compassion in reference to specific, local and immediate human needs.

### 5. LITURGIA

This is usually translated as WORSHIP. Archbishop William Temple has a wonderful quotation about worship. He says this "Worship is to quicken the conscience by the holiness of God; to feed the mind with the truth of God; to purge the imagination by the beauty of God; to open the heart to the love of God; and to devote the will to the purpose of God". Worship is that which separates the church from other institutions that love and care. We can get love and fellowship in a lot of places, but worship is openness to an encounter with the Triune God. Worship employs the God-given means of Grace through God's Word and the Sacraments. Worship honours a range of feelings and a variety of human expressions. Worship helps us to see who God is. It is when we begin to see who God is that we will reach out in KONONIA, that we will want to be DISCIPLED, we will want to bear TESTIMONY, and when we will serve.

So these are the BIG FIVE. KONONIA, DIDACHE, DIAKONIA, MARTURIA and LITURGIA. If we are involved in practising belonging, if we are growing as disciples, if we are being witnesses, if we are serving and if we are worshipping, we as individuals will be living faithful Christian lives, and if we do all this as the church, we will be living faithfully. This is how we will enter through the narrow way. AMEN.  
May God bless you all



Yours sincerely in Christ - John Green

## FROM THE CHURCHWARDENS

### Edward Pines & Andre Zuidewind

How time flies, it only seems like yesterday that we were on holiday contemplating the start of the third term on the academic calendar and here it is moving rapidly towards completion. In the rush of our busy lives, how important it is to take regular time-out to worship with our fellow Christian brothers and sisters at St John the Baptist. How fortunate we are to have such a witnessing and caring family at SJB - are you making full use of all that is on offer?

- ✘ Asking for prayers, either by phone or by using the pew message cards.
- ✘ Speaking to one of our ministers or leadership team regarding a particular concern.
- ✘ Joining the Alpha Course, to learn more about being a Christian today.
- ✘ Do you know about our ministry to the victims of AIDS?
- ✘ Belonging to a house group for regular study of Gods word.
- ✘ Visiting the sick in hospital, there is a team that takes care of this on a daily basis.
- ✘ Being part of our valuable telephone ministry.
- ✘ Are you an active member of one of the guilds?
- ✘ Have you an interest in gardening?
- ✘ Would you like to join the Heritage Group?
- ✘ How about helping our fellowship team?
- ✘ Have you ever been to a men's fellowship breakfast?

#### HAVE YOU VISITED THE NEW PARISH WEBSITE?

The address is

**[www.stjohnbaptist.co.za](http://www.stjohnbaptist.co.za)**

Thanks to Barbara McAlpin who has put it all together. We would love your comments – and your patience as inevitable teething problems are overcome.

The parish email address has been changed to

**[church@stjohnbaptist.co.za](mailto:church@stjohnbaptist.co.za)**

The list is endless, yes there is a lot that happens at SJB. We would like to say thank you to all those who provide regular help and support making possible all this work for God's Kingdom here in Pinetown. As well as the giving of time and special talents, God's work in this place needs finance and the generous giving provided by you our family; it is greatly appreciated, keep it up! The accounts have been showing a steady balance so far this year, making it possible to complete some important projects which have been part of the parish vision.

It is important to remember that a large percentage of our regular income goes towards financing the needs of the wider church and the expenses of the Diocese in providing for stipendiary clergy and our bishops. To pay our share of this in 2005 we will be looking for an extra R3 000 each month on our budget allocation. If we have 400 families on the parish roll, in broad figures that would mean extra giving of less than R10 monthly per family unit. Food for thought and prayer, as the season for considering our stewardship approaches. God Bless you all.

## PARISH ENCOUNTER : OBSERVATIONS BY A PARISHIONER

### Mimi Roach

A few weeks ago some of the parishoners stayed after the 9 a.m. Sunday service to have lunch together and exchange ideas and experiences of our diverse cultural backgrounds. After lunch we divided into groups and shared our thoughts and in our group we had a most interesting time.

- ✘ Firstly, a woman who was a high school pupil in the Transvaal in the 1970's at the time of the unrest, told us of the terror children experienced at the hands of authorities. This involved whipping and tear gas and imprisonment and the eventual fatal shooting of her father in front of their family.

- ✘ Then there were some who were children in England during the war years and the bombing and air battles that they endured.

- ✘ A younger man grew up in the relative peace of the Transkei when he was at school.

- ✘ And then there were two old 'toppies' one Irish and the other an Afrikaner-- what a combination!!-- and they couldn't wait to outdo each other in the telling of their tales! We all so enjoyed the experience and all expressed the hope that we could have more of such meetings. Thank you Jane Kustner for arranging it before you returned home.



#### St JOHN'S SHOULDER BAGS

Don't be stuck with your old 'on-its-last-legs' carry bag which might not 'carry' for much longer! The parish has a stock of durable shoulder bags with the parish 'church' logo printed on them, useful to keep your 'goodies' together. They can carry lots of different things and will manage A4 sized files! They are available from Helen in the office at an excellent price of R40.

## TRIP TO MOZAMBIQUE JULY 2004

### Andrew Morris

There is so much to say about the trip to Mozambique that John Hill and I went on recently, that there is no way I can fit it all in or even do justice to it in words, but nevertheless I shall try. God was in this trip from the beginning. One Saturday morning after men's breakfast, I was speaking to John about the need and desire to spread the Gospel and I said that if he knew of any opportunities near or far, to let me know, EVEN if it was Mozambique. Well a few weeks later I was sitting in a church office up in Richmond getting interviewed for a possible trip to Mozambique that these guys were planning and who had contacted John. When I heard the estimated price I nearly fell off my chair and left somewhat downcast.

