

Catholic Church of St. James Newsletter



February 2011

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Taizé Community History

St. James Church has had two Taizé prayer services in the past year. They were moderately attended and knowing more about the services would encourage more people to attend future services. The history of these services originated in Burgundy, France in 1940 and is clearly described by material from Wikipedia and other references.

The Taizé Community is an ecumenical Christian monastic order in Taizé, Saône-et-Loire, Burgandy, France, located 800 km southeast of Paris – a 3-hour dis-

tance. It is composed of about 100 brothers who come from Protestant and Catholic traditions and about 30 countries across the world. The monastic order has a strong devotion to peace and justice through prayer and meditation. It was founded in 1940 by Brother Roger Schultz.

The community has become one of the world's most important sites of Christian pilgrimage. Over 100,000 young people from around the world make pil-

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A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE ON IMMIGRATION

Is there a hotter topic, other than the economy? Many are more than ready to cite church teaching, papal and Episcopal statements, etc., when they support our views on a given topic, e.g., abortion, but, who is paying attention to the church on the issue of immigration? The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has a website called "Justice for Immigrants." It is full of data, church teaching, solid reflection, etc. I participated in January in a three-day Catholic conference on the topic of immigration. It moved and informed me deeply. In coming issues I will share more and more but I would like to begin now with a page from the Bishops' website which responds to the question, "Why Don't They Come here Legally?"

By Father 'Rick LaBrecque

The following article is from the #1 Briefing Series from Migration and Refugee Services/Office of Migration Policy and Public Affairs — The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. See sites:

www.justiceforimmigrants.org/index.shtml and

www.justiceforimmigrants.org/.../2011WhyDontTheyComeHereLegally.pdf

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Taizé from page 1

grimages to Taizé each year for prayer, Bible study, sharing, and communal work. Through the community's ecumenical outlook, they are encouraged to live in the spirit of kindness, simplicity and reconciliation.

Other references describe more about the uniqueness of the event. Questions and answers follow from other sources. What is "Taizé worship?" Why do so many people (up to 7,000 a week – primarily young people) go to Taizé to pray? Why is the Taizé prayer so attractive? There are certainly a multitude of answers but perhaps a key response lies in the fact that, at the heart of the prayer, there is a monastic community.

The distinguishing marks of Taizé prayer include repetition and silence and the insertion of these into the liturgy. Repetition is not a new phenomenon nor unique to Taizé. The use of repetitive prayers is a long attested reality in the history of Christian spirituality and liturgy (for example, in the Jesus Prayer and the Rosary). What is unique to the prayer of Taizé is the adaptation of the repetitive form to simple musical lines and core biblical texts that can be sung by a whole assembly of various nationalities, languages, and denominations. The assembly is to immerse itself in the simple but profound harmonies and let itself be carried by this sung prayer.

Silence is perhaps the second most important aspect of this particular prayer practice. In the middle of the prayer is a long period of silence (rather than a sermon or meditation). Maintaining silence is not a technique or method enabling some special communication with God. It is simply holding oneself in a presence and letting Christ, through the Holy Spirit, pray in us.

To learn more about Taizé prayers go to http://www.taize.fr/en_article5806.htm for more tips such as: preparing a time for prayer for each day, meditative singing, young adults and prayer at Taizé, the value of silence, preparing a welcoming space for a meditative prayer, icons in worship, prayer intentions, and learning the songs.

You are invited to join the next Taizé prayer service on March 1 in Church (7:00 PM - 8:00 PM).†

Forty is the old age of youth; fifty is the youth of old age. — Victor Hugo

IMMIGRATION from page 1***Why Don't They Come Here Legally?***

In the fractious debate surrounding both legal and illegal immigration to the United States, politicians, the public, and pundits alike eventually cycle back to one fundamental question – why don't they come here legally? Why don't the estimated 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants presently in the United States stand in line with the rest of the immigrants seeking to enter lawfully? If our ancestors did it, why can't they?

In the United States today, there are an estimated 11.1 million unauthorized immigrants. Sixty percent of these immigrants are from Mexico. Another 20 percent are from other Latin American countries. Eleven percent come from South and East Asia. Combined, unauthorized workers comprise more than five percent of the U.S. workforce.

Many understandably ask why these millions of unauthorized immigrants did not seek to come to the United States lawfully. Some argue that if their ancestors could do it, so should the unauthorized immigrants in our country today.

Many of our ancestors didn't actually come here through federal "legal" channels – there weren't restrictive federal immigration laws in place at the time.

