

# *Saints Alive! + May 2007*

All Saints Episcopal Parish, San Leandro, California, 510-569-7020

Easter, Pentecost



## **Rector's Letter**

### **Study and Sabbatical**

Over the past couple of months, I have been in discussion with the vestry about two important upcoming events: (a) my application to begin work this summer on a Doctor of Ministry degree in Advanced Congregational Development and (b) my sabbatical scheduled for fall of 2008—about 18 months from now. It's important for us all to understand a few of the details about both, and how they will benefit All Saints.

#### **Doctor of Ministry (2007–2010)**

Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, in Evanston, Illinois, offers one of the leading D.Min programs in the country. Its formal title is "Advanced Studies in Congregational Development." The program is designed for working rectors and vicars. Most of the coursework is done at home over the year, but for three summers, students go to Illinois for three weeks of study and coursework. The last year, candidates write and defend a thesis. I have applied for the D.Min program, and I'll hear in the next few weeks if I've been accepted. If I enter the program, I will begin this summer and end in June 2010. Mark Spaulding, rector of Holy Cross in Castro Valley, has also applied. If we both are accepted, we will be able to support each other and our parishes in this study.

The D.Min program is a practical course of study, focusing on the priest's parish. This will have a beneficial impact here at All Saints, both immediately and long term, as it will give us advanced, proven tools and techniques for helping us grow. Seabury-Western's lecturers include the world's most respected authorities in healthy church growth. Thanks to the vestry for its unanimous endorsement of my application for this program!

#### **Sabbatical (2008)**

Because of the day-in, day-out demands of the priesthood, parishes have found over the years that it is very much in their interest to make provision for a regular sabbatical leave for their priests. Typically, full-time clergy earn a month for each year of service, and can take a sabbatical any time after their fifth anniversary. Once returning, they agree not to leave the parish for a minimum of a year. All of these have been part of my agreement with All Saints since 2002, when I was called to be with you.

While that means I would be entitled to a sabbatical beginning this August, I have decided to postpone it to next fall (2008). I have formed a team of current and former Senior/Rector's Wardens to begin planning for this event. Our goal will be to determine the best length of the sabbatical (I expect it to be about three months) and to make it an exciting time of refreshment for the parish. We'll set other goals, to be sure; one I have is to complete my first book (or hopefully second, since the first is drafted now).

While the D.Min and sabbatical happen at the same time, it's important to understand that they are not formally related. (I fully expect that I will do D.Min coursework while I am on sabbatical, but that's not finalized. And I may not be accepted!) They are just happening at the same time. The sabbatical would happen regardless of my pursuit of the D.Min program.

I know that these programs will raise a number of questions for you. I'll be happy to answer them for you, and a lot more information will follow. But one last note. Parishes generally have some grumbling about their priests' sabbaticals, so I expect that. However, when you hear it, I hope you'll remember that the D.Min study is very demanding and is always centered around helping All Saints. And sabbaticals have

been developed because parishes have found that it's much healthier for them to do it that way. It ultimately leads to better ministry together over the long haul.

Fr. Rob Droste, [robdroste@sbcglobal.net](mailto:robdroste@sbcglobal.net)

First Visit from  
**Bishop Marc**  
10:00 Service  
Sunday, May 6

### **Get Ready!**

Our new bishop will be with us for the 10:00 service on May 6. We'll have the festival brass quartet back for the service, with Dylan's new *Easter Fanfare* and an all-parish photo in the courtyard. It's going to be a great time.

### **Finger-Food Potluck**

If the Spirit moves you, bring a few quartered sandwiches or some other healthful finger food. The Soup Stop team will contribute the leftovers from Saturday's soup kitchen. FYI: Bishop Marc is a vegetarian. **No desserts, please.**

### **May 6 Is Also Family Portrait Day**

Bishop Marc doesn't know it yet, but we are going to take his picture. It is an extremely special occasion, and we thought it would be nice to document his visit and time here at All Saints.

As we are expecting a large turnout, we also thought that this would be a great opportunity to offer the entire congregation a chance to have a professional family portrait taken at a reasonable cost. The images can also be used for the parish directory and our website.

We are going to have a small studio setting in the Fireside Room after both services. So dress for a picture, and bring the whole family to meet the bishop and commemorate the day with your portraits. The "studio" will be informal, so if you want to include sibling, best friends, or other creative combination portraits, please feel free to include a slot for that on the sign-up sheet, which will be located in the church entryway.

*Where:* Fireside "Studio"

*When:* Sunday, May 6, 2007, approx. 9:00 and 11:45 a.m.

*Cost:* No sitting fee; \$18 for 8 x 10, \$9 for 5 x 7, \$4 for a 4 x 6

*Contact:* Clyde Fralick, 510-593-6270

## **Note from the Rector's Warden**

"Wherever you are in your spiritual journey, you are welcome here at All Saints."

I heard those opening words when I first came to All Saints in October 2001, just a few months after Fr. Rob had started working here. I was to be a godmother for a friend's daughter who was being baptized that day.

