

THE PARISH NEWSLETTER

St. John's Church, Salisbury, Connecticut 06068

The Rev. John F. Carter, Rector

June, 2008

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The Rector's Corner

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MISSION REDEFINED

The word "mission" comes from a Latin word meaning *send*. Historically, missionaries were Christians who considered themselves sent by God on a journey to share the "good news" and to convert the "heathen" to the Christian faith. The spiritual life of the potential converts was often discredited and sometimes deliberately destroyed.

Beginning in the 16th century with the Dutch, the Spanish and the Portuguese, missionaries were sent from European nations to all corners of the non-European world. They were often closely allied with the military and political powers that came to conquer and exploit the natural and human resources of "primitive" regions. At a time when separation of church and state was a new idea and seldom attempted, mission and colonialism were closely identified. Power struggles among European nations were often played out on distant shores. The cost to indigenous peoples around the world, especially in Africa and Latin America, was brutally high.

"The Mission", a movie set in 16th century Brazil, shows the power and vitality of the Christian faith among the Jesuit missionaries and their faithful flocks of indigenous peoples. Tragically, the fierce rivalry between Spain and Portugal for

ascendancy in the new world resulted in the annihilation of many of those vital faith communities in Brazil.

Fueled by a presumption of religious and cultural superiority, there has been frequent collusion between empire and Christianity. This does not negate the many positive contributions made by faithful and courageous individual missionaries. Indeed, throughout the history of Christianity up to the present day, many have died for their faith.

After World War II, a deeper understanding of mission developed and an Anglican Congress in 1958 called for "Mutual Responsibility and Interdependence in Christ". In 1968, the development of Companion Dioceses in the Episcopal church sought to put these ideals into practice. With a passion for mission based upon equality and reciprocity, this innovation happily moves beyond the errors of the past. As members of the one body of Christ, we see now how much we need each other and how the rewards of diversity ought to be equally shared.



February 2008

Padre Rafael led us on a walking tour through a barrio (neighborhood) near his parish in Cartagena, Columbia. Deborah and I were there as members of a delegation from the Diocese of Connecticut, participating in a mission trip. Like most in our group, we had never been to Columbia.

As we followed Padre Rafael now through narrow and lively streets, it seemed as if he knew most of the residents of the barrio. There were frequent stops to chat with parishioners and acquaintances who, at the end of the work day, were relaxing and socializing on porches, stoops, and in the street. The atmosphere was convivial. Children played soccer on the dirt road.

Before going to Colombia, many friends expressed concern about our safety there. We were a little nervous ourselves.

Now in the barrio, any anxiety I might have had beforehand quickly gave way to the frankly warm and friendly greetings we received.

One young man called me over to his yard where his family and friends had gathered. He had something he wanted to show me. It was like a Rubik Cube (except rectangular) made up of movable attached sections. By moving sections of the (3" x 7") block he changed the picture messages. The images dramatically and colorfully told about Jesus; his death on the cross, the burial tomb, the resurrection and other scenes. As the young man manipulated the block he told the story of Jesus. The block was small, highly portable and a very effective tool for evangelism and teaching.

This enthusiastic believer was sharing his faith and was teaching me. I was impressed and touched. After he showed me the last picture he still had something more to teach me. To my astonishment he gave me the block as a gift. I was moved and humbled. At first reluctantly then gratefully, I accepted his gift. It's in my office if you want to see it.

This encounter exemplifies the recent paradigmatic shift in understanding the nature of mission alluded to above. Leslie Jones, in her accompanying article, gives some background on the meaning of "Companion Diocese" as a new understanding of mission, one which emphasizes mutuality. In this post-colonial model, the modern "missionary" sees him/herself as a learner and recipient of a transformative grace. God willing, he or she may also be the vessel of growth in faith for someone else. In other words, he or she does not have all the answers, perhaps just a pocketful of questions and a faith full of openness.

Thomas Merton wrote, "The real hope, then, is not in something we think *we* can do but in God who is making something good out of it in some way we cannot see. If we can

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ALL WELCOME ADAM GREENE

I am delighted to inform you that Adam Greene will be helping us out here at St. John's for the next year as he completes his formal preparation for Ordained Ministry. He has a busy summer engaged in an intensive course of Clinical Pastoral Education at Farmington Hospital and Choate School. He will also be making Pastoral calls at Noble Horizons. Adam is scheduled to preach at the 8:00 and 10:00 services on June 22nd, July 20th and August 24th.

I am really looking forward to working with Adam and extend a hearty welcome also to his wife, Martha, and their daughter Knox.

Adam is scheduled to be ordained to the Diaconate in Atlanta on December 21st of this year.

John +

LIFE IN THE PARISH

Congratulations!

To Alexander Beir – Amy Beir's grandson, who graduated from Avon Old Farms School in Farmington. He will be entering Hobart College in the spring.