That night I pleaded with God, letting Him know what a good guy I was trying to be now, just in case He hadn't noticed. I asked that if it pleased Him that I go on this trip and if so could He then provide the finances. I had been reading a book about a guy named George Muller who had prayed about his needs and others and how God had provided. Seemed like a good idea to ask God for stuff so I did. Next evening I hear that I'm going to get paid a little extra and later even received back pay. A few people needed me to housesit which I got paid for, Mr/Mrs anonymous left a generous amount of money in my pigeonhole even before I knew about Mozambique and there were people in the congregation who contributed to the overall expenses. Thank-you Lord. There was also the team that was put together. Some had to pull out for financial reasons but those that went on the mission were perfectly suited to the different nature and means of the message preached/taught at various times. God really put the

team together, I don't think we could have done better if we tried. Our days consisted of breakfast and then early morning devotions. After which we prepared various bits and pieces and stayed in the village teaching from 9am-12pm. Then we headed back to base camp a little outside of the village for lunch and returned to do the same thing from 2-4pm. These teaching sessions concerned different areas of church-life and Christian ministry, which was geared towards the church leaders in the area. After this was supper which was either at camp or at the house of the family of our interpreter, who had worked so hard during our stay (he was the only interpreter) and even prior to our coming. We had many opportunities to share about Jesus Christ, which we did at these family gatherings and at a funeral we went to and in particular one evening, where we held a big outside evangelistic campaign. It had been advertised on the radio prior to our coming and we went around the village with a loud speaker letting everyone know what was happening. There were certain people however who sowed seeds of unease. We started the evening with about a few hundred curious faces and by the end of the evening thanks to prayer and the power of the Almighty, we had probably about 1500 people there, with hundreds responding to the invitation to receive Jesus as there Lord and Saviour. I saw people being filled with the Holy Spirit and speaking in tongues and even experienced the Holy Spirit exercising His gifts through me. During this time of the Holy Spirit being made evident in amazing ways we witnessed an unsettled spirit manifest itself in a woman and child. There was also healing of a man who couldn't hear and a

woman who was bent and buckled over. Any given day could have been like a page out of Acts. We had experiences of God that I will never ever forget. God was working in high and low places as near the end of the trip the President of the area (the chief) was also coming to the meetings. It is also comforting to know that New Covenant Ministries International (N.C.M.I) are going to be sending a follow-up team as the area is hungry for God and His Word and are in real need. My faith was given a real injection and I need to be weary of falling into the same old rut as before. This trip just confirmed for me that it is truly in mission for Christ whether near or far and in getting out of our comfort zones that we see God move in amazing ways just like He said He would.

We also got to stay in a game reserve on the way home, which was really cool. In the wee hours of the morning I heard lions and hyenas feasting on a carcass. Awe inspiring sounds of lions roaring, hyenas laughing and bones crunching. I related my story in the morning to some of the crew but was told that it was probably a warthog eating roots nears the tent. Lion-roar, warthog-snort, bones cracking, sticks breaking. John I think not. This is a long report and still I haven't told all that there is to share.

Nevertheless, I hope you have been challenged and encouraged to serve Christ in every and any way, as well as to step up your efforts to win souls for our Lord before it's too late. Lord Jesus, yours is all the glory, thank-you so much and may You use us all more and more in the extension and building up of Your Kingdom, EVEN to the ends of the earth. Amen.

### FRIENDSHIP

#### Dawn Asher - stop press

At long last we have a date for the KZN Philharmonic Orchestra - Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> December 2004 at 3pm. This will be followed by picnic in the church grounds.

It will be a wonderful programme of music to suit all tastes - a full programme will be announced later - so please set that date aside, and bring along friends and

neighbours as well. It will be a fellowship event for all to enjoy. Watch the pew bulletin for further details.

The cost will be R50 per family of 4, pensioners R20, adults R25, and students R20.

So don't miss out on a feast of magnificent music and fellowship.

## GARDENS & GROUNDS

David Asher

Dawn and I purchased seedlings and beautified the gardens for the Anglo Zulu War Sunday service. We moved two Petreas, which had not flowered for years, to new spots bordering the car park.

The state of the shed was appalling so it was decided to have a clean up. I would like to thank Jenny Niemeyer, Andrew Morris, Innocent Zungu, Dawn Asher and a refugee for all their help with this task. We sold some of the items – thanks to John for the use of his bakkie. Andrew took several loads of rubbish to the dump.

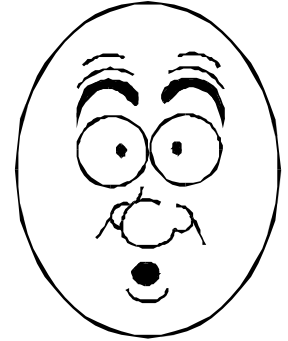
Please would parishioners note: *the shed is **NOT** a dumping group for items that **DON'T WORK** or for those people who have storage problems*, as the cleanups always seem to land up with a few willing helpers.

## DO YOU LOOK AFTER WHAT GOD HAS MADE?

Delise Coad

Do you realise the time it takes for discarded material to break down or disintegrate when left out in the open?

- ✧ Orange peel - from 2 weeks to 5 months
- ✧ Plastic-coated paper - from 1 to 5 years
- ✧ Plastic bags - from 20 to 30 years
- ✧ Nylon fabrics - from 30 to 40 years
- ✧ Boot soles - from 50 to 80 years
- ✧ Aluminium cans and tabs - from 80 to 100 years



Where does oxygen come from? 60% of our oxygen comes from plankton in the top one metre of the oceans, while 40% comes from plants. The human being cannot do much to support the oceanic source of oxygen except to help combat pollution - especially oil pollution. We can, however, do much to help improve the quality of oxygen by planting trees and in particular encouraging people to plant more trees in our cities.

National Arbor Day stems from the Green Heritage campaign which was launched in 1973. The purpose of Arbor Day is to promote greater awareness of trees as a commercial crop, for their aesthetic value in home and public gardens and as a vital component of our interacting natural environment.

**Only when the last tree has died, and the last river been poisoned and the last fish been caught, will we realise we cannot eat money.**

***[From comments on the environment from the Cree Indians in the 1900s]***

ETHIOPIA, AN EXAMPLE OF TREE NEGLECT Ethiopia was once rich in forests, but they were not carefully husbanded. Today, large parts of the country are desert. To avoid a similar fate, South Africans are being urged to conserve their trees, water resources and other aspects of their natural environment, to match the high level of industrial and commercial development already taking place here. Are you doing your bit?

