

NOVA notes

NOVA Catholic Community

March 2010

Chair Notes.....

Grace Birch Memorial – Saturday March 13

Every time I greeted Grace Birch she smiled at me. That smile came from a well of goodness and peace inside her that was as wonderful as it was inexhaustible. We will join together in a Mass for Grace on Saturday, March 13, 2:00pm, at Sleepy Hollow Manor /Golden Living Center, in the Crystal Room, 6700 Columbia Pike, Annandale, VA 22003 (across from Mason District Park). Father Quinn Connors will say the Mass. For those who wish, we will begin saying the rosary at 1:00 p.m. Immediately following mass is an Agape. If you wish, you may add to the refreshments. Further details are in the announcement that Grace's family (link below).



Grace Birch Memorial Service.pdf

General Meeting – Saturday March 13

We will be making some decisions at this meeting on the issues of alternative presiders and sharing ideas for supporting Womenpriests as well as a new "Calling Forth" process.

On the issue of Community-Led liturgies and alternative presiders, we will cover the following points:

1. Review of decisions already made on community-led liturgies and orientation to our new Community-Led liturgy model.
2. Orientation to consensus-based decision process suggested by Ken Himes.
3. We will call for new decisions following from our year long discussions on the following topics:

- a. Whether to schedule Community-Led liturgies two or three times throughout the year on those Sundays when it is particularly difficult to get a priest.
- b. Whether when NOVA plans a formally Eucharistic liturgy (mass), presiders will be canonically approved priests only.
- c. Whether when NOVA plans a Community-Led liturgy, the community is open to having ordained Christian ministers outside the Catholic Church take a leadership role in the liturgy at the invitation of the planners for that day.
- d. Whether when NOVA plans a Community-Led liturgy, the community is open to having laicized, married or suspended Catholic priests take a leadership role in the liturgy at the invitation of the planners for that day.

We may also consider idea(s) and ways to support Womenpriests.

We will consider and decide on an idea to experiment with a new Calling Forth process this year. The proposal is that after some community discussion of the challenges facing the community, a group composed of the co-chairs for the last three years would receive and/or gather suggestions from the community on candidates for co-chair. This group would identify a candidate or candidates willing to serve and propose them with the selection group's endorsement at the Calling Forth meeting in May. Anyone could also nominate a candidate at the May meeting itself. Those present would select the co-chair(s). The bulk of time at the Calling Forth meeting would be devoted to members renewing their commitment to serve in the many roles that keep NOVA moving. (*Continued on page 2.*)

Chair Notes (continued from previous page)

Model for Community Led Liturgy Now Available

The NOVA liturgy on January 31 was cancelled due to snow, but besides that, the scheduled presider was sick and unable to be with us. The planners were scrambling at the last-minute to plan a Community-Led liturgy, and we discovered that it was difficult to do because we weren't sure which of several versions of the Community-Led liturgy model was the most complete and, also, because of snow, the planners couldn't easily produce 60 copies of a new program. In order to be better prepared for the unplanned absence of a presider, we have produced a finished format based on the Community-Led liturgy format that was presented to the community last October and approved last December after several iterations. Two documents were produced. First, there is the "Community-Led Liturgy doc" that is meant for planners/leaders only and as a guide for the Program. Second, there is "The Bread Breaking Prayer" that will be printed and laminated in the next few weeks, so that 65 copies will be on hand in the closet for any Community-Led liturgy as needed. Let Gloria or me (Tom) know if there is any last "tweaking" you think should happen on this before it's "etched in stone." Links to both of the above-mentioned documents are below.



2009-12 Community Led Liturgy.pdf



2009-12 Bread Breaking Prayers for

Ad in the Washington Post

Keep an eye out for an ad in the Sunday Washington Post publicizing the small Catholic communities in the area, like NOVA. The ad includes a web site address. When people go to that website they will find links to the websites of the communities who are sponsoring the ad. Here's the website address:

www.smallcatholiccommunities.info The ad is an experiment and will run through Lent. The purpose is to let people know we're here and it may generate some new visitors, so be sure to let any newcomers you see on Sunday know that we welcome them.