To Katy Butler – granddaughter of Jeff Walker and Leonie Brewer, graduating from the French American International School in San Francisco. She will be entering Smith College in the Fall.

To Chantel Richards, who graduated high school early from Housatonic Valley Regional in January and completed her first semester at St. Joseph College. She will walk with her Senior High School class on June 23rd.

To Samuel H. Haines – son of Tom and Stephany, who successfully defended his dissertation going towards a PhD in Geology at the University of Michigan.

To Jennifer Bolmer, granddaughter of Steve and Peggy, who will be playing violin with the Sarasota Junior Philharmonic Orchestra at Carnegie Hall on June 15.

And last but not altogether least – to Molly Guthrie, granddaughter of Bill and Gaile Binzen, who graduated from Evansdale Elementary School in Atlanta, with honors!

Deaths

On Saturday, May 24, 2008, former parishioner Marjory Myles Mansfield

May the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace

"PEOPLE SEE GOD EVERY
DAY. THEY JUST DON'T
RECOGNIZE HIM."

Pearl Bailey

Sandwich maker supreme . . .

The Hospitality Committee would never forget, but the Editor did – Polly Rodie's name on the list of this winter's champion sandwich makers. She's the best! Thank you, Polly!

PLEASE DON'T FORGET . . .
to remember St. John's in your will . . .

VESTRY HIGHLIGHTS

JANUARY 17, 2008

The vestry voted to approve the purchase of the Electrolux vacuum cleaner with one abstention from Bob Tapscott: It was decided that \$500 would be taken from maintenance and \$300 from non-capital equipment.

The Rector has been in touch with Adam Greene about coming to St. John's as a seminarian. The cost will be several thousand dollars. This might be offset by donations. The vestry was unanimously in favor. It was noted that the Bible Study at Adam Green's house had been very well received. Dave Bayersdorfer suggested that an agreement be drawn up with the specifics and that the vestry approves this agreement.

The Rector reported on stewardship for David Hannegan who was not present. He was pleased to announce that we broke \$150,000 mark which was the highest amount ever pledged in St. John's history. He also announced the addition of 16 new pledgers. David Bayersdorfer suggested a commendation for David Hannegan.

FEBRUARY 21, 2008

Father John noted that this was the first meeting after the annual meeting. He welcomed Mieke Armstrong and Hector Umaña.

Bob Tapscott moved that the vestry authorize a draw-down of \$1190 from the St. John's Preservation Fund for major work on the large silver maple on the south side of parish hall. The motion was approved unanimously.

The Rector distributed an informational packet about his Professional Development Leave to each vestry member. His agreement with the church states that he is eligible for a professional development leave every five years. His thoughts are that he would take a leave in 2009, most likely during the months of February, March, and April. At this point Father John has a verbal agreement with Rev. Walt Zelly to stand in as Interim Priest during his absence. Rev. Zelly was here during John's last Professional Development Leave. The cost of employing him was estimated as follows: based on fourteen weeks, 250 days of travel, 14 half days, \$180 for each Sunday, other \$500: Total \$5,020. A motion was made and approved for a Professional Development Leave of three months for the rector in one year's time, in accordance with Diocesan Guidelines, with funding for the supply clergy coming from The Sabbatical Fund.

The Rector announced that the Diocese had granted \$5000 to the church for the Hispanic Ministry. He added that this is the last year that the Diocese will be providing this funding.

Tom Haines did a brief review of the budget for the benefit of new Vestry members. The largest section of the budget is for personnel, and the Rector's compensation is set by the Diocese. The Secretary's and the Music Director's salaries are set by the market. Tom Haines and Bob Tapscott go over the expenses at the end of the year. Investments are handled on a total rate of return. We tell the managers of the fund that we want a set amount each month.

APRIL 24, 2008

The Rector welcomed and introduced Bishop Curry. The Bishop explained that he has found that attending vestry meetings is an effective way of learning about a church's needs and concerns, thereby developing a better understanding of how the Diocese might serve individual parishes. He explained that at the end of the meeting he would field questions from the vestry members.

The Rector explained that Rev. Rosalie Richards of Christ Church, Canaan was looking into bringing together lay people, clergy, and vestry of the Deanery (Litchfield County) to explore Doing Church Differently.

The Rector touched on his plans for his professional development leave in 2009; his thoughts at this point are that his professional leave time will include a retreat, Hispanic ministry, and the improvement of his Spanish language skills.

Father John announced the pressing need for a Flower Guild Coordinator and a Sunday Hospitality Coordinator.