Those words changed my life. I grew up in a military family that was not religious. We believed in God, but it was never talked about. When we lived in Norfolk, Virginia, I attended Sunday school, but what I remember of that is that I would take my dime for the offering twisted in my hanky so I wouldn't lose it. I also remember having a Coke at the pharmacy on the way home.

Next I remember attending a nondenominational church on base in Japan. We lived directly across the street, and our family made the pilgrimage across the street to church for Easter, etc. At some point I was helping to teach Sunday school to the younger children.

And then, nothing—for many, many years. I wouldn't attend on Easter with a friend because I thought it would be "hypocritical" to only attend on a special day. I didn't think about church until I had my own two children.

I began to realize that they needed to have religious teaching, so we joined First Presbyterian Church of Hayward and attended faithfully. I always found the sermons to have something to say directly to me. I began teaching Sunday school to pre-schoolers.

I was not clear what my own beliefs were, but that didn't stop the church from letting me teach! I attended a Bible study group and felt completely left out. . . . I didn't know where the books of the Bible were, and found it hard to believe everything that was said in the passages we were studying. When the minister began preaching that the only way to God was through Jesus and that only those who believed in Jesus would have everlasting life (whatever that meant), I left the church. I wasn't sure what my beliefs were, but I knew this wasn't it.

There was no churching for over twenty years when I walked into All Saints. After that first Sunday, I called Fr. Rob and asked him if he really meant what he said, and made an appointment to come in to talk to him.

In doing so, I have found a wonderful place to learn and figure out just what my beliefs are. Many who have been involved with church all their lives seem so clear, but I have been wandering for years. Our Lenten series, EFM, etc., have all given me education on which to develop my beliefs. I still struggle with a number of issues, but things seem to be coming together.

So why am I telling you this? Fr. Rob has challenged us to share our faith and offer the word of Christ to others. It is not necessary that they believe, but that we engage. When Fr. Rob first told me about EFM—Education for Ministry—I said, oh no . . . I'm not a minister . . . I don't even talk about religion to anyone.

Has that ever changed! I have found that my beliefs about God just seem to creep in to many of my discussions with people. I shared with Robin Niderost my feelings about All Saints, and now she is part of this community. I shared with my good friend, Rob, who was fearful of organized religion, as his mother was very fundamental, and Fr. Rob began visiting my friend Rob, who was dying. The greatest joy in my life was when Rob decided, while in the hospital, that he wanted to be baptized. It was done, using supplies at hand in the room. This brought great peace to Rob and had a meaningful impact on me. I say to people that I see around town that God has given us a beautiful day, I talk about how I sometimes flounder in my thoughts and beliefs, I confess that my prayers sure don't sound like anything Fr. Rob utters. But I also talk about how I have developed a much closer relationship to God. I share gently, when someone seems open, but I am certainly not preaching. My art is a gift from God, and I let everyone know how I feel. It is out there in my artist statement, on my blog, and in my lectures.

Sharing becomes easier and easier the more I do it. Five years ago, if someone had told me that I would be in my third year of EFM, serving as the Rector's Warden and talking to strangers about God, I would never have believed them. But that is what has happened.

And what a joyful world it is!

Love to all,

Liz

## Social Ministry News

### April Highlights

#### **Soup Stop (April 7)**

We are delighted to report that ten guests came, including a family of four with two young teenage girls. One of the guests commented that he really appreciated the tranquility of our setting. Another brought an Easter basket to share.

#### **Mailing for Building Futures with Women and Children (April 15)**

Fifteen students from ELS Language Centers in San Francisco made the trek to San Leandro to help with the mailing. Four attended service, then they all joined an enthusiastic group of parishioners. The students are still buzzing about the warm welcome they received. Most importantly, over 1,000 pieces of mail were prepared to seek funds for the essential work of BFWC.

#### **April Showers Birthday Picnic (April 21)**

April Showers celebrated its fifth anniversary with a festive picnic attended by approximately 100 volunteers, homeless, city council members, and the mayor. All Saints parishioners prepared and served salads and danced with the homeless!

Tom Breckenridge, Social Ministries Chair

## Annual Plant Sale May 12

Saturday, May 12, the annual plant sale is being held in the parish hall from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Donations of plants and plant cuttings are needed to make the sale the usual success. Help is also needed for set-up, the sale, and clean-up.

If possible, deliver your potted plants to the church starting at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, May 11. If you want to donate plants (or other garden items) but can't deliver them then, or need them picked up, please call!

*Contact:* Nancy Churchill to offer help or for more information (Church office - 510.569.7020)

## Computer Angels Needed

Two aging All Saints computers have given their all for the past eight years, almost three times longer than the average computer lifetime. Due to an increasing number of processing problems, the vestry has authorized the purchase of two new computers equipped with updated software and additional essential virus protection. We are becoming a 21st-century church!

The new software enables us to make better use of information—creating attractive name badges, mailing labels, and directories. Other new features make it easier for us to create online newsletters and Web pages.

The good news is that the computers are installed and in a test phase. Not only that, one of the older computers will be resurrected for the Rev. Linda Wood's office. The vestry asks for donations to help cover this capital expense, noting that the upgrade benefits each one of us.