## YOUTH REPORT

Andrew Morris

There has been some really encouraging developments that have been and are still to take place. We had a long prayer meeting at the beginning of the term one Friday night and I left feeling that this is the only way forward, PRAYING. I think a lot is due to this and other prayer times. Other Friday nights this term have been really enjoyable such as watching Lauren and Rory Rosenberg in a school play that was held recently. We also went to listen to a lady who was a missionary in the Comores Islands and she had wonderful testimonies about the work of God in far off places. A few Sundays ago the Youth were involved in leading various aspects of the evening service and what was a real testimony to what God is doing in their lives is that some guys brought friends along.

We also have plans to lead the Junior Youth Friday 10<sup>th</sup> Sept. and also to do a skit/play (written by our very own Makhosazana Zulu) for Cheshire Homes. There should also be another service led by the Youth in September and you'll really be missing out if you don't come. What has also been good is the fact that some of the guys have responded to the request to take on leadership positions for some of the ministries generated by the group. We have also received and been pledged a number of second hand cell phones which we are using to raise funds (some guy recycles them). We would just like to thank those of you who continually pray for us and ask that you continue as well as beseech others to take up this invaluable ministry.

## A NOTE FROM AN OLD 'TOPPIE'

Mimi Roach

My husband George, died on 24th May eleven years ago. At that time I wrote a thank you letter to St.John's and asked Leslie Croft to read it for meat his funeral service. During George's last six months of illness, there was scarcely a day that went by without someone from the church popping in to offer help or to sit with him or run errands for me or the family. What a joy you all were and now I have to say that you have become my family and continue to uphold me with your prayers and love.

All families have a great aunt Agatha who sings out of tune or time, but we would miss her if she did not turn up for family gatherings. And there are children who clamber around and let out yells when they hit their heads on pews - these are the things that make for my joy at St.John's. You are all so good to me. Since my move from my house and my last chicken out of the nest, and the selling of my car due to failing eyesight, I don't know what I would do without you. I won't be able to thank you at my funeral, so I'd rather do it now!

*Thank you and God bless you all.*

## CELEBRATION OF DIVERSITY

Diocesan Liturgical Conference : Andrew Morris

When asked to do a 'review' of the liturgical conference I attended with Sue Britton recently (23/24<sup>th</sup> August), I gladly accepted. Truth be told, when I was originally asked/told to go I was apprehensive but the idea of challenging and expanding preconceived ideas about worship appealed to me. Thankfully I was pleasantly surprised by the content of the lectures delivered which I had originally thought would be as dry as dust.

The lecturer was Rev. George Guiver, the current Superior of the Community of the Resurrection in Mirfield, U.K. He is also a lecturer in liturgy at the College of the Resurrection there. For me he made the whole conference worthwhile. His depth of historical-church knowledge, humour and just plain good sense with regard to things like how we should relate to liturgy etc. gave

me perspective and added background and meaning to some of the things we do and don't know why.

The theme dealt with concerned inculturation. I found viewing our context in new and creative ways somewhat challenging although I recognise the necessity. I became more aware of many dangers inherent in the process of integration and accommodation between Kingdom culture and worldly ones. I was concerned by some people's comments and particularly by an article we were given to read about some churches attempts at inculturation. I really pray for discernment while not only trying to accommodate different cultures but also a post-modern and pluralistic society.

There were many highlights for me in particular certain discussion times, which I thoroughly enjoyed. At one time I had a Bishop, an

Archdeacon and professor in my group and from whom I was really given food for thought. We were also shown video's of various churches where this process of inculturation was underway, some appearing successful, others needing a bit more work (or perhaps less). On the last day we all participated in a Eucharist service where the liturgy had been designed for children, afterwards we reviewed and gave feedback.

Other than that not much else to say except that lunch was great (free food is always more enjoyable) and getting to meet some of the weird and wonderful clergy of the diocese was an education in itself. Lastly I would really encourage every- and anybody to attend a workshop of Rev. George's when he comes out on another teaching mission to S.A. You may find yourself pleasantly surprised, I know I was.

## RECYCLING NEWS

Delise Coad

We have just had a number of drums put in place next to the paper igloo for the **recycling of glass**. The drums will be replaced by an igloo when the suppliers have one for us. Please ensure that any bottles placed in the drums are clean - sauce, mayonnaise, jam jars etc., are to be rinsed out and the lids removed. Any dregs in the bottles will encourage rodents. **ALSO PLEASE LEAVE THE AREA NEAT AND TIDY SO THAT THE STAFF DO NOT HAVE TO SPEND TIME KEEPING THE AREA CLEAN.**

One Sunday morning the pastor noticed that little Alex was staring up at the large war memorial plaque that hung in the foyer of the Church. It was covered with names and small flags were mounted on either side of it.

The seven-year-old had been staring at the plaque for some time, when the pastor walked up, stood beside the little boy and said quietly: "Good morning Alex."

"Good morning, Pastor," replied the lad still focused on the plaque. "Pastor, what is this?" "Well, son, it's a memorial to all the young men and women who died in service."

Soberly, they stood together, staring at the large plaque. Little Alex's voice was trembling and barely audible when he asked: "Which service, morning or evening?"

**Mercury Tailpiece – April 2003**

## HOLISTIC SMALL GROUPS

**Doreen Böhmer**

Our mission is to foster the growth of faith through small groups. At a House Group Leaders meeting in October 2003, it was decided that we would try to meet every month. I am happy to report that we continue to meet on the second Saturday morning of the month from 7.30am until 9.00am. Our Rector has done much to encourage members of St John's to join a House Group by way of sermons and letters in the Lantern.

With Stewardship Sunday coming up 24<sup>th</sup> Oct you will, again, have an opportunity to "sign up". We have House Groups meeting on every weekday (mornings, afternoons, or evenings). Now that we have completed the Parish Charter, each group has found some exciting topic to study for the rest of the year.