DOING CHURCH DIFFERENTLY COMMITTEE UPDATE:

Mieke Armstrong reported that the Garden Committee had met and that a priority would be to find a way to completely enclose the garden to keep out noise and to create a true sanctuary atmosphere. The committee did not want to see the use of the space limited to meditation. Mieke also stated that there was interest in adding a columbarium at some point. Reporting for the Name Tag Committee, Father John said that he and Trish Acree had been very encouraged to find in a catalog a box perfectly suited for the name tags. On Web Site development, Laura Werntz reported that the committee had met several times, looking at various church websites, discussing possible domain names, and considering web building companies to work with. The next step would involve choosing a company to work with, and also choosing a domain name.

CONVERSATION WITH BISHOP CURRY

Bishop Curry emphasized how moved he had been by the Palm Sunday bi-lingual service and how strongly he felt that the Misa was a meaningful part of the outreach mission of St. John's Church.

MAY 15, 2008

The action item on the agenda concerned the website start-up budget which is part of "Doing Church differently." David Bayersdorfer framed a motion to establish a budget of \$750 for creating a website. The motion was seconded and passed.

The Vestry was pleased with the results of the recent letter asking for additional funding for air conditioning. Eight new pledges have been added to the fund for a total of \$18,875. The Vestry would like to proceed with the installation either before or after \$20,000 is received. Father John would like to wait until after the meeting with Eric Carlson on Wednesday, the 21st of May. The possibility of starting without the full amount of \$26,000 will be explored with Mr. Carlson.

Father John informed the Vestry that the Rev. Daniel Matthews, former Rector of Trinity Wall Street, would be available for a sermon and a forum on stewardship on September 21st.

Father John also proposed a "Vestry Day" for September 13th from 9:00 to 2:00 which would be a workshop attended by three Vestries (St. John's, Christ Church Canaan and Christ Church Sharon). This workshop would be led by Marge Roccoberton, who is the Canon to the Ordinary, or Assistant to the Bishop. Laura reported on the Website Domain, which has now been selected. It is "StJohnsSalisbury.org." On June 5th, all Doing Church Differently committees of St. John's will meet from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. to communicate with each other about progress.

Coming this summer....



A Drumming Circle at St. John's Beginning Wednesday July 2 (and every Wednesday) from 7 to 8 pm.

We are establishing a multi-generational drumming circle—open to anyone—and meeting on a regular basis. We will explore a variety of drums and traditions. Our teacher/mentor is **Master Drummer John Marshall**. To read about him and listen to some of his incredible work go to: <http://www.myspace.com/marshalldrum>

Reservations for a free 6-week introductory workshop are required. John will supply a few drums, and we need to know who might need a drum temporarily. Experienced and new drummers welcome. Call 860-435-9290 to reserve a space.

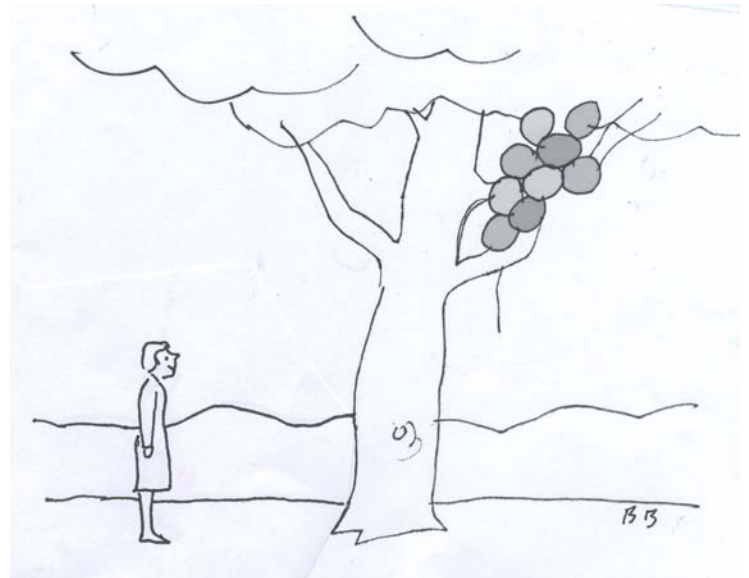


THEY TALK ON THE PHONE WHILE THEY DRIVE, THEY WATCH TV WHILE THEY EAT, THEY LISTEN TO MUSIC WHILE THEY WORK.....



Those Beautiful Balloons!

When I attended the Pentecost service on Sunday, May 11th at St. John's, what a wondrous sight I saw as I approached the church. The smiling face of Rev. Carter and a gathering of red balloons, swaying in the soft morning breeze. When the service was over the balloons still remained in their same spot. until the next day when they ended up getting caught in a tree in front of the church! I watched those balloons for several days. Sad to see them stuck, wishing for their release. Then two days later they appeared outside my kitchen window, in a nearby field. A sign perhaps? In my thoughts it was simply saying "Come back once again to the church."



Sketch by Bill Binzen

Michele O'Brien - A newcomer to St. John's!