Lenten Theme: "Wake Up and Listen"

The Lenten planning committee's theme for Lent is "Wake Up and Listen." The planners have asked all of us to share with the NOVA community at Mass on the Sundays of Lent some of the "messengers" that have spoken to us. Bring pictures or quotes and pin them on the altar screens during Lent. John Tarrant and Marlene Shade planned and hosted the Ash Wednesday service. The readings reminded us that as long as we're breathing it's never too late to do better at pleasing God. Please listen attentively this Lent to the soft but insistent call of God in your life.

—Tom Clarkson

NOVA is praying for...

Sonja Donahue, who would love a card, a call or a visit.

Peggy Meyer, who is in Mount Vernon Hospital and would also love visitors, a call, or a card.

Meg Tuccillo, who is recovering from a serious fall and is in the hospital (no visitors at this time, but cards may be mailed to her home).

Remember these and any other NOVA members, their friends and family, who need our prayers, and, during this Lenten season, keep in mind the need to connect with one another. A short phone call, a note card, or an e-mail to just say "Hi - I'm thinking of you today," could go a long way toward lifting someone's spirit during these cold winter days.



2010: A snowfall to remember . . .
or maybe to forget

NOVA Photos:

March Birthdays

NOVA Message Line	(703) 852-7907
Chairpersons	Tom Clarkson Gloria Mog
Treasurer	Joe Formoso
Coordinator, Community Life	Cece Michelotti
Liturgy Coordinator	Jeanne Clarkson
Padre Cadre Coordinator	John Mooney
Music Coordinator	Victoria Robinson
Peace & Justice Coordinators	Dianne Carroll Marie Keefe
Christ House Coordinator	Kopp Michelotti
Facilities	Glenn Passin
Newsletter Editor	Judy Christofferson

- 2 Helen Gettys Michie
- 7 John Tarrant
- 8 Cece Michelotti
Eric Robinson
Peter Reich
Kate Connelly
- 9 Marlene Shade
John Iskander
Michael Kane
- 10 Joe Barrett
- 12 Jim Todaro
- 13 Mary Mele
- 14 Bill Meyer
- 19 Mali Kane
- 20 Kathy Scheimer
- 25 Ilse Lath-Cruces
- 26 Charlie Bailey
Brian Schmidt
Mari Carmen Mariscal
- 28 Michael Iskander

The NOVA Catholic Community Invites You To Celebrate The Eucharistic Liturgy With Us Every Sunday in Arlington, Virginia.

Note: Our Liturgy is usually celebrated at Kenmore Middle School, Arlington Blvd. and Carlin Springs Rd, Arlington, VA. Beginning Memorial Day weekend up to our Fall Retreat weekend in September, we celebrate at Lacey Woods Park, George Mason Drive near Washington Blvd., unless otherwise noted.

Liturgies at Kenmore begin at 10:15 a.m.
Gather at 10:00 a.m.
Liturgies at Lacey Woods begin at 9:30 a.m.
Gather at 9:15 am

Call the Message Line (above) or check the NOVA website for the latest information.

*April Newsletter Deadline –
March 26*

Please send Judy Christofferson your birthday if you would like it to appear here (month/day only).



NOVA Lenten Banners with 2010 Theme

Liturgies: Cycle C

Inclusive Readings and Music Selections are available in the new NOVA Yahoo Group Files.
Please give all music selections to the Music Liaison the Sunday before your liturgy.
Liturgies at Kenmore begin at 10:15 a.m.