Our other small groups – Women's Guilds, Mothers Union and Men's Fellowship – continue to meet monthly with interesting speakers on various topics. During August our Guilds held their usual coffee morning with invitations to other Churches in Pinetown. It is a wonderful opportunity for the ladies of Pinetown to come together as the body of Christ.

Barbara Miller and myself attended a conference, during July, presented by Willow Creek Association Ltd. The guest speaker Gordon Macdonald spoke on 'A leaders journey'. He has been a Pastor for 35 years and has written many books. He emphasised that a leader's first priority is to tend yourself and that we focus on Jesus for our sense of direction.

## POWER OF PRAYER IN OUR SCHOOLS

**Lushan Mansell**

I am a teacher at an all girl's high school in south Durban. Many who attend this school come from Umlazi and are from single parent families. When I started teaching at the beginning of this year, I was full of enthusiasm and brimming with ideas of what I would bring to these girl's lives. It wasn't too long before the Lord showed me that He had other ideas for what He needs me to do there.

Through workshops with teachers from all sectors of Durban I have come to develop the "model" of the average South African school child: he/she has a mother, their father has either been out of the picture for years or has simply never been there at all. As the sole breadwinner, the mother works six full days a week and commutes to and from work in taxis from about 5:30am and returns home at about 7pm. This places the burden of preparing supper and looking after younger siblings squarely on the shoulders of the elder child, depriving them of experiencing their own childhood. The mother, who is working that hard to support her children and provide the best education that she can afford, is simply too tired to always assist the children with homework or work through their problems with them, so in many cases the children are growing up without all the guidance needed to become a fully rounded adult, prepared for the challenges of adult life. By the time the child is in high school, a close family member will have died of AIDS; by Gr11 that same child is having unprotected sex with

multiple partners. Tied into this is the culture of witchcraft that is growing stronger in both the African and European environment: the prolific use of muti for vengeful purposes and the placing of hexes on those in disfavour. The occult is no longer taboo and is therefore out in the open. Open any magazine or switch on the TV and I'll go so far as to say its use is even encouraged.

As a teacher I have children coming to me all the time with their problems and questions and most of the time I find that all I am moved to do is PRAY. God automatically places my arms around the shoulders of His precious child and His spirit moves me to pray over them. At the beginning of each day, my register class and I open the day with prayer and each day at home I actively give the school and individual children to God in prayer ... and it is beginning to bear fruit. At the beginning of this year there was a strong spirit of dissent in our school: kids were frequently getting into very violent fights and the staffroom was clearly divided, but I can say that besides the usual girl fights, there have been markedly less fighting among the girls and the mood in the staff room is brighter with teachers working WITH each other instead of against. Our school is achieving excellent results in sport and academics, but more importantly for me is the way I see them conduct themselves in public when with other schools. Our girls stand out, not for their threadbare

uniforms but for their good conduct and innocent pride in who they are. In today's world of cynicism, innocence is a matchless treasure.

God also answers the material prayers, like when a bus didn't pitch to take our choir to Michaelhouse for a choir competition and God supplied a luxury coach instead. He then gave us the award for Best Choir by popular vote and returned the pair of shoes one girl had lost – the real cherry on top!

Our school is not free from its problems. As it is the end of the year, the girls' pregnancies are made common knowledge. The shocking thing is that many PLAN their pregnancies to have the baby in the December holiday. There is a general apathy regarding work, as if education is a process of osmosis and not a result of effort. But let me remind you that my school is not special, if anything it is an example of a GOOD school, most schools are poorer in terms of morality, and that scares me.

Without trying to sound like a beauty queen: the children ARE our future and if we ignore them our future is bleak. As a friend said the future is our Prayer-a-mometer: we will be able to judge the power of our prayers today by the quality of our tomorrow. God answers the prayers of His faithful, but we have to say them.

So I'm asking you please: pray for our schools; for the children who attend them and the teachers who have to educate and develop these children with love.

Thank you.

## PARISH RETREAT at LYNDHURST 22 – 25 August 2004

Caroline Beech

*Jesus ... went up on the mountain to pray : Luke 9.28*

Six of us, wedged into a 4x4, crammed already with supplies and bedding and goedes en alles en nog wat, left the world for three days, and "Stepped out on the Word of God" – a retreat based on the gospel of St Luke, written by Barbara E. Reid.

And there we learned to pray in a new way through sounds and sights and smells all around us - lapping water, the cry of birds, stars as big as teacups, the changing moods and colours of the lake and sky... In the silence we listened and prayed and worshipped this God of ours together ... we learned and discerned old truths in new ways and waited for Him to stir our faith-journeys to new depths.

We were surrounded by parables - walking through fire-blackened fields we surprised tiny shoots of green bringing the promise of new life... sailing over

the lake at sunset, watching the rippled waters slowly changing its colours of gold and black and blue and red (and singing Evening Prayer's 'Hail Gladdening Light of His pure glory poured' across the surface of the lake!) .. early morning prayers wrapped in sleeping bags waiting for the sun to rise and bring a new day... scrambling down a hill to find ice-cold refreshing water among the rocks and boulders ..

On the last morning after the final Eucharist we talked and talked for a long time. The teaching had soaked into the marrow of our bones. We found that God had truly blessed us; some with affirmations and encouragement for present ministries; others with recognition of new ones budding and unfurling; and for others overwhelming assurances that

fallow times held promises yet to break the surface.

God loves us. That was so wonderfully made aware for each one of us .... as tenderly as a nursing mother absorbed in her baby, so God pours over us and loves every last detail of us

I woke one night feeling rocked steadily .... a sensation probably lingering from the swell of the little fishing boat .... and hearing our evening hymn running through my mind with the same rhythm ....

*safe in the shadow of Your arms..*

*Your saints have dwelt secure...*

*.. I trust in You*

*... I trust in you .....*

May the grace we have received, Lord, sink deep in our hearts, bear fruit in our lives, and keep us always in thanksgiving and in praise of Your holy Name.  
Amen.