Yet, until the 1870's, the federal government did virtually nothing to restrict immigration to the United States. In most cases, immigrants who arrived to the United States in search of work or a new life simply settled in the country and became citizens after a period of time. In 1875, Congress passed the **Page Law**, restricting immigration of women engaged in polygamy and prostitution, with enforcement provisions particularly focused on Chinese women. Seven years later, in 1882, Congress promulgated the **Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882**, restricting immigration of Chinese laborers. Congress eventually expanded these restrictions on Chinese immigration to exclude Asian immigrants generally. However, immigration by those arriving from non-Asian countries was not significantly restricted until the 1920's, by which time many of our immigrant ancestors had already arrived. Indeed, during that period immigration from various parts of the world to the United States was widespread; by 1870, forty percent of the residents of New York, Chicago, and other major metropolitan areas, were foreign-born.

In 1921, beginning with the *Emergency Quota Act*, the United States began to restrict immigration through the use of national origins quotas. The quota system was restructured multiple times in subsequent years, leaving some regions of the world at a disadvantage at certain points. In 1965, amendments to the *Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952* abolished the quota system, prioritizing instead family-based immigration. Subsequent immigration laws have been increasingly restrictive. For instance, in 1986, the *Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA)* was passed to control and deter unlawful immigration to the United States, making it unlawful to knowingly hire unauthorized immigrants and increasing border enforcement. Ten years later, the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 (IIRIRA)* created penalties for those who had been “unlawfully present” in the country, establishing three and ten year bars to lawful reentry.

Today's unauthorized immigrants would prefer to live and work lawfully in the United States if they could.

Moreover, according to two well-regarded opinion surveys of unauthorized immigrants in the United States, the large majority of those unauthorized in the country today would have preferred to enter lawfully if they could have. In fact, some 98 percent of those surveyed indicated that they would prefer to live and work lawfully, rather than in unauthorized status.

Under current laws, no “line” for lawful immigration to the United States actually exists for the majority of our immigrants.

So, why didn't they just “stand in line” to do so? For the large majority of unauthorized immigrants, no such “line” exists. Under the current immigration legal framework, lawful immigration to the United States is restricted to only a few narrow categories of persons. Most current unauthorized immigrants residing in the United States are ineligible to enter legally with a “green card” as a lawful permanent resident for the purpose of living and working in the country. This is because most do not have the family relationships required to apply for lawful entry; they do not qualify as asylees because of economic hardship as such status is available only to those who are fleeing persecution; and the majority of the unauthorized do not hold advanced degrees and work in the high-skilled professions that would qualify them for work-sponsored lawful permanent residency.

U.S. immigration laws provide three core means by which an immigrant may obtain lawful permanent residency. First, a qualified family member in the United States may petition to bring a foreign-born family member to the country lawfully. U.S. Citizens may petition for lawful permanent residency for their spouses, parents, children or siblings.

Residents in the country may petition for their foreign-born spouses and unmarried children. To do so, sponsors must demonstrate an income level above poverty line and must commit to financially support the sponsored, foreign-born family member so that they do not become a public charge. The foreign-born immigrant, in turn, must meet all other eligibility requirements. However, there are numeric limitations on most of these family-based categories, resulting in backlogs for entry that often range anywhere from five years to nearly 20 years.

Second, immigrants fleeing political persecution or a well-founded fear of future persecution on account of their race, religion, membership in a particular social group, political opinion or national origin may seek political asylum in the United States or qualify for refugee status. To do so, they must meet a high evidentiary burden. Even if they do qualify for refugee status, there is an annual cap on the number of refugee admissions to the United States, which is set annually and is typically between 70,000 and 80,000. Most of today's unauthorized immigrants are fleeing poverty in their home countries, not political persecution. As a result, they do not qualify for asylum.

Third, and significantly, there are various immigration categories for workers to be sponsored by a U.S.-based employer to come to the United States to work and live lawfully. However, these categories are limited to multinational executives and professors; those with advanced degrees, the exceptional in the arts, sciences or business; and narrowly-defined, specialized workers. Today's unauthorized immigrants are largely low-skilled workers who come to the United States for work to support their families. They work in the agricultural, meatpacking, landscaping, services, and construction industries in the United States. They fill the ranks of U.S. businesses, large and small throughout the country. Over the past several decades, the demand by U.S. businesses for low-skilled workers has grown exponentially,

while the supply of available workers for low-skilled jobs in the United States has diminished. Yet, there are only 5,000 green cards available annually for low-skilled workers to enter the United States lawfully. This number stands in stark contrast to the estimated 300,000 immigrants who enter the United States unlawfully each year, most of whom are looking for work. The only alternative to this is to secure a temporary work visa through the H-2A (seasonal agricultural) or H-2B (seasonal non-agricultural) visa programs which provide temporary status to low-skilled workers seeking to enter the country lawfully. While H-2A visas are not numerically capped, the requirements are onerous. H-2B visas are capped at 66,000 annually. Both only provide temporary status to work for a U.S. employer for one year. At their current numbers, these are woefully insufficient to provide legal means for the foreign-born to enter the United States to live and work, and thereby meet our demand for foreign-born labor.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) believes that current immigration laws must be re-

formed to meet our country's need for low - skilled labor and facilitate the reunification of families.