People Who Make a Difference:

PROFILE OF ANNETTE CLONEY

by **Ellen McDonald**

Quite a few adjectives come to mind, all good ones, when one thinks of Annette Cloney. First might be beautiful, quickly followed by kind, thoughtful, loyal, hard-working and so on. When she was asked about arranging for an interview she quickly said "Oh, there is nothing much to say about me, it will only take about two minutes". So add modesty to that list, and modesty is a very endearing quality.

This charming woman was born in Bermuda, which many consider a charmed island. Annette's mother, a French lady, born in Paris, went to work as a young woman for Guerlain, the perfume company. She rose up in the company and was sent to Spain, New York and then Bermuda to introduce Guerlain's perfumes and cosmetics. When Helene got to Bermuda she met William Frith, a sixth generation Bermudian, and they fell in love. They married and she stayed in Bermuda and that is where Annette was born and grew up, bilingual of course in French and English.

Annette attended school there until she came to the United States to boarding school at the Hannah Moore Academy in Baltimore, a school which was taken over by St. Timothy's School. Annette was very happy there and went back to a reunion two years ago at St. Timothy's, where she saw some of her Hannah Moore friends and a teacher. When she graduated from Hannah Moore she attended Centenary College in New Jersey for two years and then went to the Sorbonne for a year, after which she returned to live in Bermuda.

At some point while she was living in Bermuda, working in Hamilton and then the Coral Reef Beach Club, a handsome young dentist from New York named Gerry Cloney

came for a visit to Bermuda and in the course of various social events Annette and Gerry met. Back in New York Gerry corresponded with Annette and when he found out she was going to London with a girl friend to spend some time he wrote and said he would be visiting a sister in London and hoped to see Annette. The time in London sealed the romance and they decided to get married, which they did in Bermuda in 1964.



After the wedding the couple went to New York to live. Gerry had his practice and Annette was able to get a job at the Bermuda Trade Development Office for Tourism. Their first son Christopher was born in 1966, then Marc was born in 1967. In 1970, after their daughter Janine was born, they were visiting friends in Sharon, where they met several doctors from the Sharon Clinic who mentioned that they were looking for a dentist to join the group. After serious consideration Gerry accepted the position and the Cloneys moved to Sharon. They already knew the Sharon area and found a farm there, which they bought at the end of 1970. Gerry commuted and Annette stayed in Sharon until Gerry was able to sell his New York practice. It later turned out that the American Dental Association did not allow dentists to be in an incorporated group practice, so Gerry then opened his own practice which he had until he retired in 1995.

Sometime after Jerry and Annette moved up to Sharon, Gerry's brother Tom and his wife Camilla also moved up to Lakeville. They were weekenders but became involved in local affairs. They joined St. John's Church and Camilla, a very talented pianist and chanteuse, provided the entertainment for several St. John's benefit events. Tom worked with Roger Liddell on some special projects for the church. For Gerry and Annette, having Gerry's brother

nearby added greatly to their lives

The Cloney children went to Town Hill and Indian Mountain schools. Christopher went on to Deerfield and then Trinity College in Hartford. He is now married to Katie and is Sales Director for The Course Adviser Online Research Directory for secondary education in Brookline, Mass. Marc went to Hotchkiss, then to Rhode Island School of Design, and then went to work in a special furniture workshop in Maui, Hawaii where he worked with Hawaiian woods. He got a Master's Degree from the University of Hawaii, met his wife Hilda (who is from Arizona) and works for the Hawaiian government. Marc now has his own workshop and is doing very well.

Daughter Janine went to Westminster in Simsbury, then to Ohio Wesleyan where she met her husband, Mark Robertson. Mark is a project manager for Trammell Crow Residential Co. in Seattle. Janine is the Marketing/PR Manager for Buzz-Off, the company that makes the bug repellent fabric used for clothes sold by Orvis and other stores.

Each of the three children has two children except for Chris and Katie in Brookline who have just had a third child, a little boy named James Oliver, or Jamie. Annette went up to Boston right after Jamie was born and is planning to go again next week. Perhaps we should add devoted grandmother to the list of qualities.

Sometime during these years of her children's expanding lives, Annette had a bout with cancer followed by chemotherapy. She faced this quietly and courageously and says now that it really wasn't very difficult because everything was so well taken care of and chemo was nearby. This sort of quiet courage is typical of Annette.

For a while when Gerry and Annette moved up to Sharon Annette attended the Catholic Church because Gerry is a Catholic. The three children have been confirmed in the Catholic Church. However, at some point Annette decided to return to her Protestant beginnings and joined St. John's Church, at the exact time that Rev. Charles Bevan came to St. John's. She has long been a member of the Altar Guild, the Flower Guild

and now the Hospitality Committee. When asked how long the Hospitality committee commitment would last Annette said she thought it might be a "life-time" commitment. This may have been said slightly tongue-in-cheek but it would be wonderful if the present committee, all of whose members get along so well together and enjoy one another so much, could continue for quite a while. St. John's is very well served by these dedicated ladies.