### TO THE CONGREGATION OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, PINETOWN

I don't think that many people know me, but there are quite a few who know of me: that scruffy long-haired youngster who gate-crashed the seven o' clock service several years ago and despite the occasional disapproving look, refused to leave. This letter is a little something of why I came and why I didn't leave.

I arrived because I needed a church. And so I picked one and went there. The church I picked happened to be St John the Baptist. I still believe it was right. As an early service congregant, I was once told that I throw the demographics out quite a bit. I didn't mind and after a year or two neither did any one else.

People go to church for many reasons. Some go to meet other people. Some go to understand more about themselves. Others want to know more about God. I went to church to escape myself. I needed somewhere to go, and I didn't have anywhere to go. It took a long time for me to be comfortable in a church - the prayer book confused me for months and churches are strange places for those outside - but I stuck with it because here I found the beginnings of what I needed, a gentle quiet and a healing stillness. For someone whose mind was overwrought from years of frantic and fruitless search and struggle, whose spirit had shrunk so much that their body was a shell, this was the beginning, and it is always the point to which I have returned: to the quiet heart of service, where I am able to gather myself, escape myself and find God.

What I learned in the haze of summer mornings and the cooler dawns of winter is how to pray. Now I

believe I know something of what attracted me to St. John's in the first place, and those are the dual virtues of patience and prayer. I have learned to pray and I have learned to be patient. And these have grown their own fruit; an abiding peace and joy leading to a growing hope in the sovereignty and majesty of God. I believe that these are amongst the greatest gifts the church has to offer.

People inside and outside of the Anglican Church criticize congregations for not being sufficiently proactive, and maybe that is true. But for me, I was able to stay because I was allowed to and no one harassed me. For those of us whose minds are fragile and fractured and find no home, sometimes holiness and wholeness is the sound of voices in unison, in hymns or prayer. I am not ashamed and am deeply grateful for the rich heritage and living tradition of which I have been allowed to be a part. And it is these silences, these prayers and the patience that they produce, the longing that they voice, that I carry with me and have carried me for so long.

So I give thanks to God for the living church, which allowed the Spirit of God to work with a gentle hand in a small life. I have emerged immensely stronger, not in myself, but in what God gives, already owing to this congregation more than can be paid.

With all gratitude, May God bless you all.

grant

Grant Blair

## HERITAGE REPORT

### Robin Niemeyer

During the past few months, the Heritage Group has been planning and preparing for the service of reconciliation and remembrance of the Anglo-Zulu War grave site.

The first major task was removal of the three Norfolk pines in and adjacent to the historical gravesite. Three weeks before the service the trees were removed and the stumps chipped down below ground level. At the same time the large blue gum was also removed. This tree was found to be hollow in the centre of the trunk and was in danger of falling down. Volunteers from the Heritage Group got stuck in and removed the mountain of pine chips from the site that were left after completion of the chipping operation. The pathway was repaired where it had been damaged in several places from the falling trees. As part of the cleanup operation, several of the damaged head stones were professionally repaired.

On Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> August, the service of remembrance and reconciliation was held. This was the closest date to the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the cessation of hostilities. Prince M Buthelezi attended representing the Zulu forces, and Lt Col D Strawbridge of the British Peace Support Group, represented the British forces. Officers commanding the Natal Carbineers, Durban Light Infantry, Durban Regiment, Natal Mounted Rifles and 1 Medical Battalion attended the service, as did the Deputy

Provincial Police Commissioner. The SA Legion and a contingent of the MOTHS were present. Highway Commando provided the Guard of Honour.

During the church service, a military historian, Mr Keith Archibald, gave a talk on the War, its origins, the campaign and its aftermath. This was followed by presentations by Prince Buthelezi and Lt Col Strawbridge.

The congregation then moved in procession to the gravesite where, after prayers of blessing, wreaths were laid. Tea and refreshments were served after the service. Lt Col Strawbridge was then taken to St Andrew's cemetery to view the grave of Capt Joseph Malone VC. Malone was one of the earliest VC holders, having been awarded the decoration at the Battle of Balaclava in the Crimea in 1856.

As part of the Anglo-Zulu War remembrance activities, the Heritage Group has arranged a tour to the battlefields at the end of September. This will include Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift among others in the Dundee area. The tour was fully booked within a short period of time and unfortunately no further additions can be accepted. As a prelude to the tour, a supper and discussion evening is being arranged for Friday 17<sup>th</sup> Sept. The discussions will cover a range of aspects around the Anglo-Zulu War. This evening is open to anyone, not just the tour members.

## PASSIONATE SPIRITUALITY

### Vivienne Pyle

#### Foundation Course in Deepening Prayer

This six-session experiential course (running from 24 July to 02 October) explores "*what happens when I pray.*" We are introduced to various forms of prayer and Christian meditation. At each session, we reflect on the prayer practice and deepen our ability to listen to God, as we share with one another, and seek to find God in everyday experience. A team of presenters and facilitators led the course through the first four sessions, which led to lively discussion and deep faith sharing.

#### Stillness and Awareness :

Practice in different methods of prayer

#### Image of God and Self:

Exploring our images of both, where they come from and how they affect the way we pray.

#### Review and Reflection:

Ways to deepen our prayer experience through reflecting and writing/journaling. Reviewing our whole day before God.

#### Feelings and Discernment:

Exploring where our feelings come from, and how to use our feelings as a tool in decision-making and discernment.

Thirty people are attending each session from the Highway area, Durban and Umhlali.

#### Retreat - Lyndhurst

Our grateful thanks to Caroline, who led the retreat at Lyndhurst from Sunday afternoon 22 August-25 August, based on "Stepping Out on the Word of God" by Barbara Reid. Readings and reflections centered around the Gospel of Luke. For each of us it was a very personal encounter with God, experienced in the sounds of nature and the beauty of creation. Thank you also to John, for providing the perfect venue.