The USCCB believes that immigrants should come to the United States lawfully, but it also understands that the current immigration legal framework does not adequately reunify families and is non-responsive to our country's need for labor. Our country must pass immigration reform laws to ensure the rule of law in the United States, while simultaneously ensuring that the laws that rule are responsive to our economy's demand for labor, rooted in the reunification of family, and respectful of the humanity of the immigrants in our midst. The USCCB supports immigration reform that would increase the number of visas available for low-skilled workers and facilitate family reunification. †

Reference shown on page 1

An atheist is a man who has no invisible means of support.

— John Buchan

EUCHARISTIC ADORATION

Before He was arrested, Jesus asked His disciples who were sleeping, "So you could not keep watch with Me for one hour?" (Mt 26:40). Are you awake and vigilant?

The Blessed Sacrament is the living heart of our Church - of our faith. Each hour we spend with Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration fills us with an abundance of His gifts - His grace, His love, and His peace. These gifts are bestowed on us, our families, our country - on the whole world!

Please consider volunteering one hour each Monday to visit our Lord in Eucharistic Adoration. If you are unable to commit to every week, consider being a substitute. Call me at (843) 347-6872.

"For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day." (Jn 6:40)

By Sharron Wojciechowski, Coordinator

Marriage Preparation Ministry

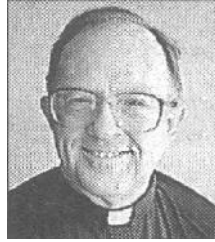
St. James offers the Marriage Preparation ministry that aids engaged couples to look to the future and to see what choices need to be made in their married life. It doesn't make them take off the "rose-colored glasses" but it does help them see reality. It also helps them focus on the role of the church in their lives. It enhances their communication.

The sponsor couple works with the engaged couple to find time to meet that is agreeable to all. All schedules are flexible. The sponsor couple meets with and prepares couples on their new life's journey. A textbook, *For Better and For Ever* is used to discuss life situations. The course takes about six weeks to complete with a two-hour session at each meeting.

Marriage Preparation is a wonderful ministry. It is very satisfying to see the couples "grow" in their relationship. If you are interested in this Ministry, please call Bob and Joan Warden at 347-1109.

By Joan Warden

Oh, for a church full of fourth and fifth graders! As I write these words, I have just completed the annual "Mass Class" in which 4th and 5th grade Religious Education students are assembled in the front of the church and we spend an hour or so learning about the Mass. They are so attentive, so eager to learn, so largely ready to try and answer a question! I wish I could give them all driver's licenses so they could get themselves to Mass on Sunday and build on the enthusiasm for the faith they show me. We do have great young people here at St. James. We have many devoted parents, too. But we are also challenged by the way our



kids' and families' lives today are filled up with so much else -- school, sports, organized activities, dance, martial arts, etc., etc., etc.! So little of that is really connected with the life of faith. So many families rarely if ever spend time together, eat together, pray together -- even at meals. We have these kids for an hour and fifteen minutes a week. I'm praying that at least some of what they get takes root. It may not blossom till a later time in their lives, but if it's down there, even dormant, we can hope. A big thank you to our catechists and youth ministers.

By Father 'Rick LaBrecque

The Wheat and the Weeds in Tucson

The nation was shocked and horrified by the shooting in Tucson on January 8 when Rep. Gabrielle Giffords and 19 others were fired upon. When such evil rears its ugly head, Christians may suffer doubt that the Reign of God is among us. The parable of the Wheat and Weeds (Matthew 13:24-30) offers us wisdom and consolation.

In the parable, workers sow good seed and are dismayed when they find weeds sprouting with the wheat. "I perceive the hand of the enemy in this," said the land owner. "Do not pull the weeds, however, or you will uproot the wheat—leave it until harvest time when I will gather the wheat and burn the weeds." The parable reminds us that good and evil grow together and it is up to God to claim victory for goodness.

At the Tucson shooting, goodness and evil emerged together. While the shooter demonstrated the

power of hate, others showed the power of love, shielding people from bullets, saving lives with first aid, and restraining the shooter to stop the bloodshed. Over time we witnessed the faithfulness of husband Mark Kelly at Rep. Gabrielle Giffords' side, and we witnessed the generosity and courage of the Greens as they donated the organs of their nine-year-old daughter, Christina, when she died of her wounds.

Good and evil are flip sides of the same mystery that was revealed in the cross and resurrection of Jesus. Jesus rose above the hate and violence of his enemies to appear to his disciples and say, "Peace be with you." Jesus is the Lamb who was slain, whose blood saves us from sin. St. Paul invites us to the same sacrificial love in Romans 12:21: "Do not be conquered by evil, but conquer evil with good."

