

"The light shines in the darkness and the darkness did not overcome it." John 1:5

# From the Rector: A Recipe for Growth

A couple of weeks ago, I shoveled the snow away from the spot in my lawn where my crocuses generally appear. I had seen crocuses in several other people's yards and was determined not to miss mine. I knew those flowers were under there somewhere, ready and eager to pop through the soil if only the snow were gone and they could get the sunlight they needed. (Certainly they had enough moisture and the soil was fine). I noticed them for the first time this weekend—just a few, but the purple buds made me really happy. It said, "Spring is near and new growth is on the way."

It is no accident that the early church celebrated Easter in the spring (at least in the Northern Hemisphere). Easter is a season of celebration and growth because of the Resurrection of Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are all invited especially at this time of year to new growth as well in the image and likeness of Jesus, to become all we were created to be.

Human beings were designed for growth. We grow physically, we grow emotionally and we grow spiritually if the conditions are right. Like the crocus, which needs rain and good soil and sunshine, there is a recipe for growth for human beings as well.

Oddly enough, three of the ingredients we need for growth call us to spend time where we are. The first of these ingredients is self-acceptance. No growth can occur unless we first accept ourselves as we are. Self-acceptance is not easy. Many of us are running from ourselves as we are in a hurry to be someone else. There is a critical voice inside our head that is telling us that what we are is not good enough. We may not know it is there, but we are often driven by it. It says, "You are not an adequate parent or worker or friend or neighbor or Christian or any number of other things." No wonder we don't want to stay around and be pestered by this voice. Instead, we become perfectionists, trying to prove our worth by never making a mistake, by always being right, so the judge in our heads is never unhappy. Of course, it is an impossible task for human beings, so the judge is always unhappy about something. Even though it does not feel good, we have to live with what makes us uncomfortable with ourselves and learn not to judge ourselves as better than or worse than or not enough to please those critical voices. They are not the voice of the Holy Spirit speaking to us, because the Spirit would bring with it a sense of peace, not anxiety. God loves us exactly as we are now, at this moment.

The next ingredient we must have to grow is the ability to live in the moment. We must be aware of what we are doing now. Most of us say we need to be multi-taskers to do all we have to do in this life. Mary Pipher says that everyone is too busy all the time. She defines multi-tasking as having a divided mind that is not fully focused on any one event. She

St. John's Episcopal Church, Arlington • The Rev. Ann Barker, Rector • April 2010 415 South Lexington Street • Arlington, VA 22204 • http://stjohnsarlington.thediocese.net Phone: 703-671-6834 • Fax: 703-671-8023 • Email: StJohnsRector@verizon.net

#### Article—Recipe for Growth

advocates mindfulness, the doing of one thing at a time.

Pipher says animals can pull us into the moment because when we are with our pets, we share their pleasure at being in the here and now. Pets allow us to take a break from chronological time because they do not live by the clock. She says interacting with children is another way to stay mindful. Children inhabit the present, she says and "we can join them in fresh experiences".

Being mindful is as hard as self-acceptance. It means we have to live in the moment and not think about the twenty-seven other things we have to do. When I am trying to be mindful during my exercise time, for example, instead of letting my mind scurry off to work, I have to say to myself that I am exercising, that I am doing grapevine steps, that I am using my arm muscles. I have to talk myself into mindfulness.

The reason living in the present is essential to our growth is because that is where God is. God is present with us now, in what we are doing. God will be present with us when we get to what we are thinking about, but in any given moment God is present in our lives in the midst of our current activity.

The third ingredient we need is patience. We cannot grow on our own timetable; it is God who directs our growth. Jesuit scholar Pierre Teilhard de Chardin says our "ideas mature gradually" and that we must "let them grow, let them shape themselves without undo haste". We cannot force them, trying to be today what time will make us tomorrow. Again we need to be where God is in our growth. We need to "do [ourselves] the favor of believing that God's hand is leading [us]" to the next level of growth.