For a "significant" birthday (Annette's) which will happen late in November, Annette has planned a Thanksgiving family reunion in Scottsdale, Arizona at a resort which has children's programs and all sorts of activities. Scottsdale is roughly equidistant from Hawaii, Seattle and Boston. All the far-flung cousins will have a chance to get to know one another and grandparents can dote on grandchildren. It sounds wonderful.

In recent years Gerry Cloney has sold his dental practice. He is now doing pro bono work of a remarkable sort: he works in New York for the Gay Men's Health Crisis. So, this kind and generous couple are doing their bit to help other people and brighten the world in which they live. Bravo and thank you.

Doing Church Differently in a New York City Episcopal Parish

Talking about "Mission" . . . if you missed it in the May 26 issue of the New Yorker, go and find it, beg, borrow or steal it – an article by Ian Frazier about his writers' workshops in the Church of the Holy Apostles on Twenty-eighth and Ninth. It is called "Hungry Minds" - and it's witty, heart-warming and mind-blowing. About a church that decided to feed the hungry twenty-five years ago – and a writer who decided to help feed their minds too. Fourteen years of workshops and six million wholesome meals later - it's a "How To" article – and a "Must Read" too!

Gaile Binzen

For Fathers Day

From *Ya-Yas in Bloom*

by Rebecca Wells

At Our Lady of Divine Compassion Catholic Church, the Saint Joseph Altar is on the side near the stained glass window of the Archangel Michael. One fierce angel. Now Baylor sat in the front row nearest the Saint Joseph altar and alternated between looking at the fierce angel of the Lord and the image of Saint Joseph, "the earthly father of Jesus." He simply sat and studied the different images. The man the statue depicted wore light brown robes, and he held a sleeping baby in his arms. Baylor thought of the thousands of times he had held his babies in his arms. He thought about their births. How each birth had seemed like the Holy Spirit coming. The birth of his children were the miracles in his life. He stared at the statue. At Jeff's age, he had thought of Joseph as such a wimp. Man married to a woman already pregnant, hung around, then nobody heard about him doing much except leading a donkey to a stable and taking the kid to the temple. He'd always been a little embarrassed for Saint Joseph. Now he sat in the pew, with the old familiar scent of years of incense and candles and wooden pews and cracking leather on the prayer kneelers, and he began to see Saint Joseph differently. He thought he saw fierceness in the statue's eyes. He noticed a muscularity about the arms. Hell, the man was a carpenter, probably strong as an ox. But mainly what he noticed this time was a tenderness, a tenderness that he had once mistaken for weakness. Now he noticed how Joseph held the baby to his heart, how he seemed to press him to his heart, how his head bent down as though he were just about to kiss the baby's fine head. The closer he stared at the statue, the more he saw that here was an image of a father who knew how to protect his baby, holding him close to his heart, but also out there for all the world to see. For the first time, Baylor let himself weep. Not "tear up," like his father said, but weep. Weep at the tenderness he felt in his

own heart, weep at the realization that to the extent any of us could ever protect our children, we could do it only with this kind of heart-fierceness, this kind of loving gaze, this seemingly sissified masculine gentleness.

Kiss the baby for me, Baylor prayed, go ahead, Saint Joe, lean down and kiss his forehead. Kiss all the children. All the little ones in this crazy Louisianan town and all the ones all over the world, stepping on land mines or starving because their mothers are too malnourished to produce milk, the ones with cancer, the ones with AIDS, kiss the ones who can't walk, Joe, the ones who will never get out of a wheelchair, kiss us all, man. We need it. We need your prayers. We can't do it alone.

He did not think about his sobbing. He simply let it come. He dropped his head and gave up. *Ain't no gun made can do what love can. How did I go so long without knowing this?*

Rebecca Wells, *Ya-Yas in Bloom: A Novel*, (New York, NY. Harper Collins Publishers, 2005), pp. 224-225.

Kindly Submitted by the Rector

Birthdays

June

03	Walter DeMelle
07	Nicole Aquilar
10	Jose López
12	George Howard
13	Alan DiStasio
16	Catie Osborn
	Gregory Wertz
	Mieke Armstrong
17	Annie Harris Milliken
19	William Mitten
	Hector H. Umaña, Jr.
23	Francis Thorne
24	Susan DeMelle

July

5	Lillie Mikesell
14	Peggy Bolmer
	Laurie Dunham
22	Peter Miller
23	David Hannegan
	Nancy López
29	Katie Voldstad
30	Peter Shiras
31	Kevin Aquilar

Continued from p. 2

do His will, we will be helping in this process. But we will not necessarily know all about it beforehand.” Mission is full of surprises.

