

THE MARCH 2010 "CHIMES" NEWSLETTER

SAINT ALBAN'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

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"Jesus said, "Do not forbid him...for he that is not against you is for you"

It is amazing how little control Jesus exerted over others. His power was the power of attraction and not force or manipulation. He held out an invitation not a weapon. When his followers saw someone doing good works and healing without using Jesus' name, he told his disciples to "let them be". If they are doing good, that is to everyone's benefit even if they don't seem to have the right credentials. How different we often are! We try to get people to do it our way, or to follow our rules. Forcing others into our mold just does not work. Applauding and accepting others' good results and appreciating the distinct differences in people is much more productive.

When was the last time you truly let someone "do their own thing"? It is so easy to give advice and try to shape others into our own idea of Christianity. Is your friend showing the gifts of the Holy Spirit?...joy, peace, courage, kindness, love? Are they more open, secure and considerate? Do they listen? Are they growing in confidence and enthusiasm for the God of their understanding? Are they doing good works of health and healing and help in Christ's name? Well that's what matters! They are with us, not against us. Jesus also told us also that "The kingdom of God is not just coming with signs to be observed; for behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Luke 17:20-21) and having this kingdom within means that we don't always have it all figured out and can expect God to be working in many unusual circumstances, by unusual people, and in unusual ways In other words, letting God be God. Part of "Letting Go, and Letting God" is not only surrendering to His will but also being open to his unexpected action. God has a way all His own that frequently surprises us. Just when we become comfortable with His regular ways, he does something quite irregular.

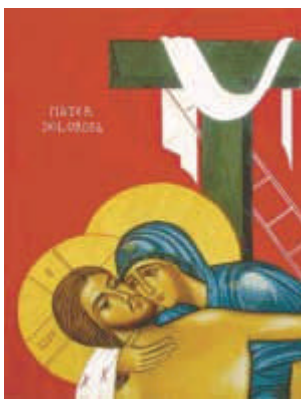
In George Bernard Shaw's St. Joan, the maiden, Joan of Arc, is asked by her interrogator about her conversations with God: "How do you mean? Voices?" She responds, "I hear voices telling me what to do. They come from God." Her questioner insists, "The voices come from your imagination." To this St. Joan replies, "Of course, that is how the message of God comes to me." How many of us are ready for that? Does God speak to us through our imaginations? Can we look for the kingdom of God within us?

The late Cardinal Cushing often told the story of the little girl who sat on her grandmother's lap to listen to the story of creation from the Book of Genesis. As this magnificent story unfolded, the grandmother noticed how quiet the child became, and asked her, "Well, what do think of it, dear?" The little girl answered, "Oh, I love it, you never know what God is going to do next!"

Both St. Joan and the little girl are examples of what Jesus teaches: we had better get used to expecting the unexpected from God. He will not conform to our prejudices and preconceived opinions. Who could have imagined that people like us, addicts of all shapes and sizes, once enslaved by our own selfishness, could find God in admission of failure and sin? . God can and will be present and active wherever He chooses, and "you never know what God is going to do next!", except that it will be good. May we pray to the God of the imagination and the unexpected, to help us to be open to new images and ways God may speak and act. Keep us from prejudice and a closed mind.

Yet even within such a loving group as our own church there will be fear, mistrust and distance. When we look outside our groups to other churches, temples, civic clubs, the neighborhood, we often find the same elements. When we begin to realize that we are all human, with the same fears, hopes and dreams, perhaps we will move through our suspicion and fear and reach out to others in love. It is in love that we find fear's antidote because "there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear" (1 John 4:18). Jesus is perfect love. In his name and spirit and with his presence in us, we too, can learn to love more and fear less. More love equals less fear. Less fear creates more love. How can we lose with that equation?

Fr. Philip



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Visit our Website: www.saintalban.org

EACH WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY 10.30 A.M. - NOON, MASS IN THE LADY CHAPEL

***WEDNESDAY EVENINGS: SOUP AND SANDWICHES AND SPECIAL SPEAKERS
THROUGH MARCH 31ST.***

MARCH 6, SATURDAY – DEANERY MEETING AT ST. JAMES, LAS CRUCES, 9.30 A.M.

MARCH 7, THIRD SUNDAY IN LENT: HOLY EUCHARISTS @ 8 AND 10.30 A.M.
9 A.M. *TEACHING BY JOHN MORGAN IN THE LADY CHAPEL*

SATURDAY, MARCH 13TH – VESTRY IN THE GREEN ROOM @ 9.30 A.M. (Guests at 10.30)

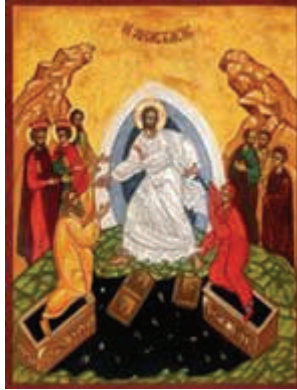
MARCH 14, FOURTH SUNDAY IN LENT: HOLY EUCHARISTS @ 8 AND 10.30 A.M.
9 A.M. *DAUGHTERS OF THE KING MEETING IN THE GREEN ROOM*
ORGAN CONCERT AT 3 P.M. BY RICH GARVEN

MARCH 21, FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT: HOLY EUCHARISTS @ 8 AND 10.30 A.M.
9 A.M. *TEACHING BY THE BENNETTS IN THE LADY CHAPEL*

MARCH 28, PALM SUNDAY, HOLY EUCHARISTS @ 8 AND 10.30 A.M.
9 A.M. *TEACHING ON HOLY WEEK MUSIC BY BOB SHEWAN*

APRIL 1ST MAUNDY THURSDAY EVENING @ 6 P.M. HOLY EUCHARIST AND FEET WASHING

APRIL 2ND, GOOD FRIDAY LITURGIES @ NOON AND 6 P.M. – BISHOP FREY, ATTENDING



APRIL 4TH, EASTER SUNDAY, ONE HIGH MASS @ 10.30 A.M.

AT NOON - A SPECIAL PRESENTATION LUNCHEON BY CHEF PERONNEAU AND HIS STAFF.

SIT AND BE SERVED. LEAVE THE PREPARATION ENTIRELY IN OUR CHEF'S HANDS, AS WELL AS THE KITCHEN, DISHES AND CLEAN UP ALL TO OUR CHEF AND STAFF.

CONTRIBUTIONS ACCEPTED