By Deacon Jeff Mevissen

Hooks and Needles

The Hooks and Needles ministry was formed in June 2010. This group of more than 25 women, continues to grow and would welcome new members. It is comprised of knitters, crocheters, and quilters who get together on the third Wednesday of each month in a Founders Center classroom to socialize while their hands are busy making prayer shawls, afghans, quilts, and hats, scarves and socks for the less fortunate in our community.

The St. James family and the local community were generous in providing donations of yarn and fabric to this new group. Initial goals of the ministry include making items for the Baby Jesus layette at Christmas and supporting the community through donations to Catholic Charities, Kingston Nursing Home, and Project Linus with handmade quilts, afghans and clothing articles. For more information, contact Ginger Monaghan at 843-347-2066.

By Dottie Laudeman 843-234-0905

Pharmacy Phacts – How to Survive the Spring Allergy Season

One of the most beautiful times of the year is the spring season, when plants and trees begin to bloom. It can also be one of the most troublesome health-events of the year, as pollen and other allergens start to “do their thing.” Your eyes, nose and throat sense the airborne allergens, and force you to try to figure out how to self-medicate these nasty little irritations. For most people, it is usually sensitivity to grass/plant/tree pollen, certain weeds, or mold. A few of us, however, may need a trip to our doctor’s office to be allergen-tested.

Once a person has a good idea about what is causing their allergies, it is very possible that an over-the-counter (OTC) medication will be a satisfactory solution to this problem. OTC antihistamines like Benadryl, Claritin, and Zyrtec are very useful for treating runny noses and itchy eyes. OTC decongestants, like Claritin-D and Zyrtec-D can help relieve that “stuffed-up” feeling and sinus pressure. But decongestants should not be used by people with high blood pressure (HBP), as they tend to increase untreated high blood pressure. Long-acting nasal sprays like Afrin can also be used to treat nasal

congestion, but only for a few days. Overuse of this spray can cause rebound congestion, and is a side effect of overuse. Please follow the package instructions for the best results. It is always a good idea to discuss the use of these OTC medications with your pharmacist before you start to use them, and make sure you mention which prescription medication(s) you are currently taking.

One last thought about allergens. Most of us have noticed how our cars look when pollen is in the air. It doesn’t take too much time for a car to be parked outdoors and take on that telltale yellowish tinge. At that point, a good washing is the only thing that will remove the pollen. Well, our bodies act in much the same way when we spend time outdoors in the spring. We can also be covered with the same pollen, and need the same treatment as our cars, to rid the pollen from our clothes and skin. If we don’t, the allergens are deposited on our furniture, carpets, and bedding, and we can be affected indoors as well as outdoors.

By Tom Flench, R.Ph.

Parish Columbarium Update

Here are a few facts and suggestions about the St. James Columbarium that may be of interest to you.

- ⇒ **50** of the 96 available niches have been sold.
- ⇒ **28** of our beloved deceased have already been inurned.
- ⇒ **\$2900** is the cost of a niche which holds two cremated remains.
- ⇒ **12 inches x 12 inches x 12 inches** are the dimensions of niche.
- ⇒ **Provide dimensions** to funeral director when purchasing an urn so there is room for a second urn later (sounds obvious but is sometimes forgotten at times of duress / sadness).
- ⇒ **“Companion” urn** is popular – **one** box of metal,

wood or stone with **two** compartments (purchased at first death and also will hold ashes of a second deceased).

- ⇒ **Time payment plan** is available (36 months with minimum payment of **\$200** at any time – keeps parish staff from processing small \$10 etc. payments).
- ⇒ **Parish registration** is required (in any parish of the Diocese of Charleston).
- ⇒ **Non-Catholic spouses** may be inurned in columbarium.

By Don Ullmann, Committee Chairman

The only certainty is that nothing is certain.
— Pliny the Elder

2011 St. James Missionaries

The St. James Mission team is returning to Honduras for 10 days (June 20 – 30, 2011). This will be the team's third trip. This year they will be traveling to a different area of Honduras. They will be working at Olancho Aid's foundation in Juticalpa, Honduras, a poor rural area located about 105 miles east from the capital city of Tegucigalpa.

Olancho Aid is a Catholic organization serving the poor. Their facilities include the only special-needs school in Olancho, bilingual schools serving K–12, and a home for the elderly. They also have the Solidarity Project – where they share their volunteers and missionaries with the surrounding community. Those wishing to learn more should visit their website at www.olanchoaid.org.

Mission St. James learned of this organization from one of our missionaries, Beth Mevissen, who spent a year there as a missionary. The team is excited to go and help this worthy cause. Work there will include medical, teaching, and construction projects.

St. James Mission is a missionary movement of St. James Parish and this is their sixth year of service. Any member of St. James is welcome to apply to the mission team. The group this year consists of 23 missionaries, ranging in age from 11 to 75. The team funds the trips by fund raisers and sponsorships. Our next fund raiser is a Craft/Vendor Fair on March 26 in the Founders Center. Any person or organization can purchase a table for \$25 and sell items (profits are yours to keep). Anyone interested can contact Paul Fling at (843)650-8954 or (843)503-9231 to purchase a table or for more information.