March Music Liaison Barbara Formoso

March 7 - Third Sunday of Lent

Jim Hug, SJ - Kopp and Cece Michelotti
Exodus 3:1-8, 13-15
Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 6-7, 8, 11
1 Corinthians 10:1-6, 10-12
Luke 13: 1-9

March 14 - Fourth Sunday of Lent

Quinn Connors, O.Carm. - Arabians,
Christies and O'Tooles
Joshua 5:9, 10-12
Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7
2 Corinthians 5:17-21
Luke 15:1-3, 11-32

March 21 - Fifth Sunday of Lent

Joe Kenna - Barbara and Joe Formoso
Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6
Philippians 3:8-14
John 8:1-11

March 28 - Palm Sunday

Bill Callahan - Mike Timpane, Teddi Ahrens,
and others
Luke 19:28-40
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Philippians: 2: 6-11;
Luke 22:14; 23; 56 *or* 23:1-49
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
Matthew 2:1-12

April 1 - Holy Thursday

Joe Kenna - Holy Thursday Team
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
Psalm 116:12-13, 15-16, 17-18
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

April Music Liaison Tom Clarkson

April 2 - Good Friday

Meg Tuccillo
Isaiah 52:12; 53:12
Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25
Luke 23:46; Hebrews 4:14-16; 5: 7-9
John 18:1-19; 42

April 3 - Easter Vigil

Quinn Connors, O.Carm. - Helen Michie
Genesis 1:1-2:2, *or* 1:1, 26-31
Psalm 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35 (30)
or Psalm 33: 4-5, 6-7, 12-13, 20-22
Genesis 22:1-18 *or* 22:1-2, 9, 10-13, 15-18
Psalm 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11
Exodus 14:15- 15:1; Exodus 15:1-6, 17-18
Isaiah 54:5-14; Psalm 30:2-6, 11-13
Isaiah 55:1-11; Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6
Baruch 3:9-15, 32- 4: 4; Psalm 19:8-11
Ezekiel 36:16-17, 18-28
Psalm 42: 3, 5, 43: 3, 4 *or* Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6
Romans 6:3-11; Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Luke 24:1-12

April 11 - Second Sunday of Easter

Joe Kenna - Kate Doherty
Acts of the Apostles 5: 12-16
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
Revelation 1:9-11, 12-13, 17-19
Victimae Paschali Laudes
John 20:19-31

April 18 - Third Sunday of Easter

Bill Callahan - Clyde and Judy Christofferson
Acts of the Apostles 5:27-32, 40-41
Psalm 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13
Revelations 5:11-14;
John 21:1-19 *or* 21: 1-14

April 25 - Fourth Sunday of Easter

Quinn Connors, O. Carm. - Cackley Family
Acts of the Apostles 13:14, 43-52
Psalm 100:1-2, 3, 4
Revelations 7:9, 14-17
John 10:27-30

Holy Week and Easter Liturgies

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 28

Where: Kenmore Middle School
Time: 10:15 a.m.
Presider: Bill Callahan



HOLY THURSDAY, APRIL 1

Where: The Center for Spiritual Enlightenment (formerly the Woman's Club of Falls Church) 222 N. Washington Street, Falls Church, one block north of Route 7)
Time: Gather: 6:30-6:45 p.m. Liturgy: 7:00 p.m.
Presider: Joe Kenna

This is the one NOVA occasion where space is limited and an RSVP is required. Please call Cathy Goldschmidt by March 27 to let her know how many will attend and to receive your meal assignment. Thanks!

GOOD FRIDAY, APRIL 2

Where: Kenmore Middle School
Time: 8:00 p.m.
Presider: Meg Tuccillo

EASTER VIGIL, SATURDAY APRIL 4

Where: Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Fairfax, 2709 Hunter Mill Rd., Oakton, VA 22124 (main sanctuary)
Time: Gather: 7:15 p.m. Liturgy: 7:30 p.m.
Presider: Quinn Conners, O.Carm.

In keeping with past custom, there will be an Agape following the Easter Vigil liturgy. Please bring finger food to share. Beverages will be provided.

