

THE APRIL 2010 "CHIMES" NEWSLETTER



SAINT ALBAN'S

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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FROM FATHER PHILIP

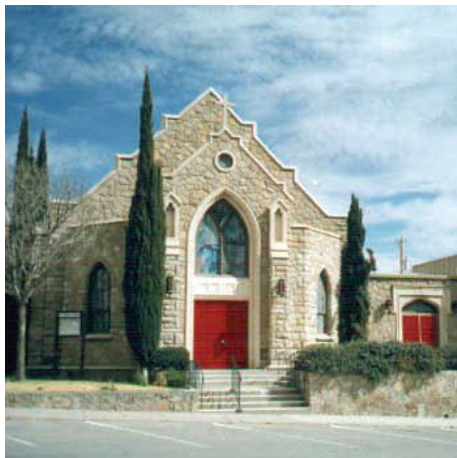
"WAKE UP AND EAT"

Most of us have been in the hospital. At least we have experienced sickness. Don't you just hate it when you have to be shaken and then awakened to take your medicine? Yet don't you just love it when you wake up hungry and some delicious food is offered? I remember that when I finally woke up with an appetite, I thought the Jell-O and cream soup was like a King's feast! When you are deprived and sick, without any desire for food, nothing tastes good. But when you are famished and ready to eat, nothing sounds as wonderful as "Wake up and eat!"

A father knelt down beside his little child's bed. It was time for the tender tucking-in and the familiar prayer: *Now I lay me down to sleep; I pray the Lord my soul to keep. If I should die before I wake, I pray the Lord, my soul to take.* However, this night the words got mixed up and the child prayed: *If I should wake before I die.* Then the child stopped to apologize: "Oh, Daddy, I got all mixed up." The father responded with spiritual insight: "My dear one, that's the first time that old prayer was prayed right. My deepest desire is that you *wake up before you die.*" I agree! Don't you? That's a ghastly prayer anyway. What child should be thinking of "dying before waking" anyway? Why should anyone? It must have been popularized during the plagues and at a time of great infant mortality. Anyway, I like the child's version. May we all wake up long before we die.

By the grace of God, we are those who are "waking up before our death." We have found our way to him. We have heard his call. We have found the "bright new morning star." We know each day we can wake up alive into a new life in Christ - to his "wake up call." Paul's says these wonderful words: "*Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give you light.*" (Ephesians 5:14) and then he goes on to say, "*Look carefully then how you walk...and be filled with the Spirit*", as he describes what this spiritual life is like. To be filled is the result of consuming, taking in, receiving, assimilating and absorbing. To be filled is the opposite of being empty, exhausted, deflated, barren, drained. To be *filled with the Spirit* is to be supremely satisfied, gratified, complete, content, filled to the brim, overflowing with Joy and with Jesus

We wake up each day. We eat each day. If waking up, is to *become conscious* and eating is another word for filling, Christ means for us to wake up and eat his *spiritual* flesh and his *spiritual* blood. There is no life without his life. We are used to that as Episcopalians. At each and every Eucharist we respond to his words: “*Take, eat, this is my body, take, drink, this is my blood.*” We feed spiritually, not biologically... we eat and drink heavenly food, and are filled beyond any physical satisfaction we could ever experience. We are full filled and filled full with *Joy, Peace, Love, Faith, Hope, Courage, Kindness, Goodness* and all the fruits of the spirit. Are we not blessed by his most mystical and spiritual understanding? *We are those who hunger and thirst for God, who gives himself for heavenly food.* As we each try to fathom this spiritual mystery, for most of us, it is the *real presence* of the risen Christ in our hearts, whom we receive in *faith and in thanksgiving.* We are real to him. May he become even more real to us in the “real presence” of Christ, the “Bread of Heaven and the Cup of Salvation.” Amen.



LOOKING AHEAD IN APRIL

Monday, April 5th : Requiem for Walter Creed @ 10.00 a.m., Father Martin

Each Wednesday: Lectio Divina @ 10.30 a.m., Mass @ Noon, Fr. Rowland

Saturday, April 10th: Vestry Meeting @ 9.30 a.m. in the Green Room

Sunday: April 11th Easter One, Masses @ 8 and 10.30 am

*Sunday Afternoon: = April 11th, One and only chance to see and hear all nominees for
bishop @ 3 p.m. at Temple Mt Sinai,*

4408 North Stanton. All are invited.

Delegates to meet the week following at a time and place to be announced.

Because of the Electing Convention on April 24th and a Retired Clergy conference, the rector will miss Sunday, April 18th and 25th. Father Thomas will supply and give pastoral coverage during that time.