Sponsors are very important members of the mission team. Sponsors are carried with the mission team in spirit and prayed for during our trip. A sponsorship is \$125 or more and can be for a specific missionary or “any missionary”. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor, you can contact Father 'Rick at the church or Wendy Donellan at (843)234-1235. Mission St. James hopes to make another trip in the summer of 2013.

By Wendy Donellan

1. Wendy Donellan – The coordinator for the 2011 mission trip. This is her third mission trip. She is married with four children and is a Registered Nurse with many years experience.
2. Paul Fling – A retired Air Force officer and published author. This is his third mission trip. He is also a Benedictine Oblate. He is skilled in carpentry and painting.
3. Father 'Rick LaBrecque – The pastor of St. James Church. This is his third mission trip. He is fluent in Spanish; a priest with over 40 years experience.
4. Judy Lloyd – An occupational therapist. This is her second mission trip. She will be traveling with her family.
5. Sydni Donellan – A university student. This will be her third mission trip. She is studying to be a teacher.
6. Dottie Lloyd – A retail employee. This will be her second mission trip. She will be traveling with her family.
7. Cody Lloyd – A high school student. This will be his second mission trip. He is a talented musician.
8. Colton Lloyd – A middle school student. He is one of our youngest missionaries. This will be his first mission trip.
9. Calvin Lloyd – A middle school student. He is one of our youngest missionaries. This will be his first mission trip with his twin brother.
10. Karen Willoughby – A retired teacher and currently employed as a registered nurse. This is her first mission trip with St. James, although she has been on previous mission trips.
11. Maxine Gatling – A retired physical education teacher. This will be her first mission trip.
12. Wilma Lucas – A retired teacher. This is her third mission trip. Wilma is fluent in Spanish.
13. Beth Mevissen – A graduate student in Education. This is her second trip with St. James Mission. She spent a year in Honduras as a full time missionary.

Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God.
— Thomas Jefferson; a motto found
among his papers.

See more **Missionaries** on page 8

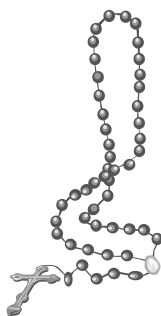
Missionaries from page 7

- 14. Bryan Hendrick – A college student. He has previously traveled to Honduras, but this is his first mission trip.
- 15. Maura Walbourne – A high school student. This will be her first mission trip. She is an accomplished athlete.
- 16. Paulette Flench – The pastoral associate at St. James. This will be her first mission trip.
- 17. Chris Nwanegwo – A high school student. This will be his first mission trip. He is an accomplished athlete.
- 18. Ron Walker – An artist and musician. This will be his second mission trip. He works at CCU in the sign department.
- 19. Trish Walker – A diocesan employee, she works for Catholic Charities. This will be her second mission trip.
- 20. Alexis Walker – A middle school student. This will be her second mission trip. She is an athlete and singer.
- 21. Shirley Currie – A teaching assistant for special needs children. This will be her second mission trip.
- 22. Helen Tatarsky – A retired teacher. This will be her second mission trip. Her specialty is special needs children.
- 23. Lauren Green – A high school student. This will be her first mission trip. She is a musician and athlete. †

By Wendy Donellan

Rosary Makers Ministry

We have a new ministry at St. James called the *Rosary Makers*. Members make rosaries and then send them to the missions either here or a foreign country. The ministry is devoted to the Blessed Mother and the furthering of devotion to the rosary. We are in need of funds for supplies and postage for this ministry. Would it be possible for you or your organization to donate money to help us in this very worthy cause? We thank you in advance for your support. Call Anne Blatz at 843-347-0325 for more information.



By Anne Blatz

New Parish Council Member – Sallie Walbourne

I came to Conway in 1979 to work for two Veterinarians at the Palmetto Animal Hospital. I met them while at the University of Georgia. I thought I would come to Conway for a year or two and then move back up to the Chicago area where I grew up. I met my husband, Larry, at St. James and would see him at the Post Office whenever I was mailing packages to my boyfriend in New York! Larry and I married in 1982, and I went back to school to learn the art of dog grooming in Boston.

I opened my first grooming shop in the back of the animal hospital where I had been employed. Since then I have made two moves and now have a beautiful building with a dog daycare, self-serve dog wash and a boutique. I have six great employees. I also teach grooming.

My husband Larry and I have raised four children: three girls, Jennie (26), Katie (21) and Maura (18). Our son Bryan is (24). Larry, who is from Boston, had been stationed here at the Myrtle Beach Air Force Base and then stayed in this area and has been at the Conway Post Office for 30 years.

