



Another Reason to Buy Into Our Dreams: Secret Gift

It's a Big Fish Fry That Almost Wasn't

"Father, take a look at that mail on your desk!"

When almost 50 people came together Friday night

Parish Treasurer Greg Duckett doesn't very often tell Fr. Whitlock what to do, but last Friday he had a very good reason.

In an envelope lying on our priest's desk was an unexpected, anonymous check for \$6000.

It came through The Community Foundation of Tampa Bay so that our parish benefactor, a new friend of St. Augustine's, could remain anonymous.

"I love the spirit at St. Augustine's," our newest benefactor said.

"I think you are so committed to working together to serve in your neighborhood."

Obviously this person feels sure of us. Does this mean the donor reads this newsletter? Worships with us from time to time? Attends our social functions? Checks out our web site?

Our patron added, "I wanted to help."

Have we finally been "telling our story" with more conviction? Are we "on fire" now, with a stronger sense of mission? Is there truly something different this year? Maybe we see a little more clearly. Maybe we have lost our reticence to describe this "newness" as the Spirit at work?

"I'd like to be a part of what you are doing," the donor said. "Something brave that will extend your mission beyond what you thought possible."

"This could be seed money for extending our parish facility," thought Joyce Corn, Jr. Warden. "Remember that last month we received a generous gift from St. Thomas' parish," she added. And last summer, Mary Clowers remembered, "just out of the blue, we got \$4500 from St. George's parish across the Skyway Bridge.

Fr. Whitlock responded that he had "talked with our parish treasurer about creating a dedicated fund for future capital improvements at St. Augustine's."

"What's an appropriate continued on back page

St. Augustine's Episcopal Church

invites the Faithful of St. Petersburg to:



A Pentecost Celebration on the Beach

Filled with the Joy of the Holy Spirit!

Sunday June 4, 2006 at 10:00 am

Fort De Soto Beach, Shelter #6, North Beach



"And All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability" Acts 2:4

Embracing Diversity - ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ ✠ - Proclaiming Justice

Soul Filled Music, Lively Liturgy, and Prophetic Prayers for those who do not yet know the Power of the Spirit! Join Us!



Above is a smaller-size copy of the 4 x 7" ad published in the June 1 issue of The Weekly Challenger. Fr. Whitlock drew up the ad and placed it in hopes that more people would be drawn to the mix of excitement and vitality that is St. Augustine's.

Parish Summer Schedule

June 11th, 18th, 25th and July 2nd

at 9 am, St. Augustine's Fr. Jack Hyde celebrating

July 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th

at 9 am, St. Augustine's Fr. Lee Jaster celebrating

for another successful St. A's Fish Fry, Nate Jones' famous recipe for fresh mullet fed them all, plus another dozen take-outs.

But this time the event demanded extra effort. After a nice showing Thursday morning to clean the fish, Chef Jones expressed real doubt about the quality of that mullet catch. It had been acquired from a new source and it disappointed him, so he returned it and went shopping elsewhere. That meant that another fish-cleaning session had to be squeezed in on Friday morning with only five sets of hands. Now that's commitment.

This time the Fish Fry even had a live music jam with Laura & Emile DeCosmo, and four guest performers: guitarists Charlie Jones and Rockin Robin Whitlock, clarinetist Auriel James and newly-recruited vocalist Shirley Davis.

This newsletter is for members and friends of one courageous Episcopal Church in south St. Petersburg, FL. "... more\* from St. Augustine's" is about candor, recognition, spiritual attitude, nixing hearsay and, yes, unashamed cheer leading. Members Judy and Tom Krug are the weekly's co-editors. Some 65 parishioners are essential to the effort. Every issue is available each Sunday after the service and also online at www.staugstpete.org, our web site for church-shoppers.

## You Gotta Be Curious ...

Remember last summer and **what a hurry** Holy Cross church's new owner was in? Well, almost 11 months later that Episcopal Church is gone and 7 of the 24 houses planned for that property have been sold. None are yet completed. Many of the artifacts of that church building live on at St. Augustine's and other diocesan churches.

It's been six months already that **Fr. Robin Whitlock** has been our half-time Priest-in charge. As he leaves next week on a long-planned vacation/retreat with his family (see story this issue), it's good to realize what we have achieved together. Parish reorganization, specific planning, 2 major grant applications, 2 baptisms, 2 memorial services and a wedding -- in addition to "having been available to people when they needed me," Fr. Robin says.