#### Centering Prayer

A team of three presenters from Contemplative Outreach USA, will be visiting Durban 18-23 October. There will be a series of teachings, workshops, and a Day of Renewal on Saturday 23 October 09:00-16:00. Venue: Glenmore Pastoral Centre, Durban Charge: R20 to cover refreshments for the day.

#### **Highly recommended for all those who practise Centering Prayer!**

A group meets for Centering Prayer on Mondays at 5.30 pm in St Andrew's Chapel. Please join us!

## LANTERN DEADLINE

**The deadline for material for the next edition is Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October. Please support your publication and submit articles to Anthony Castleden.**

## GOD'S PREVENIENT GRACE

Ed Wolff

*I was asked to submit the transcript of the talk I gave at the Men's Fellowship Breakfast on Saturday 4 September for the Lantern but this cannot be done because of its length. This is the gist of it in a drastically condensed form. Ed*

During the recent Parish Retreat, as I looked out over Lake Lyndhurst, I thought "What have I done to deserve this", when He gently reminded me "You haven't done anything. You are here by My Grace". When we open the door to our hearts and allow Jesus to live in us, it is indeed by His Grace that we are what we are and that we find ourselves where we are. Read what Paul, the once murderous persecutor of the early Church, says in 1 Cor 15 verse 10a

I've been thinking about His Grace in my life for a long time now and, in particular, of His Prevenient Grace. The dictionary defines these words as follows

**Grace** *The Favor and Love of God. The Influence of God operating in man to improve and strengthen.*

*The condition of being influenced and favored by God.*

**Prevenient Grace** *Divine Grace turning the heart towards God*

I can truly say that we are what we are by the Grace of God. When I now jump from the first person singular, I, to first person plural, we, I do so not because I suddenly feel that I should use the royal 'we', but because Delysia has been a part of most of my life (and I a part of hers). Then again, we are also 'Royalty' as Fr John reminded us recently in his sermon on discipleship. See 1 Peter 2 vs 9 to 12.

In my youth, I and a few friends investigated and discussed all sorts of Religions and the only conclusion we came to was the difference between God and Satan. God was good, Satan was bad. That's it. For us there was no time for Church, Shul or Synagogue. We were too busy with work, studies, parties, racing bikes and cars and trying to impress the girls.

Apropos girls. Allow me to tell you a little fairy tale. Once upon a time there was a lovely, petite and squeaky clean Anglican girl who regularly spoke to the Lord and even taught Sunday School. In her prayers she asked the Lord for a Knight in shining armor on a white horse to spend the rest of her life with. Little did she know what was coming her way - a "Knight" in scruffy leather jacket and gauntlets with a chipped crash-helmet on a slightly battered black NSU Scooter. She compromised and married me. Even though I never proposed to her. My dad did that. But that's another story.

After we got married, almost six years went by before we decided to start a family. In that time we never went to church. We didn't need God. We were self-made,

modern, '60s yuppies. During Lysia's pregnancy with Heidi, she was forever telling me to make sure that the baby would have all five fingers and toes at birth. I was to count them and tell her the moment the baby was born that everything was OK. I said "Yes, of course dear". When Lysia went into labour, her gynae came to me and said "The baby hasn't turned. We'll have to do a Caesar" and I just said "So? Do it".

About an hour later the Doctor came over and I could see on his face that everything was not Kosher. He said "We have a problem. Oh, by the way, it's a little girl. She was born with a condition called Spina Bifida and Hydrocephalus. We can leave her and she will probably not live long or we can do a new procedure which might save her but we don't know how successful this will be. What do you want us to do?" What a question!! I was totally shellshocked and had no clue what all this Medico-babble actually meant and he asks me whether I want to let our baby die or whether he should do something to save her. I just glared at him and said "You do whatever is necessary to pull her through". I think he realised that the consequences of her not pulling through would be serious for him. She did pull through. And that has been Heidi all along - a tough little miracle. My next task was to tell Lysia that all the fingers and toes were there but we had other problems. I asked her if I should get a Minister to come and see her and she just said "What for? We'll manage".

Heidi was one of the first patients in South Africa to have a small non-return valve, called a Shunt, installed to regulate the pressure of the fluid surrounding her brain. This first unit failed after a week and she had to get another one fitted at Wentworth Hospital. I was not doing too well with all this and Heidi's Specialist saw that I was taking strain. He phoned me and asked if I could meet him at Wentworth. He asked me to accompany him on his rounds and we would talk afterwards. We went through the wards and, as we progressed, I noticed that the cases we saw were getting more and more severe to a point where we were looking at virtually lifeless bodies. I was traumatised by what I had seen. We went to the Doctor's lounge and without a word he made coffee, we sat down and then he quietly said to me with absolute love and compassion in his eyes "So, tell me. What is your problem with Heidi?" It was then that I realised that Heidi was not a problem at all and, throughout her life, she has proven so. She's a miracle who survived the first six crucial months and will, in a few years, celebrate her 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, the Lord willing. She's had a few Shunts fitted. They've failed over a number of years and the last one was fitted about 5 years ago. At the time I understood the Doctor's compassion but now, on reflection, for me that was the first time I'd looked at the face of Jesus - a face full of love and compassion.

The decision to have another child was difficult. We were then founder members of the Spina Bifida Association and were still

trying to find out what causes the condition. Hereditary versus diet versus all sorts of other theories. Experts from all over the world advised the chances to be 1:25, 1:250,000, 1:1mill. Might as well flip a coin. Nine months later Lysia gave birth to a perfectly healthy boy, our son Eugene. He grew up with compassion for the handicapped and, as a 12 year old, felt real pain when his best friend, Neil, confined to a wheelchair by Muscular Dystrophy, died.

Eugene had a few friends who knew the Lord and came from Christian families. I called them the "Four Gees", Gordon McBean, Grant Nurden and Greg Donner, the son of an American missionary. Gordon and Grant involved Gene in St John's Youth before I even knew anything of St Johns. After all, I didn't need God or church. I was selfmade, successful and arrogant. I had a head that battled to get through most doors, it was so big.