I always enjoyed being involved at St. James and was one of the original parish members to lead Father Chet [now Monsignor] out to our present location to see the old Academy that might "make a great new church!" Larry and I worked hard along with so many of our friends to turn the school into the "new" St. James. It was such fun! We loved the whole endeavor. My mom, Ruth Kennedy, has also joined us here at St. James and has made many great friends. It is a wonderful parish and we have loved calling it "home" for our family all these years. I look forward to working with Father 'Rick and all the members of the Pastoral Council over the next three years.

By Sallie Walbourne

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Catholic Charities
 537-B Hwy 90 Conway, SC 29526
 (843) 234-1999 (843)-234-3132 Fax
 Open: Monday - Thursday from 10 am - 1 pm.

CAP (Churches Assisting People)
 206 Main St. Conway, SC 29526
 (843) 488-2277
 Open: Monday — Thursday 10 am - 4 pm
 Friday 10 am—1 pm

Child Development Center
 Ann Parks, Director 347-KIDS (5437)

Citizens Against Spouse Abuse (CASA)
 (843)-448-6206 Crisis Line 24/7

SCRIPTURE † PRAYER † SPIRITUALITY :

INTRODUCTION TO THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW

During this cycle of the liturgical calendar most of our gospel readings will be from the Gospel of Matthew. In order to have a better understanding of any one of the Gospels it is helpful to have some knowledge of what was happening at the time of the writing and the community the evangelist was writing to. With that in mind I hope to give you a bird's eye view of that information. I do realize that many of you are attending the study of the Gospel of Matthew sessions. For you this may serve as a reminder of Matthew's background. For others, I hope it will serve to help you better understand Matthew and his gospel.

It is believed that Matthew wrote his Gospel sometime between the years 80 - 90 CE (Common Era) and that his community of Jewish Christians may have come from Palestine and eventually settled in Syria. The community had strong Jewish roots as demonstrated by its reverence for Jewish Law and customs and its reference to Gentiles as outsiders.

The time and place is important to understanding Matthew's Gospel and why he wrote it. It was a time when Christians whose roots were still in Judaism and its sacred history were experiencing a tension that ultimately led to a heart-breaking separation, even alienation, from the religion of their ancestors. Prior to the Jewish revolt against Rome in 67 AD, Jews and Jewish Christians seemed to have experienced relatively peaceful relationships. This is attested to in Acts 2:46 which states that Jesus' followers continued to go to the sacred Temple of Solomon as part of their worship and the ranks of the young church were swelled by an influx of Pharisees as well as Samaritans and Greek-speaking Jews. The early Christians considered themselves to be thoroughly Jewish and completely in tune with the religious history of Israel. They were the people of the renewed covenant, of the Messianic Age so longed for by the Hebrew Scriptures. At the same time, those Jews who rejected the claims of Jesus and his followers were able to tolerate the fringe groups that the Christians seemed to be. In general, it was a live and let live atmosphere.

Enormous changes took place which engulfed both Judaism and Christianity and led to the crisis atmosphere which helped trigger Matthew's Gospel. A key event for both religious traditions was Rome's suppression of the Jewish revolt of 67 - 70 AD. When the Roman general Titus destroyed Jerusalem and the sacred

Temple, the destinies of both Jews and Christians were profoundly altered along with the relationships between Jews and Christians

For Judaism it meant the end of an era. The destruction of the Temple (the unifying religious symbol of Israel) significantly changed the religious practices of the Jews. Under the leadership of Yonahan ben Zakkai the future of an Orthodox Judaism without temple or priesthood began to take shape. Now the local synagogue, with its emphasis on the teaching of the scriptures, and the home, where acts of piety and devotion were sustained in family life, would be the focal points of Jewish identity. Israel's worship of Yahweh would not be the ancient ritual of temple sacrifice but the 'holocaust' of strict obedience to the law, the law interpreted and taught by the rabbis.

The destruction of Jerusalem and its Temple also effected fundamental changes on early Christianity. Prior to 70 AD, the religious center of Christianity had remained in Jerusalem with Jewish Christian leaders. Gentiles had been streaming into the community and soon dominated the voice and culture of the young church. Christianity had accelerated its move to the west and as it did so its distinction from Judaism would become more apparent and its debates with the Jewish leaders became more heated.

The Christians of Matthew's community were witness to these turbulent times of transition and disruption. Most of them were Jews who had come to accept Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God. They had seen their community grow with increasing numbers of converts, including Greeks and other Gentiles from the mixed population centers of Syria. For the Jewish members of Matthew's community, faith in Jesus had never meant a repudiation of their Jewish past. Jesus was the Christ, the fulfillment of Israel's dream.