The “missionary” is often the one who is converted and strengthened, discovering a new mission upon returning home. We can bring back and share the good news of experiencing God's love through connecting with the hopes, dreams, basic needs and the love of those whom we have visited. This has already happened in the case of the Columbia trip. There have been fundraisers for a roof and a cooking stove for Padre Jose and his family in Malambo, for Prayer Books for another congregation, and for other needs.

Meeting material needs is essential, but it is also important to have educational opportunities back home that strengthen relationships between newly formed companion parishes.

In his conversation with the Vestry at our April meeting, Bishop Curry emphasized the relationship between the spiritual vitality

of a parish and its commitment to mission and outreach. He cited as an example St. Barnabas Episcopal Church of Greenwich (www.barnabasgreenwich.org) which has been revitalized through its mission trips to New Orleans to assist in rebuilding the lives of victims of Hurricane Katrina and of inept bureaucracies. Those who have helped others in New Orleans come back with their faiths strengthened. They share what they have learned and the whole parish benefits.

Reaching out to others gives the Spirit an opening to reach back into our lives. We at St. John's could form a companion relationship with another parish in Columbia or another country. What do you think?

John+

Acknowledgments: Thanks to the Rev. Christopher Webber for his helpful suggestions.

COMPANIONS IN MISSION

By Leslie Jones

The Companions in Mission Committee of the Diocese of Connecticut sponsored two trips to Colombia, South America, in the past year.

The first delegation was made up of four people who visited the capitol city of Bogotá with the objectives of establishing a cathedral-to-cathedral relationship, determining the feasibility of clergy exchanges, and learning how the Diocese of Colombia operates with respect to clergy, parishes and programs. We had business and social meetings with cathedral and diocesan staff and traveled throughout Bogotá's 20 barrios to visit missions and parishes. All this was done with an eye open for opportunities to support the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The second trip included the three cities of Cartagena, Barranquilla and Malambo on the northeast coast of Colombia. Three clergy and eight lay people from six Connecticut parishes made up the delegation. The goals were similar to the first trip: experience Colombia in order to



understand where Connecticut might offer assistance with respect to the MDGs. We explored the Caribbean coast as tourists and as guests of three parishes.

I attended both trips as a diocesan representative, a member of Emmanuel Church in Killingworth, and as a person who felt a more-than-subtle nudge (call?) to see Colombian life firsthand and then do something with my communications skills to move others to action.

Much of the poverty we saw in Colombia can be attributed to its 45-year civil war among drug gangs, Marxist guerrillas and right-wing paramilitary groups—a war fueled by the international demand for cocaine. Hundreds of Colombian people arrive every week in Bogotá and in cities along the Caribbean coast, pushed north by the cocaine-fueled guerrilla war.

According to a Reuter’s news release, “Left vulnerable by a government too weak to protect them, displaced families are greeted by poverty and growing exploitation that the United Nations says is compounding the world’s worst ongoing humanitarian crisis outside Africa.” Eight percent of the people in Colombia live on less than \$1 a day.

Colombian missions and parishes are severely impoverished and needy when compared to parishes in Connecticut. One mission in the outskirts of Bogotá operates from a single rented room in a neighborhood that is more run down than I could have imagined. Half of the clergy are unpaid. They do without many things that we take for granted, including The Book of Common Prayer ... only the cathedral has those. Many missions are also in need of clothing, educational materials in Spanish, and space to offer feedings, recreation, educational programs, and housing for homeless.

But our Colombian companions—clergy and laity alike—operate from a great sense of abundance. Rather than focus on what they don’t have, they focus on their gifts and what can be accomplished with those gifts. Their unfailing faith in God’s own abundance is inspiring.

For example, Misión Divino Salvador is one of the poorest barrios in Bogotá. The Rev. José Romero has given his house to the church and turned it into the mission. He lives there, he provides housing for nearly 30

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homeless elderly, he runs an after school program for about 45 children, he packs the basement church with about 100 worshippers on Sundays, and on Saturdays he arranges for free

haircutting services and opportunities to acquire over-the-counter medications and clothing. And he buys a new outfit, from head to toes, for each child who is confirmed. He is also unpaid.

One rectory we visited in Malambo had no running water. The roof leaked. The kitchen consisted of a two-burner cooktop. And yet, the rector and his wife managed to feed and entertain eleven of us with more grace than I’ve ever experienced. While at that parish, we learned about their vision of a medical clinic and playground, delivered school supplies, painted, socialized, and worshipped together. By week’s end, members of the delegation were able to supply the rectory with a water pump and stove.

In Cartagena, the Rev. Rafael Abuchar is rector of two parishes. In addition, he manages a twelve-unit rental property which

brings income to the churches. He also manages to find the time to walk through the barrios where he is greeted as warmly as he greets.

