



## *St. Andrew's Tidings*

*Week of March 19, 2017*

### An Unexpected Holy Lent

Like most of us I have seen Lent as the prelude to Easter morning, the season of introspection and in some cases dreariness. We are expected to sacrifice some pleasurable thing or habit as a way of making room for the coming Resurrection. If nothing more it has served me as a spiritual discipline, a sort of spiritual workout.

This year I was caught flat footed right up to Ash Wednesday. I did not know what I would be "giving up." The aging process has done a thorough job of separating me from many of my former dietary delights, no red meat, reduced salt, no coffee. Sweets and soft drink have long lost their allure. If denial of these and other pleasures were a hallmark of saintliness, then I could delude myself that I should be a candidate for canonization.

It was only just before the imposition of ashes that my mind wandered to the oppressive negativity the news has become. I could almost say crushingly oppressive. I had come to wish for an escape from all the headlines and "shocking" developments. I felt that one more case of "breaking news" would finally break me. It was then that I decided to give up the news for lent in all its forms. Maybe ignorance could be bliss.

Beginning the next morning I altered my long time habit of checking into the world via the news, a habit I have cultivated since my teen age years. The day after Ash Wednesday would be different this year. I was feeling pounded down by relentless battering of bad news, so disconnecting would be easy. Except, it left me with nothing to set my eyes upon at the breakfast table. "I wish there was some sort of Good News Network", I thought. A Google search delivered to me a website title, yes, "The Good News Network." I began reading stories about caring, compassionate people helping and caring for others; like the restaurant that maintained a coat rack outside its door filled with used coast during the

winter months. The sign reads, “If you need one take one. If you have an extra, leave one.” There was the story of two young women who befriended a homeless man. Having learned his story they bought him a plane ticket to return to his family in Finland. Millions of trees have been planted in Pakistan by volunteers. A high school students began a lunch club so no one eats alone. I began to witness the goodness that had been hiding in plain sight.

I took my Lenten fast a bit further. Instead of automatically turning on NPR as I drove about I began listening to TED Talks on my iPhone app. Great and hopeful ideas are discussed, ideas that real people are working on to improve all our lives. My sense of hopelessness was fading fast. I then had that wonderful Aha moment. If Lent is about the coming of the Resurrection then it seems to me that, at least in my case, the Resurrection has already come in the form of my dying to my addiction to news and being reborn to the goodness and hope that ordinary people exhibit toward each other and to the Earth, our island home. The Lord rises indeed, even when we are unaware.

Frank Lopez

***We need to examine the cups we bring with us to our prayer and to our worship. We need to see if they're already full of our own thoughts—and yes, prejudices. Do we give Jesus any room to fill us with the water that gushes up to eternal life?***

***—Susanna Metz.***

**Adult Formation this week: *All Creations Praise God-* words from Mirabai Starr. Led by Belle Casler**



***STATIONS OF THE  
CROSS: EVERY FRIDAY IN  
LENT, 11 A.M. FOLLOWED BY  
A LIGHT LUNCH.***

**COMING JUNE 1<sup>ST</sup>. SHARING FAITH DINNERS**

**Join tables all around our diocese for an evening of listening and sharing, plus a delicious dinner here at St. Andrew's! *For more details, contact Anne Staley at 850-624-0844***

**Children's Sunday School**

A new children's Sunday School has begun at 9 am in the Atrium (the room in the southwest corner of the church). We will be using the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd for our curriculum. This is a wonderful hands-on program to help children learn to love Jesus and their church.

**THE DIOCESE OF THE CENTRAL GULF COAST IS  
ONCE AGAIN PRESENTING**

**Discipleship Day**

March 25, 2017 at St. Jude's Episcopal Church in Niceville, Florida

Mark your calendar and let the office know if you are going! Let's have a great crowd. There will be a number of interesting workshops. We have rented a van to take everyone. Please be at the church just before 8 a.m. We will leave at 8 a.m. sharp!

**Change in Counting Procedure for**

**Sundays: We will be assigning**

**counters for after church on the new**

**Rota for April. There will also be new**

**job descriptions for each job in the**

**parish, paid and volunteers -**

**(crucifer/server, torches, etc.) This has**

**been done from time to time, and as we**

**make changes in the worship space**

**and in the office it's good to refresh.**

**IT'S COMING:  
“PROJECT RESOURCE”  
.....STAY TUNED!!**



Prayers to Go

Prayers to Go is up and running on the Hospice floor at Bay Med. Everyone who has participated reports that it is a wonderful experience. If you want to participate, and have not attended training, or have not finished training, see Tom Brewer.

## EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT MEDITATION

March 16, 2017

### EPISCOPAL RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT MEDITATION

Everywhere I visited as an international public health worker, women were eager for new ways to protect their children. In 2004, on my last trip to West Africa, we were evaluating the impact of malaria education in Burkina Faso. Women in the Winpanga Credit Association were enthusiastic about their new insecticide-treated mosquito nets. When they got up in the morning and saw dead mosquitoes on the outside of the nets, they had solid evidence that mothers and children were being protected while they slept.

The women also appreciated the information they were given about age-appropriate dosing with chloroquine to treat malaria. Now, they felt confident about educating neighbors and family members. One older woman explained, “What we like best is the solidarity of the group, that we work together. We give each other advice about caring for our children and for our husbands.”

Following the example of the women in Burkina Faso, we must never hesitate to share information or resources to assist our struggling sisters and brothers.

Sometimes our individual efforts may seem inadequate in the face of enormous challenges. But like the loaves and the fishes, God accepts our small offerings and combines them with those of others to make a real difference.— **Joanne**

**Leslie**

Archdeacon of the Diocese of Los Angeles and a retired professor of public health at UCLA.

*(Names are left on the prayer list for 3 weeks, unless specified for a longer time)*

*Please keep the following in your prayers: Bob, Virginia, Warren, Ed, Nell, Sandra, Margaret & Bill, Dr. Benton, Meagan, Ally, Rita, Cynthia, Brian, Ray, Carol, Charlie, Jesse, John, Shawn, Judy, Kate, Mat, Mike, Shirley, Juana, Cindy, Mandy, Dawn, Rick, Mary Lou, Donna, Robbie, Vickie, Anne, Mandi, Pat, Bob, Colleen, Courtney, Charlie, Glenn, Michael, Suzy, Sandra, Josh, Maggie, Debra, Theresa, Dana, Patricia & Gene, Elizabeth, Pam, Vi, Dana, Mary, Connie, Helen, Louise, John, Nel, Josh, Debra*

*We pray for our men and women in the Armed Forces at home and abroad:*

*David, Jason, Billy, Colin, Todd, Jordan, Jeremiah, Richard, James*