But now this continuity with their sacred past seemed threatened with rupture. Gentile converts brought strange customs, many of which contravened the Jewish law and were repugnant to refined Jewish moral sensitivities. Also, with the destruction of Jerusalem and its impact on Judaism itself, these Jewish Christians had to contend with the growing hostility of their fellow Jews who had less tolerance for the kind of diversity rep-

See **Matthew** on page 10

Matthew from page 9

resented by Jewish Christianity. Christians were accused of destroying the law and of forfeiting their claim on the Jewish scriptures. They were not to be part of the destiny of Israel promised by God and they were apparently banned from participation in Jewish synagogues.

It was a time of crisis for Matthew's church. What had happened to the sense of kinship with the past? Was it right to launch out into a strange and untracked future? Matthew's church was infected with the perennial virus of people in transition: disunity and loss of perspective. This was the pastoral situation to which Matthew's Gospel attempted to respond. By editing the already written Gospel of Mark, by including precious materials about Jesus found in a collection of his sayings, and by incorporating a number of traditions known to Matthew and his community, the evangelist would shape a story of Jesus' life that would have a special meaning for his distraught Christians.

Matthew's gospel represents a Spirit-filled portrait of Jesus and his significance that is no longer local but universal, able to be 'good news' for all those who believe in Jesus and hope to find perspective in him.

Note: Material for this article was taken from *Invitation to the Gospels* and *Journey into Matthew*.†

Eleanor Fisher, Spiritual Director

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #7531

Thanks to the hard work of our Brother Knights at St. James and the generous support of our fellow parishioners, we were able to distribute \$7500+ to ten charities in our community at our Year-End Dinner. This money was raised during our fund-raising efforts in 2010. This money is in addition to our financial support of our parish, our youth group, two Seminarians and Catholic Charities.

Because of the response last year, we will be having three fish dinners – March 11, April 1 and April 15. Our St. Patrick's dinner will be on March 19. Please watch your bulletins for more information about our dinners and other fund-raising activities.

If you are a Knight and have not been to a meeting or an activity for a while, please attend one and see what is happening. As we grow we need all of our members support and help.

By Ed Harrison, Grand Knight



“Come and Get IT!”

This is a great theme for all the times food is served at St. James by many of the Ministries at St. James. But how about “*Coming and Getting IT?*” with *IT* being the joy, pleasure, and peaceful feeling of sharing or discovering your talents, abilities, and gifts within the walls of St James, the Church, and your faith. There are over 70+ ministries now operating at St. James. The best part is that new ones are starting up every year. So if you do not find a present ministry that fits your talents, you can start a new ministry.

2010 saw a new *Rosary Makers* ministry and a *Hooks and Needles* ministry spring up. Annette Copeland and some great assistants, as a quiet ministry, just put out the new Directory of Ministries booklet. If you want to take a quick look at some of the Ministries available you can go on the website at

<http://www.stjamesconway.org/ministries.html>

Another quiet ministry you can do from the house is to fill out a card once a month to send to a relative of a parishioner who passed away. Do you like to use a camera? Glenn Bond is looking for a few people to take pictures at church events so we have a history of our parish. So, *Come and Get IT*. The joy and pleasure will all be yours.

By Lanny J. Breczinski

Alexander, Caesar, Charlemagne and I myself have founded empires; but upon what do these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love; and to this very day millions would die for Him.

— Napoleon Bonaparte

In the silence of the heart God speaks. If you face God in prayer and silence, God will speak to you. Souls of prayer are souls of great silence.