Other ingredients for growth call us to move forward, either physically, emotionally or spiritually. Albert Einstein once said that "Nothing happens until something moves." Heather Guthrie-Hoey of the Center for Pastoral Counseling of Virginia says the smallest movement can lead to meaningful change. "With movement, little by little, we warm up the machine that is our body, the inner warmth that is our heart and the spirit that is our soul". Sometimes movement is hard. Physical movement can be difficult for those with illnesses or handicaps. Emotional

movement—reaching out—can be difficult for those with social anxiety of any kind. Spiritual movement can be hard for those stuck in a concept of God that does not work for them but who are scared to look for another one. If we are changing habits, starting new projects, working on better relationships, movement is necessary. No matter how small our start, movement is a necessity in growth because God invites us forward and walks with us.

God invites us to extend our movement past our comfort zone and that leads to the next ingredient in growth, which is risk. In order to grow, at some point we must take a risk to do something different, to be a new person, to walk with God into new territory. For growth in Christ to happen, we must risk trusting. We must do whatever our equivalent is of the team building exercise of falling backward into nothingness, trusting that the group will catch us. Our risk may be starting a new career, having a baby, letting go of work to begin a new life where we are unstructured, taking on a new volunteer task, talking to strangers or any number of other things.

The final ingredient for new growth is hope in the future. Hope that God will lead us, walk with us and follow us, as God did with the Israelites. Hope that the resurrection of Jesus is our resurrection too and that we may be confident of that reality. Hope that God keeps God's promises.

Crocuses don't have a choice about whether to grow or not, but we do. During the season we celebrate Christ's resurrection to new life and its promise for us, let us choose to grow by practicing self-acceptance, mindfulness and patience, by moving in some direction or other, by taking risks and by adopting an attitude of hope, knowing God is in the moment with us every step of the way. God is surely doing God's part. Let us do ours and see the wonder of the places we can go.

Ann

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\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\* Easter Week at St. John's March 28 Sunday of the Passion: Palm Sunday Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist Rite I—8:00 a.m. Liturgy of the Palms and Holy Eucharist Rite II—10 a.m. **April 1** Maundy Thursday Traditional Maundy Thursday Loaves and Fishes dinner, Holy Eucharist, and stripping of the Altar—6:30 p.m. This simple meal of fish, coleslaw, roll and a beverage will begin in the undercroft at 6:30 pm. After the meal, a short service incorporating the Eucharist will take place at the dinner table. After the Eucharist, the congregation will proceed to the nave where the stripping of the altar and draping of the cross will take place. The service ends with participants leaving in silence. **April 2** Good Friday Good Friday liturgy—noon and 7:00 p.m. *Cristo Rey* Good Friday liturgy—8:30 p.m. **April 3** Easter Vigil Flowering of the church 11:30 a.m. (see Upcoming Events article on page 4) Region 3 celebration of the Great Vigil of Easter—St. Andrew's, 7:30 p.m. The celebration of the *Great Vigil of Easter* is the conclusion of Region 3 Lenten series. The Great Vigil of Easter is the first service of Easter. It is held between sunset on Holy Saturday and sunrise on Easter Sunday. The Great Vigil is a moving service, beginning with the kindling of fire in darkness to light the Pascal Candle, and continuing with a service of lessons, Christian Initiation or the Renewal of Baptismal Vows, and concluding with the Holy Eucharist. It is customary for all the ordained clergy present, along with lay readers, singers, and others to take active parts in the service. If you have never experienced the Great Vigil, or just have not participated recently, mark your calendars for April 3 and make a point of attending. **April 4** The Feast of the Resurrection (Easter Sunday) Holy Eucharist Rite I—8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with children's message—10:00 a.m. No Christian Education or Children's Chapel Reception and Easter Egg Hunt following the 10 a.m. service 

# **Potluck With a Purpose**

Are you interested in reviving small groups at St. Johns? Would you like to take part in service projects in the community? Do you have ideas about activities St. Johns could be hosting? Would you enjoy not having to cook a full meal on Saturday night?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, please bring your favorite dish and join us for a "Potluck With a Purpose" on Saturday, April 17 at 6 p.m.