Plus we know the intangible but undeniable **change in spirit** within our congregation. Will we sustain that spirit through another summer's heat?

Surely we all have wished the newlyweds our best. **Hazel Hudson** and **Bobby Allen** were married here May 20. They honeymooned on Hilton Head, SC and are now back in town, merging households.

For two months this summer, while we have supply priests (see box on page 1), parishioners can call either **Sr. Warden Mary Clowers** or **Jr. Warden Joyce Corn** to request spiritual help from our supply priests. Mary and Joyce's phone numbers are listed on the bottom of this page.

"Nurse Knox. **Paging Nurse Ericka Knox.**" Now it's not a dream, because next Thursday Ericka, a second career mother in her 40's, will be honored at PTEC's Pinning Ceremony. She says that event is "the passing of the torch from nurses to the new nursing graduates." Ericka will soon graduate as a Licensed Practical Nurse. "It's the culmination of all my studying and nursing practice. I just know I'll be emotional," she says. "Receiving this pin is my motivation to continue school until I get my Bachelors in Nurs-ing. That's my next goal." With daughters **Jericka** at the University of Florida in Gainesville and **LeQuina** beginning high school in fall, this mom is thinking of staying nearby for her degree -- "either St. Pete College or USF, I think."

Today, Pentecost, we remember with the symbols of **wind, flame and dove** how the Holy Spirit came to the first disciples. "I love the symbols of Pentecost," Fr. Whitlock says. "I used them on my Ordination Announcement." He maintains that the Spirit speaks in so many ways, some very subtle, others more obvious. "Mostly, I've learned to hear the Spirit -- the echo of God's voice -- when people tell their faith stories."

At last Sunday's after-service parish meeting, there seemed to be no wiggling, coughing or glances at watches. Members, friends and even guests stayed 45 minutes after the recessional hymn to see the details of this church's five year plan projected on a screen -- just as the plan was incorporated in the 2020 Grant Proposal to the diocese.

Reactions from parishioners? "It's about time for a plan like this," said one. "To achieve these goals -- anything you want me to do, I'll do it," said another. "We need to look at this again and again," Inez Ford said, while requesting that the projected slides be printed and distributed to members. "This is what we are all committing to do."

## Secret Donor

*continued*

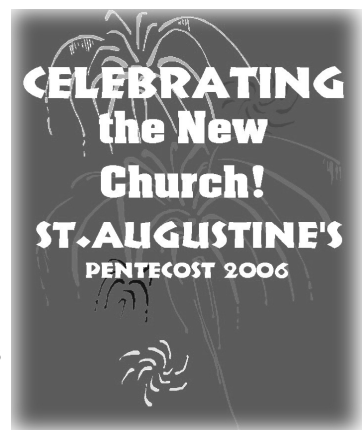
response to a gift like this? How should we say "Thank you"?

"God has been so good to us," **Lula Caines** said. "We just keep praying and honoring Him."

Greg Duckett thinks to meet routine expenses we keep up our pledges and pay bills with pledged money instead of having to dip into these gifts.

**Mary Jones** was all smiles when she heard about the gift. "We have to keep on working hard. We can't let up now. I know we can do this."

"Our best response is to use this wonderful gift to accomplish our dreams," Fr. Whitlock said. "We stay open to the Spirit. We tell our story, grow and fill our facilities."



This is the artwork on 61 Pentecost-red tee shirts at today's annual Picnic and Mass on the Beach. Following Fr. Robin's lead, the design is from Tom Krug.

### Who Ya Gonna Call This Summer? Our Elected Parish Council, The Vestry:

Sr. Warden: Mary Clowers 864-3568

Jr. Warden: Joyce Corn 540-0655

Clerk of the Vestry: Shirley Davis 866-1499

Parish Treasurer: Greg Duckett 866-1508

Inez Ford 327-9693

Rudy Gabbidon 866-1077

Michael Griffin 823-5933

Hazel Hudson-Allen 343-4157

Mary Jones 867-7702

Judy Krug 525-5044

Claude Reynolds 422-2395

Louise Stroude 866-2818

## Genesis Light

After creating heaven and earth, God made man and woman.

The first thing He said was, "Don't!"

"Don't what?" Adam asked.