I had done well in my own business and it had grown quite nicely. Then we 'needed' more space and I went into a loose partnership with someone who had the space. Lysia tried to stop the whole mad idea, but I knew best. What did she know? Woman's intuition and all that nonsense. Anyway, from one day to the next everything went sour and, through the domino effect, the world came apart around us. We were in serious trouble. (Before you go into a partnership, talk to me. Better still, talk to Lysia).

During our troubles, Gene came to me one day and said "Dad, what's with the gun on your bedside table? Please don't do anything stupid. Let me introduce you to Jesus. He can help" And I said "Thanks, son, don't worry about me, I'll sort things out myself".

But he persisted and eventually we made an appointment to see Fr John Freeman at the Rectory. There I bawled my eyes out, threw the entire sorry mess called my life at the foot of the Cross and the whole load was lifted off me. Then I didn't have a clue what the Holy Spirit was all about and what this Peace was "that passes all understanding" but I'll tell you what - it all happened right there and then. After John led me to Jesus and I gave my life to Him, our problems were still there to sort out. The difference now was that I did this with a song in my heart. One of the first things I learnt was Hebrews 13:5-6

The Lord was there for us before I even reached for Him. Since I found Him, He has never left us, never forsaken us.

- The gun that led me to Him was later stolen and I prayed that it would never be used in a crime. He answered my prayers and I got it back in a very mutilated state a year later, unused. It is now a dead gun. Thank You, Lord.
- Eugene was a survivor of the Translux bus accident near Harrismith. Again, thank You, Lord, for answered Prayer.

- After many attempts to stop smoking before I knew Him, He answered my Prayer and I gave up without any craving.
- Delysia and I survived the February 1999 flood only because of His Hand in our miraculous escape. Thank You, Lord.
- A few hours before the December 1999 flood went through our house, I listened to His Voice and we left to go to Eugene and Val's house for shelter rather than take up a neighbor's invitation to come to them. While we were at Eugene and Val's place, a mudslide pushed their bedroom wall and piano onto the bed where they had been sleeping. Had we not woken them, they would, in all probability, have been crushed. Two weeks after the flood they came to us with the glorious news that Val was pregnant.

Throughout our lives, even when Delysia and I did not know our Heavenly Father and had removed ourselves from Him "as far as the East is from the West", He was there for us all along. His Preventive Grace was with us.

I and Delysia pray that all you that are near and dear to us and to Him, will hold fast and rejoice in 1 Peter 2: 9 to 12

All Glory to God the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever. Amen



## MARY RUTLAND IS CALLED TO HER REST

It is with sadness that I write to tell you that Mary died in Parklands Hospital on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2004 at 16hr50. After her return from a quick visit to family and friends in the UK, her health deteriorated rapidly as she started a new regime of treatment for cancer. Her condition declined to the stage that full hospital care was necessary and she was admitted on Wed 1<sup>st</sup> Sept.

She bore her ill health courageously and never ceased to trust in

### A PRAYER BY JANET MORLEY

O God who brought us to birth,  
and in whose arms we die:  
in our grief and shock  
contain and comfort us;  
embrace us with your love,  
give us hope in our confusion,  
and grace to let go into new life,  
through Jesus Christ, Amen.

God or doubt His purposes for her. She will be remembered for the deep love she had for her Saviour and fellow human beings and for her steady inspiration to us all.

At this time of Mary's life completed in Jesus, we hold up before God, Graham her husband, Ronald and Catherine their children, together with Wayne, their son-in-law and Harley and Justin their grandchildren.

*The Editor*

## MARY RUTLAND - Personal Memories from the ordained clergy

John Green

As one could write a book of all that Mary has meant to us, I am going to highlight a few things that stand out for me about this great saint.

I will always remember Mary for her practical holiness. Mary did not "beat about the bush", she called "a spade a spade". This practical holiness revealed itself especially in her calling as a nurse. She nursed my mother and many others at Fairydene and I know how much my mother and others appreciated her ministry there. This practical holiness also resulted in her being a person who displayed profound wisdom.

Mary loved all types of music. Will we ever forget when leading the choir, the way she explained the words of a hymn or anthem as "lovely, lovely and are you taking note of the words?" We thank God

that she is singing eternally with "the angels and archangels, and with all in the company of heaven".

I will never forget our visit to Lake Lyndhurst near Fort Nottingham for a 'quiet day' together. We arrived at Lyndhurst and put aside about three quarters of an hour to fish before we spent the day together with the Lord in prayer. During our fishing time, I could not even get my line into the water, for, as soon as Mary's line went into the water she caught a fish, and I had to net it! In three-quarters of an hour she caught her trinity of "lovely" fish (each about two and a half pounds). It was the night she returned from this trip that Graham had to take Mary into hospital.

I will never forget Mary's courage and tenacity through her illness and bouts in hospital. In

January 2002 the sight of Mary sitting on her bed, reading the paper and with a facecloth over her head to keep her cool, and with, what seemed like a hundred pipes protruding from her body, will stay with me for the rest of my life. She had no recollection of this afterwards.

We have all been privileged to know and work alongside this brave and holy woman, who loved God with her heart and soul, who loved her family very deeply and served all with passion and compassion.

There was a profound simpleness to her life. If we had been asked to encapsulate Mary's philosophy of life in a motto it could have been "Serve God - Serve others".

Caroline Beech

One of the more public journeys Mary and I shared together was that of our individual exploring of our discernment to the ordained ministry. A very lonely road, full of testing, hold-ups, apparent dead-ends, U-turns.... and it would have been even lonelier without this bond that helped to keep us on track in the fog; and it gave us a

companion to rejoice with when suddenly the road cleared.

Our favourite "mantra" of that time was borrowed from Katherine Kuhlman, "It's not what happens to you that matters - it's what you do with what's left over", something Mary lived out constantly in spite of the cancer

and the treatment that went with it.

Our last sharing was that of Hebrews 12:1... that great crowd of witnesses cheering her on as she came into the Stadium for the last great circuit.