By happenstance (Holy Spirit in action?), six of the volunteers in our delegation had a background in healthcare. That provided us with a last-minute opportunity to add a medical component to our mission trip. We ran two hypertension clinics in Cartagena and those clinics added an interesting dimension. With the simple introduction of touch, the visit to Colombia was transformed from one of observation to one of engagement. We were no longer strangers just looking at each other; we were together as the companions we are.

After visiting the diocese, cathedral, parishes, missions, clergy and parishioners in Colombia, I've developed an overwhelming respect for their depth of faith and their unfailing readiness for fellowship. In their impoverished economic conditions, there is an abundance of love, respect, dignity, beauty, resourcefulness, faith, determination, generosity and grace.

The people from the most recent trip have gone back to their parishes and are providing the impetus for a variety of programs which are unique to each parish's resources and focus. My parish has begun a pen pal relationship between children, and we're having a pasta dinner to raise money for the mission's after school program. Another parish is raising funds for a playground. The Companion in Missions committee is discussing the feasibility of a medical clinic in Cartagena. Another group is trying to acquire prayer books for Colombia. The opportunities are boundless.

My blessing now is to help spread the word and provide assistance to others in the form of articles, slideshows, presentations and information so people can establish parish-to-parish partnerships in support of the MDGs in Colombia...or, to put it more simply, in the act of loving one another.

Leslie Jones is a member of Emmanuel Church in Killingworth, chair of Middlesex Area Cluster Ministry, member of the Companions in Mission Committee, and works at the Episcopal Diocese of Connecticut in the areas of communications and Christian education.

(Photos credit: Leslie Jones)

Lousy at Math

Once a group of thieves stole a rare diamond
Larger than a goose egg.

Its value could have easily bought
One thousand horses

And two thousand acres
Of the most fertile land in Shiraz.

The thieves got drunk that night
To celebrate their great haul,

But during the course of the evening
The effects of the liquor
And their mistrust of each other grew to such
An extent

They decided to divide the stone into pieces.
Of course then the Priceless became lost.

Most everyone is lousy at math
And does that to God -

Dissects the Indivisible One,

By thinking, saying,
"This is my Beloved, he looks like this
And acts like that -

How could that moron over there
Really
Be
God?"

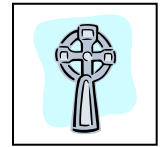
From *The Gift* by Hafiz



Presiding Bishop urges Farm Bill defeat

May 09, 2008

[Episcopal News Service] In response to House and Senate leaders' release of a final farm bill package May 8, Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori released the following statement urging congressional defeat, or presidential veto, of the legislation.



As we are learning more each day about the widening food crisis around the world and the deepening economic problems threatening the poor and those living on the margins at home, it is fundamentally wrong for Congressional leaders to seek passage of a farm bill that harms American family farmers and significantly exacerbates poverty and suffering around the world.

Congress has been considering the United States farm bill for well over a year, debating broad legislation that governs our nation's agriculture and food policy. During this long process, the Episcopal Church and more than a dozen other faith communities have urged Congress continually to reform the bill in a way that promotes equity for family farmers in the U.S., responds to hunger and need at home and abroad, and reforms our current farm-payment system in ways that remove the deep inequities that affect hundreds of millions of people living in poverty around the world. These calls fell on deaf ears, as both chambers defeated bipartisan amendments to bring fairness to the system. This week, after months of closed-door negotiations, House and Senate leaders unveiled a package that corrects none of the significant inequities in the current system and, remarkably, goes further than current law in exacerbating human need around the world. Particularly at a time when American attention is focused on the international food crisis, the farm bill "compromise" announced by House and Senate leadership is a moral failure of the highest order and worthy of Congressional defeat. Should the House and Senate pass this legislation, however, I urge President Bush – who has repeatedly expressed his opposition to the current program – to veto the bill.

"If you offer your food to the hungry, and satisfy the needs of the afflicted," the prophet Isaiah tells us, "your light shall rise in the darkness, and your gloom shall be like the noonday. You shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in."

While the legislation unveiled this week invests much-needed new money in nutrition programs that provide healthy meals to hungry people in the U.S., it does so at the expense of starving and impoverished people around the world, an unacceptable and false choice. Two areas are particularly troubling:

First, the legislation leaves intact the deeply unjust American farm-payment system, which has been ruled a violation of international trade law for the manner in which it cripples the ability of farmers in poor countries to sell their products fairly in world markets. Experts estimate that the subsidy system bleeds at least \$75 billion each year from African nations alone and contributes significantly to the extreme poverty that kills 30,000 of God's beloved people every day. Despite repeated calls from President Bush, U.S. faith communities, and trade experts, Congress has done nothing to reform this reprehensible system. Ironically, the very sorts of reforms that would be good for U.S. family farmers -- a phasing out of taxpayer support to millionaire corporate farmers -- would also correct the imbalances in our current world-trade system. In rejecting reform, Congress turns a blind eye to family farmers at home and to impoverished people overseas.

