



St. Mary's Messenger

It's summertime - and for Tom and me, a time to slow down, regroup, and get our lives back into order. Tom's finally done with summer school (a real blessing) which means that for us - vacation has *really* started! We've gone to the movies and enjoyed [Green Lantern](#). Last night we celebrated our 33rd anniversary by catching a game at the Round Rock Express. (It was fun - but *hot*! I couldn't help but notice Gatorade and water were going for \$4 - and beer for only \$2.50!!) There is a lot to be said about watching a game at home in air conditioned comfort on TV.

This month's [St. Mary's Messenger](#) has a lot to offer. Jan Denson has a terrific article on choosing to be happy. She really puts things into perspective for me - and I'm going to take her advice. Libby brings us up to date on the Columbarium project, and Jack Newsom provided an amazing photo of the work being done on the cracks inside our church. Tulisha sent in a touching story about a mother and daughter, and I wrote a piece on letting go - as well as a final "editorial".

Take time to look at what is going on around St Mary's...we are busy folk! The **Vestry** rescheduled their meeting until later this month in order to gain a better perspective on the repairs that are taking place. Due to growing work load, Terry asked for a leave from church treasury responsibilities, so Tulisha has taken over this job (Thank you, Tulisha!!). **His Kids** ministry fed about 35 youngsters on Monday, June 27. Everyone enjoyed brisquet, home-made cookies (from Libby!!), nachos, and 2 salads (potato and macaroni). Fr. Reid gave a nice talk to the kids about assuming the "yoke of Christ". It was fun - and if you've never danced to "Pharoah Pharoah - Let your People Go" you are missing something! **Church services** are being held in the Parish Hall until the church repairs are done. It's a nice change of venue. The **Parish Hall stained glass windows** should be showing up soon - not all of them - but we'll take what we can get and be grateful. Several of us are involved in **Spring Ho activities**....

At home, we are reading some good westerns - Larry McMurty's [All About Billy](#) is GREAT to read outloud and a total hoot. If you want a good laugh, try this easy, funny story. Cormac McCarthy's [All the Pretty Horses](#) is totally the opposite - quiet, vast, and spare. The best way to experience this book is to be alone and quiet when reading so that you can really "feel" the solitude of the characters as well as the big sky and land.

So - slow down, regroup, and enjoy this copy of the [Messenger](#). Send us some feedback, please! This newsletter is only as good as you make it!

All our best,
Tom and Mary

Photo Op's



Jack Newsom took this great picture of the inside of our church. It shows the corner above the choir loft. You can see where the plaster has been removed to expose a rock wall. We learned that our church walls are actually composed of 2 layers of rock. The exterior rock wall is mortared together while this interior wall consists of rocks that are simply balanced on one another!!

Here is the Columbarium. Tom and I stopped by on July 1 just as the workmen were putting on this cap stone. They are doing a great job, don't you think?



Jan's Corner

HAPPINESS IS A CHOICE

I must admit that I am struggling at this moment with sadness vs. happiness. The sadness may seem insignificant in the scope of things...but today I had to euthanize a beloved pet. My dog, Gizmo, who had shared mine and Bob's life for some 10 years. Before that, he shared his life with my son and his family, and before that who knows...because Gizmo was "saved" by my son from a shelter. As my daughter-in-law, Collin, said "Gizzy lived a happy life...he was loved and played with by children who loved him in his younger days and then he retired to the ranch". And, that he did. Gizmo lived a happy life...and let us know it. And, in doing so, he brought happiness to those around him. Certainly, no further explanation is necessary to those who are blessed with the love of pets!

Which leads to my topic....a topic that began thought over Father's Day weekend when my other daughter-in-law, Erin, commented that her grandmother always said "happiness is a choice". Wise words. Words that I seem to deal with on a daily basis in my own life and that of working with my clients who struggle with life's problems. Life deals many blows. It is we who must make the choice of seeing the "glass as half full".....or "seeing the glass as half empty...". It is we who must make the choice to find the joy or find the despair. And, in doing so....whichever choice we make....we set an example to those around us.

I encourage people that I work with to look for the joy. Find something every day that brings joy. It doesn't have to be something that cost a lot of money or something that causes a lot of planning. Enjoy our beautiful sunsets; enjoy hearing the birds sing; laugh with your family or friends; enjoy music; laugh at the antics of children; get into a random conversation with someone you don't even know; laugh at yourself. The list is endless. I can't help but reflect on Gizmo as I say this....Gizmo found tremendous joy every day as he greeted whoever he loved that re-arrived in his life....whether they had been gone two hours or two months. He ran circles with a facial expression that just said it all! We would do well to follow his example.