For more information please call the church office or contact Debbie Carter, (703)575-7969 or ddgcarter@yahoo.com.

#### The St. John's Collect

Last fall, one of our youth's Sunday school projects was taking a look at what Jesus the man did in God's service and what we at St. John's can do to imitate him. They asked the congregation to look through the Bible and find things that they thought Jesus did that were important. Then they gathered all the results together and with Del Hunt's help wrote a collect that expresses what we think we at St. John's should be doing in God's service.

On Easter Sunday, we will begin using the St. John's collect at the beginning of the Prayers of the People. We will all read it together. Copies of the collect may be found inside the Book of Common Prayer and in the service booklets.

## The St. John's Collect

Dear God, our heavenly Father, who made Christ's church for all people,

You know we want to grow the home we have found at St. John's;

We pray that you help us share the love you have given us with all who enter here,

So that St. John's may grow and accomplish all you have for us to do.

Amen.

# **Upcoming Events to Remember**

The Altar Guild invites everyone to help in flowering of the church in preparation for the celebration of Easter. The flowering will take place Saturday, April 3, beginning at 11:30 and should be finished about 2 p.m.

Spring Cleanup Day will be April 10. Bring your wheelbarrows, rakes, hoes, and clippers and help get the grounds ready for spring. Please note this is a change from the previously announced date of April 24.

Junior warden Del Hunt seeks people to help out with buildings and grounds duties and jobs both on a one-time basis and on an ongoing basis. If there is something that needs doing that you feel particularly qualified or called to do, put your name on the signup sheet in the narthex. Del asks that you sign up on that sheet even if you have already volunteered for a job.

The Morning Guild's Spring Tea is May 8 at 1 p.m. Mark your calendar to attend and remember that the Morning Guild will need "few strong men" to help with setup before and cleanup after the tea.

Cristo Rey will be holding a yard sale on May 15, to coincide with the Glencarlyn Community Yard Sale. Don't miss it.

# **AFAC Facts, Figures, Events**

On the bulletin board in the undercroft is a note that last year the St. John's community gave 800 pounds of food to the Arlington Food Assistance Center (AFAC). This is no time to rest on those laurels, however. AFAC is presently serving more people than ever and they need our support. There are many ways to support AFAC.

One way is to bring canned goods and dry goods, leave them in the basket at the back of the church, and they will be delivered directly to the food bank.

You can also go to the AFAC web site (www.afacinfo. org) and click on the "How to Give" link, where you can make a financial contribution or participate in their virtual food drive online. The virtual food drive harnesses the power of buying to get more groceries for less cost—check it out.

Under the category of doing well by doing good, you can take part in the "Shred for Bread" event. If you have paper that needs to be shredded, bring it to Little Falls Presbyterian Church on April 10, between 10

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a.m. and 1 p.m. A professional shredding company will be on hand to shred your sensitive paper and all it costs you is a donation to AFAC.

Check out the "Upcoming Events" at the AFAC web site for more ways to help the food bank and the people who depend on it.

# **February Vestry Notes**

The Vestry met on February 18 as its meeting on the 9th had to be postponed due to the snow.

The Vestry agreed that it is important to have a liaison with the Glencarlyn Civic Association; someone who can attend their regular monthly meetings, talk about St. John's and bring back to us any community issues. Nine members of the congregation live in Glencarlyn; Ann will ask one of them if they will serve as the liaison.

Ann said that we have a seminarian interested in being with us next year, beginning in September of 2010. The Vestry was enthusiastic. We have to pay Virginia Theological Seminary \$1,200 a year (in the next budget year). This money does not go directly to the seminarian but to the seminary to help defray costs for seminarians, especially those who serve in distant churches where the commute is long.