If you'd like to join with other "computer angels," please make your check payable to All Saints, and note on the check that your donation is for "computers." Your investment will serve us well for at least another three years.

*Contact:* Maxine Sitts (Church office - 510.569.7020)

## Living Peace Workshop in June

The war in Iraq continues, a nationally syndicated radio host makes radically insensitive remarks on the air, and the tragedy at Virginia Tech becomes the latest example of how our personal sense of peace is undermined almost every day. In response to this dichotomy that many of us feel, All Saints is sponsoring a thought-provoking workshop entitled Living Peace. The workshop offers participants the opportunity to explore the concepts of peace within themselves and to develop skills and practices for embodying peace on an ongoing basis.

Workshop leaders Jim Halligan and Cynthia Eaton draw on more than 40 years of conflict management teaching and practice between them. Their interactive workshops provide practical, personal approaches to help individuals discover their own peacemaking strengths, and how to use them while walking through everyday life.

Invite your family and friends to join us in this fun and inspiring community workshop at All Saints. Coffee, snacks, and lunch are provided. The cost will be a sliding-scale donation from \$35 to \$65, and all proceeds will benefit All Saints' work in the community.

When: Saturday, June 9, 2007, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Where: All Saints

Contact: Jim Halligan, (Church office - 510.569.7020), for more information and registration

## Altar Flowers / Sanctuary Candle

When you donate altar flowers or a sanctuary candle, please give Janet, in the office, the name(s) for whom you are giving thanks or in memory of so that they can be included in the Sunday bulletin. She will have to have the information by the previous Wednesday. Thank you.

Contact: Janet Plankenhorn, Parish Secretary, 569-7020

## Thank-You Letter

A very lovely letter was received from Building Futures with Women and Children, thanking our parishioners for the help we regularly give through the Social Ministry Team. It's on the bulletin board—take a look!

Contact: John Trubina, [jtrubina@comcast.net](mailto:jtrubina@comcast.net)

## Submitting Items for This Newsletter

Every item in this newsletter identifies a contact person. When you submit an item (regardless of size), it's very helpful if you specify the contact person's name and (1) email address, (2) phone number, or (3) both.

- If no contact person is provided, we'll assume it's the person who submitted the item.
- If no phone number or email address is given, we will use the person's email address.

We can't include digital images, but we welcome news items. Thank you!

Contact: Mary Nelson, Editor, [marypat56@comcast.net](mailto:marypat56@comcast.net)

## Mark Your Calendars

### **May 5 (Saturday)—Diocesan Planning Event, Grace Cathedral**

Don't forget to sign up for Bishop Marc's first diocesan planning event, "Building the Beloved Community" May 5 at the cathedral from 9 to 4. Registration is most easily done online. Go to [www.episcopalbayarea.org](http://www.episcopalbayarea.org) and click on the Building Beloved Community icon at the upper right.

*When:* Saturday, May 5, 2007, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

*Where:* Grace Cathedral, 1100 California Street, San Francisco

*Contact:* Fr. Rob Droste, [robdroste@sbcglobal.net](mailto:robdroste@sbcglobal.net)

### **May 5 (Saturday)—Soup Stop**

Help prepare and/or serve soup and sandwiches to the homeless in the All Saints parish hall.

*Contact:* (Church office - 510.569.7020)

### **May 9–21—Fr. Rob's Vacation**

Don't forget that Fr. Rob and Karla will be on vacation May 9–21. Amma Linda will supply and provide emergency pastoral care if needed.

### **May 13 and June 14 (Sundays)—Honoring our Mothers and Fathers**

#### **Joint 9:00 Services**

Be sure to mark your calendars for May 13 and June 14. On each of those days, we'll have a joint 9:00 a.m. service, combining the beautiful language of the Rite I service and our 10:00 music. A festive brunch will follow the service—everyone is welcome!

*May 13 brunch tickets:* Available from Kathleen Waters on May 6 at church

### **May 13 (Sunday)—United Thank Offering**

*Contact:* Gwen Page, (Church office - 510.569.7020)

### **June 9 (Saturday)—Living Peace Workshop [see article above]**

### **July 15 (Sunday)—AIDS Walk**

Walk with the parish, joining other churches in the deanery, and help stop a killer.

*Contact:* (Church office - 510.569.7020)

## Website Continues to Develop

Thanks to the irrepressible John Trubina and Bronwen Howes, All Saints' website has been taking leaps forward recently. If you haven't been there recently, [check it out!](#) Note the calendar features!

*Saints Alive!* is published monthly via email by All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Boulevard, San Leandro, California 94577.

Submit news items for the June 2007 issue to [marypat56@comcast.net](mailto:marypat56@comcast.net); deadline is **May 24**.

For changes to the parish database (names, phone numbers, addresses, or e-mail addresses), please e-mail John Trubina at [jtrubina@comcast.net](mailto:jtrubina@comcast.net). To get information on All Saints' people and programs, please visit us on the Internet at <http://www.saintsalive.net>.