— Blessed (Mother) Teresa of Calcutta

~~~~~RCIA News~~~~~

GETTING READY FOR THE EASTER VIGIL AND RECEPTION  
OF THE SACRAMENTS

With the beginning of Lent on Ash Wednesday, March 9, our catechumens and candidates enter into the final phase of preparation for the reception of the sacraments at the Easter Vigil. This period of preparation is called the “Period of Purification and Enlightenment.” It begins with the Rite of Election and ends at the Easter Vigil. For the already baptized this is a time to reflect on the meaning of their baptism and for the unbaptized it is a time to prepare for its reception. The theme of repentance is also a major factor in the sessions and Rites that occur during this time.

A more intense spiritual preparation, consisting more in interior reflection than in catechetical instruction takes place during this time. It is a time to purify the minds and hearts of the elect as they search their own consciences and do penance. This period is also a time to enlighten the minds and hearts of the elect with a deeper knowledge of Christ the Savior. The celebration of certain Rites brings about this process of purification and enlightenment and extends over the entire Lenten season.

The Rites and Presentations which will be celebrated are as follows:

Rite of Sending for both catechumens and candidates - March 15

Rite of Election for catechumens - March 16 at St. Michael Church

Call to Continued Conversion for candidates - March 16 at St. Michael Church

Penitential Rite for candidates - March 20

1<sup>st</sup> Scrutiny for catechumens - March 27

2<sup>nd</sup> Scrutiny for catechumens - April 3

3<sup>rd</sup> Scrutiny for catechumens - April 10

Day of Retreat for catechumens and candidates - April 16

Our catechumens this year are: John Bullock, Kelly Komnick, Veronica Grubb and Linda Roberts.

Our candidates this year are: Dorothy Branch, Summer Bullock, Kerry Maldonado, Sofia Maldonado and Sandra Roberts.

We ask you to remember in your prayers all candidates and catechumens who are preparing for the sacraments. †

By Eleanor Fisher, Catechumenate Director

FILL IN THE BLANKS....

Every quarter I am asked, as the President of the St. James Ladies Guild, to contribute an article to the Church Newsletter. Every quarter I search for a subject that, hopefully, will be interesting and informative to the reader. But, sadly, sometimes I “go to the well” and come up dry! This time I thought it would be nice to have some of the members speak for me, so I sent out a questionnaire to a few members and asked them to fill in the blanks.

Following are their responses:

*What prompted you to join the Ladies Guild?* Most responses were very similar to my own...we were new residents in a new area in a new church and wanted to meet other ladies in the parish. Some were drawn by the activities in which this group is involved, some were invited to come as a visitor by other members, and some were impressed in the way that the group served the St. James community. “It was the best decision I ever made!”

*How long have you been a member and what has prompted you to keep coming back?* These ladies ranged from 2.5 years to 25 years membership and continue as members for the opportunity to serve the Church, participate in our many projects to benefit others and share in fellowship with the many friends that they have made over the years.

*What do you feel is the most important roll that the group plays on a Church, local, national and international level?* “The most important role is to give women the opportunity to join forces to accomplish greater things than could be done individually; the Guild plays an active role in helping our church in many ways; as one of the original ministries of St. James, the Guild is the ‘heart’ of the parish”; and, most importantly, “they bear witness to Jesus Christ by their acts of charity and service.”

I am humbled by the spirituality and generosity of our members and it is with pride that I serve as their president. If the Ladies Guild is something that you would like to “fill in the blanks” in your spiritual and social life, please join us! We meet every third Monday of the month (except July and August) beginning with the 6:30 p.m. Mass in the Chapel followed by our meeting. All women of the parish are invited to join us or call me at 347-2767 if you have questions.

By Diane Pauls

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**February 2011**

*Happy Easter*

*Happy Spring*



**Catholic Church of St. James**

**C/O Newsletter**

1071 Academy Drive  
Conway, SC 29526  
Phone: 843-347-5168  
Fax: 843-347-1212

**We are on the Web at**

[Http://www.stjamesconway.org/](http://www.stjamesconway.org/)

Email: [stjames@stjamesconway.org](mailto:stjames@stjamesconway.org)

**Editor:** Nancy Schwindinger 347-7463  
[nance@sc.rr.com](mailto:nance@sc.rr.com)

**Publisher:** Bob Gagne 903-4184  
[bobcat@sccoast.net](mailto:bobcat@sccoast.net)

**Staff:**

Paulette Flench 347-5168  
[pflench@stjamesconway.org](mailto:pflench@stjamesconway.org)  
Tom Flench 347-5779  
[tpflench@yahoo.com](mailto:tpflench@yahoo.com)  
Amy Horan 843-283-0568 cell  
[ahoran@stjamesconway.org](mailto:ahoran@stjamesconway.org)  
Anna Marie Winters 347-9295  
[rwinters@sccoast.net](mailto:rwinters@sccoast.net)

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*Calendar of Events at St. James*

- ⇒ Tuesday, March 1 — Taizé Prayer Service 7-8 PM
- ⇒ Wednesday, March 9 — Ash Wednesday
- ⇒ Friday, March 11 — Lenten Fish Fry at Founders Center
- ⇒ Friday, March 11 — Stations of the Cross 7:00 PM in Church
- ⇒ Saturday, March 19 — St. Patrick's Day dinner 5:30 PM in FC
- ⇒ Sunday, March 13 — Parish Mission 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM
- ⇒ March 14 — Parish Mission 10:30 AM— 1:00 PM and 6 PM – 9 PM
- ⇒ March 15, 16 — Parish Mission 10:30 AM— 1 PM and 6 PM – 9 PM

**Pastoral Staff:**

|                              |                                |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Father 'Rick LaBrecque       | Pastor                         |
| Father John Silver (Retired) | Sacramental Ministry           |
| Jeff Mevissen                | Deacon                         |
| Paulette Flench              | Pastoral Associate             |
| Sister Ana Gema Villafaña    | Hispanic Pastoral Associate    |
| Eleanor Fisher               | Catechumenate Director         |
| Amy Horan                    | Children's Religious Education |
| Mike Donellan                | Youth Ministry                 |
| Paula Loehr                  | Administrative Assistant       |
| Kathy Caughey                | Secretary                      |
| Pam Bosselait                | Director of Music              |
| Brenda Gorski                | Organist/Accompanist           |
| Jean Witt, RN                | Parish Nurse (843) 347-5118    |