Happiness is a choice....even when you have to work to make it happen.....And, it is a choice that is yours alone.



On top of Enchanted Rock in April. That's me with my friend Jane, Jaslin, (Maddie's friend), and Maddie.

Mary's Musing...

I think the hardest part of parenting is letting go. My girls have both moved out and live on their own now. They have their own friends and families and weeks can go by before we see or hear from them. As a result, I have been forced to move to a phase of parenting that my support group calls "detachment with love". This means that Tom and I have to let our girls live their lives without giving advice or rushing to their aid, even when there is great difficulty. My Courage to Change book says: *"...detachment with love (is) equally important in building healthy, loving, respectful relationships. Many of us have interfered not only with a loved one's problems but also with their achievements. I may have the best of intentions, but if I take over other people's responsibilities, I may rob them of the chance to accomplish something and to feel good about what they've done. Although I am trying to help, my actions may be communicating a lack of respect for my loved ones' abilities. When I detach with love, I offer support by freeing those I care about to experience both their own satisfactions and disappointments."*

This detachment stuff is HARD - and for me - it ties in with my Christian beliefs. This is how I see it: I believe that God loves me - AND that God loves my daughters. If I really believe that, then I have to stop being "God" to the girls (rushing in to fix things) and turn their care over to His saving grace. This means I have to trust (REALLY trust) God - and step back (detach with love). So...for me, this is where the rubber meets the road... Do I really trust God enough to give my girls to Him?

Application to my life: I am not calling (or texting) either girl as much as before. When they call with a complaint or problem, I listen and ask, "How are you going to fix that?" or "What are you going to do about that?" or "What do you think about that?"

As old as I am - I guess I'm STILL growing!

From Tulisha

Recently, I overheard a mother and daughter in their last moments together at the airport. They had announced the departure. Standing near the security gate, they hugged, and the mother said, 'I love you, and I pray you enough.'

The daughter replied, 'Mom, our life together has been more than enough. Your love is all I ever needed. I pray you enough, too, Mom.'



They kissed, and the daughter left. The mother walked over to the window where I was seated. Standing there, I could see she wanted and needed to cry. I tried not to intrude on her privacy, but she welcomed me in by asking, 'Did you ever say good-bye to someone knowing it would be forever?'

Yes, I have,' I replied. 'Forgive me for asking, but why is this a forever good-bye?' 'Well...I'm not as young as I once was, she lives so far away & has her own busy life. I have some challenges ahead, and the reality is - her next trip back will be for my funeral,' she said.

'When you were saying good-bye, I heard you say, 'I pray you enough.' May I ask what that means?'

She began to smile. 'That's a prayer that has been handed down from other generations. My parents used to say it to everyone.' She paused a moment and looked up as if trying to remember it in detail, and she smiled even more. 'When we said, 'I pray you enough,' we wanted the other person to have a life filled with just enough good things to sustain them.'

Then, turning toward me, she shared the following as if she were reciting it from memory.

I pray you enough sun to keep your attitude bright no matter how gray the day may appear.

I pray you enough rain to appreciate the sun even more.

I pray you enough happiness to keep your spirit alive and everlasting.

I pray you enough pain so that even the smallest of joys in life may appear bigger.

I pray you enough gain to satisfy your wanting.

I pray you enough loss to appreciate all that you possess.

I pray you enough hellos to get you through the final good-bye.

Then, she began to cry, and walked away. They say it takes a minute to find a special person, an hour to appreciate them, a day to love them, but an entire life to forget them... *I pray you enough*.

ST. MARY'S COLUMBARIUM UPDATE

If you haven't had a chance to see the progress on our new addition to our facility, please take a stroll down the sidewalk toward the play ground. On your right are the Hirst House yard and our new Columbarium. The foundation has been completed and the stone work (by the time you get the July messenger) will be complete. We have taken delivery on the niches and they are being secured off site to keep them safe. The stone caps have been ordered and we're waiting delivery to complete our entire structure. What happens next? There's a small amount of wood working that will be done and the last addition will be the concrete apron around the project. Cleaning up the yard, arranging for the removal of the current residences of the in-ground Columbarium and placing them into their new niche will need to be done last. We are discussing ideas for the consecration of the new Columbarium and possibly a service for those relatives or friends interested in coming to it. Let us hear from you on ideas for a service.

Our fund raising is ongoing. We are asking that you consider a donation to help with the costs for those individuals who have no family, or whose family is unable to help with the costs. We will be moving 5 individuals and that will translate into 3 niches at a total cost of \$3300. That cost will have to be absorbed by the Columbarium fund. As of now, we need additional money to cover the cost of those niches.