The recent snow caused cancellation of one Sunday service; Ann wondered the best way to notify parishioners of a cancellation in the future. Paul Stenger volunteered to see if a message on the church's phone can be changed from outside the church.

We suffered some damage on the eaves from the snow and ice. Del Hunt, as Junior Warden, is getting estimates from several roofing companies. Our insurance should cover most of the damage.

The boiler (which heats the church) needs cleaning and several valves replaced. Estimates are around \$2,000 for this. The Vestry approved this expense, with the money to come from the Elsie McNeely Fund.

The March vestry meeting was held March 16. March Vestry notes will appear in the next issue of LOGOS.

# St. John's Library

by Bill Schenck

Would you like to read about the history of the King James Bible? How about a commentary on the New Testament? Or one of the many books by Jan Karon? All of these, and many more, are available to you in our church library.

Our library is a small collection of books meant to be helpful to you. Unlike a regular library, our books are not listed by author or title but instead grouped by category. Each category has a different colored label. So if you are interested in church history, you find the books with that color label. Fiction books are in alphabetical order by author; other books are not alphabetized, so you have to browse the category.

Once you find a book that interests you, check it out by putting your name and the name of the book on the sheet on the credenza. Keep it as long as you want; we have no fines.

The library has been built partially through generous donations by parishioners. Donations are always accepted although not all books are kept. We might not keep a book if we already have it or a similar work or if it is not appropriate for a small library. Books not wanted are usually donated to the library at the Virginia Theological Seminary where, if not needed for their library, they are sold to seminarians at low prices.

Please direct any questions about the library to me.

#### St. John's Mission Statement

To discover and share the transforming love of Christ

### St. John's Vision Statement

St. John's is dedicated to making disciples for Jesus through

- attracting and welcoming newcomers;
- sharing faith-deepening worship, education, outreach, and pastoral care; and
- together carrying God's vision of the kingdom into the world around us.

#### **Parish News**

## Thank you

To Lynn Robinson for organizing game night

To Faye Pritchard and Jeff Wallace for coordinating our Region 3 Lenten dinner

To Del Hunt and his crew of helpers for all the work they have done on the church in the past month

To Dave Vistica and friend for removing the tree that fell on St. John's roof during the recent snow

To all our AFAC donors—we contributed more than 800 pounds of food to AFAC in 2009

To Anne Stenger, who has agreed to serve as our lay delegate to Region 3 meetings and Diocesan Council and to Paul Stenger, who will be our alternate delegate

## **April Birthdays**

Apr 2	Linda Trochim
Apr 4	Carol Dunlap
Apr 6	John Petrich
Apr 8	Evan Barker
Apr 8	Caitlin O'Connor
Apr 10	Gerard Baynham
Apr 16	Amanda Pardo
Apr 21	Sharon Tallent
Apr 24	Diane Henderson
Apr 24	Jackson Tallent
Apr 25	Valerie Wilson
Apr 26	Jim Hull
Apr 26	Sebi Pardo
Apr 26	Bob Tallent
Apr 29	Maggie Buchanan

#### **April Anniversaries**

Apr 3	William & Nancy Gibb
Apr 9	Lisa & Jud Buchanan

## What Would You Like To Read?

St. John's Book Club will meet April 6 at 7:30 p.m. to discuss *At Home in Mitford*, by Jan Karon. Book Club leader Lynn Robinson says it is an easy read, so it's not too late to borrow it from the library and read it (or listen to it on tape) before the meeting.

In addition to discussing this month's book, the April book club meeting will also take time to select the books to read and discuss in coming months. A number of books have been suggested and the April meeting is your opportunity to help make the selections.