Second, and even more surprisingly, House and Senate negotiators unexpectedly slashed funding for a key program that provides meals for poor school children around the world. Known as the McGovern-Dole International Food-for-Education Program after its original Congressional sponsors, the initiative has for decades been an emblem of American generosity in response to human suffering, providing food to at least 3.4 million children in poor countries each year. This helps children -- particularly girls -- stay in school, improve their capacity for learning, and delay marriage and child bearing. Last year, House members debating an earlier version of the farm bill set funding for the program at \$840 million over five years, a much-needed boost from its current \$100 million funding level. Not only did House and Senate leaders totally negate that gain, they in fact slashed the current funding level to just \$84 million. This action is simply inexplicable in the face of a worsening international food crisis. Congress cannot claim to do justice to poor families in the United States while actively shortchanging starving children in other parts of the world. Nor can Congress claim to contribute to a secure future for this nation when it fails to address the growing number of starving, undereducated, and underemployed young people, both here and abroad. Violence is born in the hopelessness of hunger and systemic injustice. Peacemaking begins in feeding the hungry.

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The Most Rev. Katharine Jefferts Schori
Presiding Bishop and Primate
The Episcopal Church

Church Squirrels

There were five country worship communities in a small Texas town: the Presbyterian Church, the Baptist Church, the Methodist Church, the Catholic Church, and the Jewish Synagogue. Each was overrun with pesky squirrels.

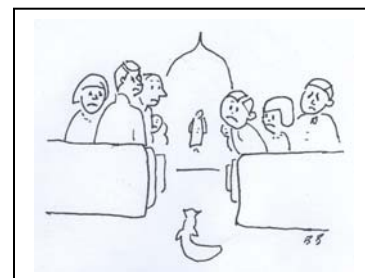
One day, the Presbyterian Church called a meeting to decide what to do about the squirrels. After much prayer and consideration, they determined that the squirrels were predestined to be there, and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will.

In the Baptist Church the squirrels had taken up habitation in the baptistry. The deacons met and decided to put a cover on the baptistry and drown the squirrels in it. The squirrels escaped somehow, and there were twice as many there the next week.

The Methodist Church got together and decided that they were not in a position to harm any of God's creatures. So, they humanely trapped the squirrels and set them free a few miles outside of town. Three days later, however, the squirrels were back.

But - the Catholic Church came up with the best and most effective solution: they baptized the squirrels and registered them as members of the church. Now, they only see them on Christmas and Easter.

Not much was heard from the Jewish Synagogue, but they took one squirrel and had a short service with him, called "Circumcision," and they haven't seen a squirrel on the property since . . .



Bill Binzen

Kindly submitted to the Newsletter by Nancy Howard

CALENDAR – JUNE 2008

JUNE 2008

1	Sun.	8:30–9:30 a.m.	Breakfast Club – Breakfast Served
		10:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite II and <i>Hungry Sunday</i>
		12:00 p.m.	Misa
		3:00 p.m.	Blessing of the Animals
	Mon.	10.00 p.m.	Writers Workshop (every Mon. thru July 7th)
		6:00 p.m.	Fitness Class (every Monday)
3	Tue.	9:00-5:30	Arts in Motion (Classes offered by Terre Lefferts, temporarily in Lower Parish Hall for 2 weeks)
4	Wed.	5:00 p.m.	Choir Rehearsal (every Wednesday through June 11 th)
5	Thur.	3:30 p.m.	Arts in Motion (Classes offered by Terre Lefferts, temporarily in Lower Parish Hall for 2 weeks)
		7:00 p.m.	Doing Church Differently Meeting
6	Fri.	6:00 p.m.	Al-Anon (every Fri. evening)
8	Sun.	8:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite I
		10:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite II
		12:00 p.m.	Misa
11	Wed.	7:00 p.m.	Last Choir Rehearsal
13	Fri.	12:00 p.m.	NWMA
		3:00 p.m.	Executive Meeting
15	Sun.	8:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite I
		10:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite II
		12:00 p.m.	Misa
19	Thur.	5:00 p.m.	Vestry Meeting
21	Sat.	12:00 noon	Memorial Service for Marjorie Mansfield
22	Sun.	8:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite I
		10:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite II
		12:00 p.m.	Misa
25	Wed.	11: 00 a.m.	Noble Horizon Service Clergy Luncheon
29	Sun.	8:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite I
		10:00 a.m.	Eucharist Rite II
		12:00 p.m.	Misa

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Phone: 860-435-9290



The Mission of St. John's Church

- To reveal through worship the presence of God
- To grow spiritually in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ
- To reach out to others through the power of the Holy Spirit.



Dear Readers:

Please know that this Newsletter is also available by email. Let us know if you are interested sjsalisbury@sbcglobal.net.