We realize that each of us has our own pet church projects and this may or may not be the one you're interested in, but we thank you so much for your support and encouragement while planning it. You are the very reason why wonderful things continue to happen at St. Mary's and because of you we will continue to plan and improve our beautiful, historic church and the grounds that lovingly surround her.

Father Reid Morgan
Libby Bluntzer
Kathleen Woodby

EPISCOPALIAN 101: Good Episcopalian Websites

Texas Episcopalian News: <http://www.epicenter.org/>

These people have an electronic version of the Dialogue that you can subscribe to for free. This website also has a lot of interesting articles and links to cool sites (art, blogs, etc.).

Forward Day by Day: <http://forwardmovement.org/Today-s-Meditation/>

You know the little daily devotional booklet that we can pick up at the back of the church? Well, here is the website for that publication. There is a new editor (Father Scott Gunn is *really* nice - and he responds when you email him!!) and he puts the daily devotion every day for FREE. (Watch for a podcast app - coming soon!)

The Episcopal Church: <http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/>

This looks like the “big kahoona” Episcopal website. It has tabs for advocacy, finding a church, general conventions, lesson plans, good sermons, ministries, House of Deputies, etc. It looks really good - lots of links to ongoing projects. They ask for our input too.

I am an Episcopalian: <http://www.iamepiscopalian.org/>

This is a portal to “The Episcopal Church”. The print part of the page gives generalities about our beliefs, where Episcopalians can be found, and who we are. The pictures are actually a slide show of hundreds of pictures. If you click on a picture, you’ll actually activate a short video made by - and submitted by - that person. The videos describe why they belong to the church. I think we should consider adding our own stories to this website!

Editorial: Ever Wonder?

-Why the same people seem to be in charge of everything that goes on?
-Why decisions are made the way they are?
-Why we keep doing what we are doing - and never do something new?
-Is the “same old/same old” good enough to keep us going for the next 10-15 years?

(I sure do! - and I realized I was getting resentful or angry at not being included in the decision-making. I did some poking around and thinking. This is what I decided as an answer that worked for me.)

Many of us believe that our responsibility starts - and ends - with simply showing up at church on Sunday. We don’t get involved with any of the other “stuff” - and use our jobs, families, or past bad experiences as the reason why we hold back. We see church decisions repeatedly made by the same small cadre of people - and we think

that group doesn't include - or want - our input. (I'm not talking just about the vestry here.) We think that going to church on Sunday is enough - or that the church "owes us" for our years of loyal attendance. We see decisions being made by the same people and then decide we will retaliate by refusing to get involved "if anyone should ask us to".

After mulling all this over, it has occurred to me that maintaining a successful, growing church is a bit like my desire to lose weight and get into shape. It requires my work and my participation. No "magic pill" exists to make me look like Julia Roberts. I have to start taking responsibility for my own health - by eating right, exercising, and getting the right attitude. While I sit and complain, healthy people are passing me by. I'm the one who has to lace on sneakers and get out the door.

St. Mary's is the same way. It won't grow or improve until I start getting involved. I need to screw up my courage and show up at meetings (even when I don't think I'm wanted). I need to learn about issues, sign up to make Rice Krispie treats, and advocate for my own pet projects (I'd love to start a "NetsforLife" committee to get \$12 from every parish family to help combat malaria in Africa...and Relay for Life is looming.) I need to have the bravery to tell a family that they need to come to our church. But until I start taking responsibility for my church's "health" other individuals will continue making decisions and moving ahead with projects without me. Bottom line: I need to stop making excuses why I CAN'T participate - and start taking responsibility.

The choice is the same for each of us to make!

Mark Your Calendar - and Attend!

July 4 @ 7:15 p.m. FR. REID TO GIVE INVOCATION at the Spring Ho Opening Ceremonies
Location: Ruth Eakin Outdoor Theatre

July 5 @ 11:00 a.m. Brown Bag Lunch and Bible Study

July 6 @ 7:00 p.m. Spring Ho Gospel Night at the Ruth Eakin Outdoor Theatre

July 7 @ 6:30 p.m. "His Kids" Bible Study @ Hirst House
8:00 p.m. AA Meeting and AlAnon Meeting in Hirst House

July 9 @ 8:00 a.m. Toughest 10K-5K-1 mile Run (starts at golf course)
(Tom and Mary running 5K...need your prayers, cheers - and water! :))

July 10 @ 1:30 p.m. Knitting Group in Parish Hall

3:30 p.m. Adult Bible Study

July 25 @ 5:30 p.m. "His Kids" dinner at Holiday House