# **Gospel Lessons for April**

# April 4, 2010, Easter Day John 20:1-18

Early on Sunday morning, before dawn, Mary Magdalene (witness to Jesus' death and burial) comes to the tomb and finds that the "stone" door has been rolled back, so she and those with her ("we", v. 2) tell "Peter" (v. 4) and "the other disciple" (v. 4, traditionally thought to be John) that they suspect that someone has removed the body. The "other disciple" apparently younger, outruns Peter (v. 5). But the orderliness of the "cloth" (v. 7) and "linen wrappings" shows that the body has neither been stolen nor spiritualized. John, when he sees, comes to trust ("believed", v. 8) that God is active; by implication, Peter does not understand yet. They do not yet understand the significance of what is occurring (v. 9), of how it fits into God's plan, because they have not yet received the Holy Spirit.

Mary, still thinking that the body has been moved, has returned to the cemetery. In her grief, she sees "two angels in white" (v. 12), heavenly messengers. She recognizes Jesus when he calls her by name. But something has changed: they are in a new relationship: "do not hold on to me" (v. 17). To John the evangelist, Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection, exaltation and return to heavenly glory, his ascension, are parts of a single event.

# April 11, 2010, Second Sunday of Easter John 20:19-31

Early on Easter Day, Mary Magdalene has discovered that Jesus' body is missing from the tomb; the stone

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door is open, so it looks as though someone has stolen it (v. 1). She has seen a man standing near the tomb. When he speaks to her, she recognizes him as Jesus. She has told the disciples: "I have seen the Lord" (v. 18).

Later the same day, Jesus joins the disciples, gathered behind locked doors. He shows them that he is the one who was crucified (v. 20). Jesus confers on "the disciples" (not including Thomas, but perhaps a group larger than the ten) "peace" (vv. 19, 21) and "the Holy Spirit" (v. 22). As God "breathed" life into Adam, the proto-human, so Jesus now breathes the new, spiritual, life of recreated humanity into his followers. Aided by the Spirit, they continue Jesus' judicial role in the world, forgiving the sins of the faithful and holding others blameworthy ("retain", v. 23) for their actions. Thomas is expected to believe without having seen, but he demands: show me the evidence! (v. 25)

The next Sunday, the community gathers again (v. 26). Upon seeing, Thomas makes the most complete affirmation of faith of anyone in the gospel (v. 29). Henceforth the faith of all Christians in all ages will rest on the testimony of the first believers. Vv. 30-31 tell us John's purpose in writing the book. His eyewitness account is intended to help us, who were not witnesses of Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension to "come to believe" and thus "have life in his name", eternal life.

# April 18, 2010, Third Sunday of Easter John 21:1-19

Since his resurrection, Jesus has twice appeared to the disciples in the house where he hosted the Last Supper. Now he appears to six disciples near the Sea of Galilee ("Tiberias", v. 1). Led by Peter, they go fishing but catch nothing. When they return to the shore in the morning, Jesus is there. When he invites them to cast their net again, they catch many fish (v. 6). One (probably John) recognizes him now (v. 7); the others do later. V. 10 looks odd, for some fish is already on the fire (v. 9), but it leads into the eucharistic scene in vv. 12-13. In John 6, the Feeding of the Five Thousand, Jesus has blessed a meal of bread and fish. (The significance of "a hundred [and] fifty-three", v. 11, is unknown.)

Jesus asks Peter about his love for him (v. 15). Peter avoids comparisons with "these", the other disciples. Jesus asks three times—a reversal of Peter's denial of

him; each time Jesus tells him: feed/tend my lambs/ sheep. V. 18 begins with a proverbial saying: in old age, we lack the mobility and freedom of movement we had when young. But Peter's life will be cut short: he will either be bound a prisoner, or be crucified ("stretch out ..."). In 13:37-38, Peter offers to follow Jesus even to laying down his life for him. Now Jesus says: "Follow me" (v. 19). Tradition says that Peter was crucified too.

