

The Beacon

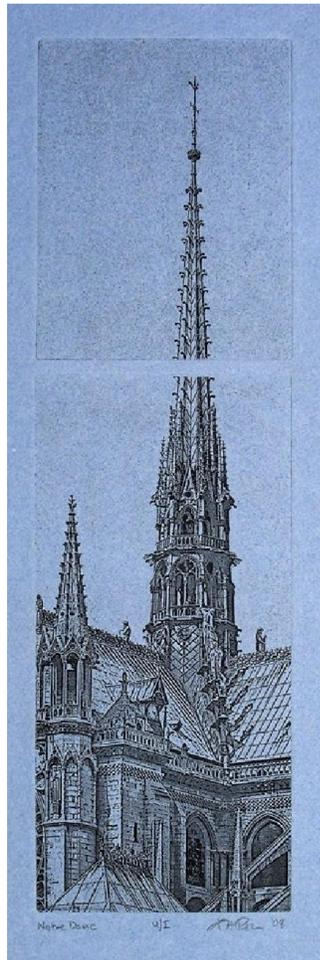
ST. THOMAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH
MAY 2019



From the Rector's Desk

A number of years ago, when Lee and I were still living in Saranac Lake, the work of an artist friend of ours was exhibited in a local gallery. Larry, our friend, specializes in print-making, and when Lee and I were at the exhibition we particularly liked a print of Notre Dame Cathedral that Larry had made using denim. We purchased the print, and for years it hung in a corner of our library in the rectory. Now the print hangs next to the door of our den, so we see it every time we go in and out of that room.

It's with great grief, then, that whenever I see Larry's print now I am reminded that the Cathedral's spire, featured so prominently in the print, is gone, having succumbed to the great fire that devastated Notre Dame on April 15, the day after Palm Sunday. I know that Lee and I were not alone in our shock, horror, and grief as we watched the video images of the fire consuming the Cathedral and sending the spire collapsing through the roof. Miraculously, the spire just missed the altar and the altar cross. Later images, taken after the fire was doused, showed the golden cross glowing in the light through the smoke and dust swirling around it--a symbol of hope and a poignant reminder that, in the words of St. Paul, "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."



Within just hours after the fire, promises of donations to rebuild Notre Dame came pouring in. The Cathedral represents so many and varied things to people: a center of prayer and worship; a priceless work of art housing other priceless works of art; an act of devotion designed, constructed, and reconstructed over a period of centuries; a concert venue; a site of countless historical events; a testimony to human aspiration and achievement; a place of pilgrimage; and a benevolent and beautiful guardian keeping watch over her city of Paris (nearly everyone who spoke about the catastrophe referred to the Cathedral as "she").

There are some who have great difficulty understanding why promises of millions of euros to repair and restore Notre Dame were offered so quickly and easily from extremely wealthy donors, when usually it is so difficult to raise money to help the hungry, the homeless, and the sick. I understand those concerns, for the disparities in wealth in our world are mind-boggling. At the same time, though, I don't believe that one action must exclude the other. God's abundance is such that **IF** humankind is willing to share it, there is plenty to feed the hungry, house the homeless, and take care of the sick--*and* plenty to restore the Cathedral. The key word, of course, is **if**.

Notre Dame is a treasure in so many ways. To the faithful it is a spiritual treasure. Or, as Paris Archbishop Michel Aupetit put it so perfectly in a television interview the morning after the fire: "Why was this beauty built? What jewel was this case meant to contain? Not the crown of thorns (a relic saved from the fire), but a piece of bread that we believe is the body of Christ."

Peace and many blessings, 



ENDOWMENT NEWS

Holy Week and Easter services don't take place in a vacuum; many, many people are involved in the planning and execution of the ten services that take place during that time, beginning with Palm Sunday and ending with Easter Sunday. So special thank you's are in order to:

- LEM's and Lectors
- Altar Guild
- Tom and Linda Whitehead
- Choir
- Keri Davis, our Music Director
- Parish Administrator Donna Hall
- Lindy Moore
- All those who made coffee and brought goodies to our coffee hours
- Ushers
- Everyone who organized and supervised the Easter Egg Hunt
- Acolytes
- Torch-Bearers
- Cindy Jensen, for teaching our children about the Passion and training them as torch-bearers
- Everyone who donated flowers
- Lottie Rohde, for providing excellent child care
- Our intrepid grounds volunteers

Many thanks from a grateful rector!