"Don't eat the forbidden fruit," God commanded.

"Forbidden fruit? We have forbidden fruit? Hey, Eve, we've got forbidden fruit."

"No way, Adam."

"Oh, yes we do. God told me so!"

"DO NOT EAT THAT FRUIT," God warned.

"Whhhhy?"

"Because I said so and I am your father," God replied, wondering why he hadn't stopped all his creating with making elephants.

A few minutes later God saw his children enjoying an apple break and he was ticked!

"Didn't I tell you not to eat that fruit?" God asked.

"Yeah," Adam answered.

"Then why did you?"

"I don't know," Eve said.

"She started it," Adam shouted.

"I did not!"

"Did too!"

"Did NOT!"

Having had it with the two of them, God decided that the best tactic would be for Adam and Eve to have children of their own.

Thus the pattern was set and has never changed.

So don't be too hard on yourself when your children and grandchildren don't listen to you. If God had trouble raising his children, what makes you think it should be a piece of cake for you?

## Envy in Paradise

When Bill Gates passed on, he went up to heaven where St. Peter showed him to his house. It was a beautiful 16 room place with landscaped yard, swimming pool and tennis courts. Bill was pleased and spent many happy times there.

One day while he was strolling through one of heaven's lovely parks, he met a man dressed in an expensively tailored suit. "That's a very fine suit, my friend," Bill said to the man. "Where did you get it? I'd like one myself."

"Actually," replied the man, "I'd be happy to give you one; I got a hundred of them when I got here. And I got a mansion on a hill overlooking a lake, yachts, a golf course and three Rolls Royces."

Totally amazed, Bill asked "You must have been the Pope. Or a doctor who performed miraculous cures."

"Oh no. I was the captain of the Titanic."

Baffled, Bill stalked off to corner St. Peter. "How could you give me a paltry house while you showered exotic cars, a mansion and exquisite suits on a guy who was just captain of the Titanic? I invented the Windows operating system, for heaven's sake!"

"Yes, and we use Windows here," replied St. Peter. "But the Titanic only crashed once."

## GOD SPEAKS IN WONDROUS WAYS

Many years ago, an ardent Episcopal priest preached a dramatic temperance sermon. With great fervor he said, "If I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river. Every bit of it." "Amen," shouted his parish.

Even more strident than before, he continued, "If I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it into the river."

Then, really on a roll, he declared, "If I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take it and pour it too into the river."

Sermon complete, the rector pounded the pulpit one last time and sat down just as the organist began the final hymn: *Shall We Gather at the River*.

## Tomorrow Night Vestry Gets Summer Assignments

The agenda for the monthly vestry meeting Monday night will include a "To-Do List".

"I want to pull some jobs out of our parish plan – some summer homework assignments for vestry members," Fr. Robin said.

Such as?

1. Completing the parish map showing where all of our members live.
2. Repairing the ceilings in Ford Hall so that the two back rooms are useable spaces again.
3. Checking and completing our official list of members.

"These jobs will be reasonable and, I hope, individualized for specific people," he said.

Junior Warden **Joyce Corn** agreed. "Summer is no time to slack off, for the vestry or for the parish."

"Last summer, by working together we really became good friends, I thought -- partners, in fact," **Judy Krug** believes. "I hope we have goals again this summer that involve the whole parish."

## Whitlock's Family Retreat

"It's not so much a typical vacation as it is a retreat." Fr. Robin was describing his family's upcoming time away. "Every summer we head to Michigan, to a 111 year old resort of twenty-three Victorian cottages on a bluff overlooking the shore of Lake Michigan. The family I grew up in has been going there since 1910."

It's not grand, he says. They just got a phone seven years ago. They take an old computer with a dial-up modem "just to check e-mail."

"It's an *On Golden Pond* kind of experience," Fr. Robin says referring to the popular movie of a decade ago. "We truly are forced to separate ourselves from the modernization of the world. In that sense, it really is a retreat."

They read, sit on the porch, talk with neighbors. "It'll take me fully a week to stop asking myself what I should be doing," he added.

Toward the end of the Whitlock's time away, they will visit past haunts and good friends in England. As a young university student, Fr. Whitlock spent an academic year in London at Kings' College. "This will be a time to reconnect," he said.

Fr. Whitlock will be back at St. A's August 1st and leading our worship on August 6th.