A woman of deep faith, and great love for our Lord.

Anthony Castleden

Mary was a strong woman. From her upbringing on a farm in England lifting hay bales, to her time with the Pinetown Voluntary Nursing group lifting people out of baths, Mary had an incredible strength physically. Mentally, Mary was strong too: she was blessed with a quick brain and great musical talent. She had a quiet determination to get things done, a strong belief in what was right and what was wrong. Her strong sense of humour came out many a time as we shared a breakfast on Wednesday mornings with all the Clergy! For me it was Mary's unshaken trust in Jesus as her Lord, which really had an impact on all the

people she met. The Lord WAS her strength and her joy and she certainly carried His light to the world. Mary was, quite simply, love-in-action. Throughout her illness and even to the end, she was strong - strong in her belief that she will meet her Lord face to face in all His glory. What an example to us all!

*She girds herself with strength  
and makes her arm strong.*

Proverbs 31:17

Bless you Mary, my friend and sister in Christ.

Sue Britton

One of Mary's strengths was her single-mindedness. No matter what the topic of discussion, sooner or later she would find the right moment to comment on how good God is and what a lot we have to be thankful for; and this would happen whether the discussion was about a deeply-held point of faith, or the weather. She lived in such close relationship with

God, that she saw God's hand in everything: there was no separation between so-called "spiritual" and so-called "secular" matters - everything was in God's hands. Mary's own utter conviction makes it easier for us to know this truth - and to be utterly certain that she now does indeed rest safe and at peace in God's hands.

## Vivienne Pyle

Our family came to St John's in 1984, when Michael Hays was Rector. I first knew Mary through joining the prayer chain, which she and Caroline set up, and later the choir. Mary had a beautiful singing voice. It was easy for a beginner like myself to follow four-part singing, with Mary in the choir stall opposite. Mary also encouraged me to attend my first RSCM Summer School at Hilton College which, as secretary, she was involved in organising. Mary was a very practical person, balancing her nursing career with church commitments and family.

We were privileged to be pilgrims together on Michael's tour of Israel in 1988. Our pilgrimage took us from the Golan Heights in the north, to Eilat on the Red Sea. There are a kaleidoscope of memories where we visited the sacred sites and holy places, rising early to watch the sunrise over the Sea of Galilee, sharing the Eucharist on a sandy lakeshore, floating in the Dead Sea, climbing the heights of Masada,

walking the Via Dolorosa to Golgotha and the Garden Tomb, renewing our baptismal vows in the Jordan, worshipping in an Anglican church in the Old City of Jerusalem, singing psalms on the Mount of Olives, and spending evenings in preparation and study for the following day. Everywhere there was the tangible presence of the Lord, an experience we shared together.

Over the years I have known Mary to be a person deeply rooted in God, faithful to her calling to Lay Ministry and the Ordained Ministry, training and encouraging others to grow in their spiritual journey. She was a person of deep compassion and care for others. Her response to her own sickness and suffering was courageous, offering everything "To the glory of God." It has been a privilege to walk with Mary on this final stage of her life's journey, her complete surrender to God. We love you Mary!

## J29:11 UNEMPLOYMENT SUPPORT GROUP

### Revived in fond memory of Jim de Vlieg by Ed Wolff

What is J29:11? : The name is taken from the book of Jeremiah, Chapter 29 verse 11

*"For I know the plans I have for you" declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future..."*

The Lord has a plan for all of us and we must always keep this promise in mind, even when we find ourselves out of work. I know that it's easy to talk and that this doesn't put bread on the table.

Right from the outset we must point out that we are **not an Employment Agency**. Having said that, this does not mean that we are helpless and cannot do anything. And it also doesn't mean that we cannot put you in touch with someone who urgently needs your skills temporarily or on a permanent basis.

The aim of J29:11 is to identify one person's skills, talents and gifts and to try and match any of these with another person who is in need of such skills, talents or gifts.

This goes beyond finding work. It can extend to all manner of skills. For example - you may be a lonely, elderly person with an absolute gift for, say, home decorating and want to pass this on to others.

- Firstly, you will be sharing your gift
- Secondly, you'll be helping someone who needs to get some decorating done
- Thirdly, you'll put yourself in contact with others, you'll no longer suffer loneliness and raise your feeling of self-worth and
- Fourthly, you might even get a little pocket money

So, if you're interested, contact Ed Wolff at home on 702-7081, cell 084 838-6083 or watch the Pew Bulletin for news of our first meeting.

## TRUE STORIES

There is the story of the three university theological lecturers: a Rabbi, a Catholic Priest and a Pastor. Every week they get together to discuss campus matters and how best to reach students in order to fulfill their particular calling.

On one such occasion, a companion suggested that all three withdraw to the wilderness and, finding a male lion, demonstrate their preaching techniques as best they can.

Each one thought this ridiculous but nonetheless each resolved to prove that their way was the best.

Time passes and they are gathered together again for their weekly discussion:

The Priest arrives full of welts and scratches and a terrible blue eye. He tells the other two how he approached the lion who wanted to have nothing to do with him, no matter how well he preached in his best Latin. As a last resort he threw holy water over the lion and a miracle occurred. The lion became as tame as a lamb! The Lion is now in his office waiting to partake in the evening Eucharist with the parish community.

The Pastor looks even worse than the priest. She is in Plaster of Paris, her nose is broken and she can hardly talk because her tongue is so swollen. She tells that she had the same problem. The more she preached the angrier the Lion became and the lion scratched and kicked her mercilessly. She tells how she prayed in tongues to just survive this silly adventure when suddenly the Lion became as tame as a lamb! The Lion is now in her study waiting to join a cell group.

The Priest and the Pastor both look at the Rabbi as he has not said anything yet. They wonder what terrible things have befallen him as he is lying on a bed swathed in bandages and there are tubes and medical gadgets where-ever you look. He winks them closer and whispers through a crack in his mouth:-

*Have you any idea what it takes to circumcise a Lion?*