Late last month Rev. Ann and I attended a Planned Giving Workshop at St. Paul's Church in Salem. I fully expected this all day event to be like most conferences I've been to over a 35 year career – boring. Guess what? It wasn't. Far from it!

Leaders and members of other Episcopal churches shared ideas and anecdotes about what does and doesn't work in building endowment funds. We look forward to sharing several of these with you as we all work together to build our Endowment Fund to the \$250,000 level we need to attain so that we can begin awarding grants. Right now we're just over \$100,000 shy of this goal.

We're tentatively planning an event later this year where we can all get together and learn more about the value of including the Endowment Fund in our planned giving. Stay tuned – more on this later.

- Duncan Murray, Chair



A Word of Caution

Be on the alert for “phishing” expeditions as the trolls have been active and intruded on the email boxes of some parish members. The diocese is aware of this activity as St. Thomas is not alone in this intrusion by unscrupulous internet users. The following website has been provided by the diocese to allow for reporting and/or guidance in dealing with online “phishing” activity. <https://www.diocese-oregon.org/dont-buy-that-gift-card/>

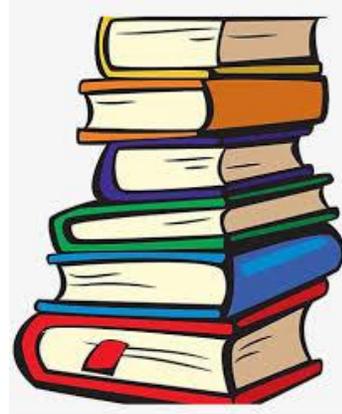


NetsforLife - Why nets?

Long-lasting, insecticidal bed nets (LLINs) are a simple, cost-effective solution to protect families from malaria while they sleep. They create a physical barrier against malaria-carrying mosquitoes, and the insecticide woven into the nets kills the mosquitoes before they can transmit the disease from one person to the next.

Today, approximately 53% of the population in sub-Saharan Africa is protected by bed nets, compared to just 2% in 2000. During the month of May, the St. Thomas Outreach Ministry will be collecting money to send to Episcopal Relief & Development to purchase mosquito nets. Each net is \$12.

Notes about the Parish Library



Did you know that...?

...the library is not for adults only? The bottom right section holds a treasury of children’s books. Some they can read alone, others are perfect for those adult-child reading times, such as “Side by Side, Poems to Read Together.”

...not all the books in the library are what we might think of as “religious” books. “Wit and Wisdom from the Peanut Butter Gang,” is a collection of wise words from young hearts that will not only give adults a chuckle but could be a great resource for family discussions about relationships.

It’s easy to use the library facilities. It is open on Sunday mornings and during office hours, 9 am – 1 pm on weekdays. You are welcome to browse the shelves, discover the wide assortment of material to be found on them. A comfortable couch and chairs are inviting places to relax and read.

To borrow a book, simply fill in the information in the notebook on the left side of the counter...and enjoy.

- *Barbara Root*

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

May

- 2 Courtney Fredmonsky
- 3 Larry Thompson
- 4 Lottie Rohde
- 7 Joe Konieczka
- 14 Christopher Hente
- 26 Ann Gaillard
- 30 Mark Pezzoni



*The Women's Afternoon Book Group will be gathering at the home of Vicki Zoot at 2 pm on May 23 to discuss the book **THE PERFUME COLLECTOR** by Kathleen Tessaro. We'll meet at the church at 1:30 to carpool to Vicki's house in Springfield. Come join the fun!*

Happy Anniversary



May

- 17 Karl and Erika Hente



Family Fun Night Needs Volunteers!

Each year the St. Thomas Pre-School puts on a Family Fun Night as their primary fund-raiser. They are looking for volunteers to help take tickets, serve pizza, etc. (Last year's volunteers had a great time—just ask Tom and Linda Whitehead, Paul and Sue Colvin, Judy Wilson, and the rest!) This year's Fun Night will take place on Friday, May 17, and there are two shifts: 5:30-6:30 and 6:30-7:30 p.m. If you are able to volunteer for a shift, please call the Pre-School Director, Patty Lyon, at 541-484-0682.