## April 25, 2010, Fourth Sunday of Easter, John 10:22-30

Jesus' claim to oneness with God and pre-existence with him (8:58) has aroused some listeners. Some think he is demented but others doubt it, for he heals (vv. 20-21). Later, at Hanukkah ("Dedication", v. 22), Jesus is in a cloister in the Temple grounds ("the portico of Solomon", v. 23). They ask whether he is the "Messiah" (v. 24), the one whom Jews expected to come to establish a godly kingdom. To understand the answers he has given requires faith—which they lack. His Godly actions ("works", v. 25) show who he is. To those who do believe, who are his "sheep" (v. 27), he gives "eternal life" (v. 28) and assurance that they will not be condemned to annihilation ("perish") at the end-time. He will ensure that they remain his. What his Father has given him (v. 29) is a "command" (v. 18): that through his voluntary sacrifice on the cross and return to life he will bring his "sheep" (followers) to oneness with both the Father and the Son (vv. 14-18).

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#### **LOGOS**

The LOGOS is published nine times a year in February, March, April, May, July, September, October, November, and December near the beginning of the month.

Dave Dunlap, LOGOS Editor

Jane Edwards, LOGOS Editor and Page Layout

Email Dave at dave\_dunlap@yahoo.com (preferred) or leave info in newsletter box in the office.

The next deadline is Thursday, April 15 at 10 am.

## St. John's Calendar

#### **April** Wed 28 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Thu 29 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. Thu 1 Maundy Thursday Traditional Meal & Stripping of the Altar, 6:30 p.m. May Fri 2 Good Friday Liturgy, 12 noon and 7 p.m. Sun 2 Fifth Sunday of Easter Cristo Rey Good Friday Liturgy, 8:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Sat 3 Flowering the Church for Easter, 11:30 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Great Vigil of Easter celebrated by Region 3 Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. at St. Andrew's, 7:30 p.m. Education for Ministry, 6 p.m. Feast of the Resurrection (Easter Sunday) Sun 4 Tue 4 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Wed 5 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. No Christian Education or Children's Chapel Thu 6 Morning Guild, 10 a.m. Reception and Easter Egg Hunt following Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. the 10 a.m. service Sat 8 Morning Guild Spring Tea, 1 p.m. Tue 6 St. John's Book Club, 7:30 p.m. Sixth Sunday of Easter Sun 9 Wed 7 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Thu 8 Morning Guild, 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. Education for Ministry, 6 p.m. Sat 10 Spring Clean-up outdoors, 9 a.m. – noon Tue 11 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m. Second Sunday of Easter Sun 11 Wed 12 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Thu 13 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m. Sat 15 Education for Ministry, 6 p.m. Sun 16 Seventh Sunday of Easter Tue 13 Vestry Meeting, 7 p.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Wed 14 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. Thu 15 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. Education for Ministry, 6 p.m. LOGOS deadline, 10:00 a.m. Wed 19 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Sat 17 Men's Fellowship, 8 a.m. Potluck with a Purpose, 6 p.m. Thu 20 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. Sun 18 Third Sunday of Easter Sun 23 Day of Pentecost Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. Education for Ministry, 6 p.m. Education for Ministry, 6 p.m. Wed 21 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Wed 26 Candlelight Prayer Service, 7:30 p.m. Thu 22 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. Thu 27 Choir Practice, 7:30 p.m. Sun 25 Fourth Sunday of Easter Sun 30 Trinity Sunday Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite I, 8 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Christian Formation for all ages, 9 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. Holy Eucharist Rite II, 10 a.m. Education for Ministry, 6 p.m. Education for Ministry, 6 p.m.

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St. John's Episcopal Church 415 South Lexington Street Arlington VA 22204 703-671-6834 http://stjohnsarlington.thediocese.net

Next deadline is Thursday, April 15 at 10:00 a.m.

# **Time Sensitive Material—Please Deliver Promptly**

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Organist: Carol Dunlap

Parish Administrator: Virginia Pearson

Sexton: Justiniano Garay

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Editor: Dave Dunlap

Page Layout and Webmaster: Jane Edwards