Volunteer Projects/Opportunities

Ongoing Need for Gunston Volunteers

Nova volunteers distribute bags of non-perishable food, cereal provided by NOVA members, and perishable items such as eggs, milk, and meat that are picked up at the Arlington Food Assistance Center warehouse on the night of distribution. Produce items are picked up every other week by Eric Carroll at the produce markets downtown (and funded by the Nova Peace & Justice budget). The distribution takes place at the Gunston Middle School Recreation Center in Arlington. Many volunteers have been active in this project for many years. All love their work and would be glad to teach new Nova folks how it's done. So if you would like to volunteer: email Dianne Carroll

Also

remember to bring cereal to Sunday liturgies.

March Schedule (Blanks indicate volunteers are needed.):

March 4: Ann/Don, Cathy G

March 11: _____

March 18: Tim, Jerry,

March 25: Glen, Syd,

MS Walk

The **Multiple Sclerosis walk** is in April again this year. The MOM Team will be walking on Sunday, April 11. The walk will be in Reston, starting at the Reston Town Center. Check in is from 8:30 to 10:00 a.m. Kirsten Carroll-Teal is the Team Captain. If you would like more information about participating in the walk or sponsoring a walker, contact Dianne Carroll or Linda Rosenberg.

[Click here to view the team page for MOM Team](#)

Care of the Earth

Contrary to what you might have thought, the Care of the Earth group, which grew out of last year's Social Justice Meeting, has not disappeared. We have been hibernating somewhat. Some of us are

reappearing for a limited showing in 2010. We welcome anyone who would like to work with us this year. Our "program" will be to celebrate the rhythm of the Earth in four liturgical events which we hope will move us as individuals and as a community a few steps further in our quest to live more in harmony with the Creative Spirit, which gives life to us all. We hope to collaborate with the liturgy planners who will be developing the liturgies closest to the four major seasonal events: the Spring Equinox, the Summer Solstice, the Fall Equinox and the Winter Solstice. Our involvement might include any/all of the following: liturgical readings, development of the theme for the liturgy, a symbol or sign present in the physical environment, a project to occur that day, or some form of education or commitment to behavior change. So far the group includes: Marlene Shade, Tim White, Marie Keefe, David Mog, Peggy Becker and Jeannie Clarkson. We are including the chairs, Tom Clarkson and Gloria Mog in our communication. We will be planning via email and telephone for the most part. We would welcome any level of participation anyone else offers. Please let one of us know if you are interested. The Fall Equinox falls during the weekend of our Annual Retreat!

— Peggy Becker

Help the Homeless in Virginia

Social Action Linking Together (SALT) asks that you contact your state delegate and senator to urge them to restore funding for homeless programs. In these times of extreme need, homeless shelter programs are being cut 21% in 2011 and 41% in 2012. The Homeless Intervention Program (HIP) that prevents homelessness before it begins by keeping families in their own homes is being eliminated. HIP provides housing at about half the cost of emergency shelters and frees up shelter space for some of the 51,315 Virginians turned away last year. For information on how to contact your legislators, visit www.S-A-L-T.org and click on "Contact Your Legislator." Questions? Contact John Horejsi at jhorejsi@cox.net.

Upcoming NOVA Events and Recent Liturgy Photos

Save the Dates

Saturday, March 13

- 10:00 a.m.** Paper presented by Quinn Connors, O. Carm.
WTU, 6896 Laurel St., NW, Washington., DC
- 2:00 p.m.** Memorial Service for Grace Birch
- 5:30 p.m.** Nova General Meeting (with pot-luck), Barretts' Party Room

Sunday, April 11

- 7:00-9:00 p.m.** Nova Nite, Barretts' Party Room

Saturday, May 8

- 5:30-9:30 p.m.** Calling Forth Meeting (with pot-luck), Place TBA



Tom Clarkson at Community Sharing Time



Father Dan Madigan - February 14 Liturgy



Jim Todaro with Granddaughter Elisabeth



Father Joe Kenna - Feb. 21

Thank You Letters

Thank you from Rose Barrett to the Community:

I so much appreciate the food, flowers, cards, emails and prayers from Nova Community members during my recent radiation treatment. It was a great comfort for me to know that others were there for me during my recovery. It's wonderful to be part of such a caring, supportive community.

Letter received by Carolyn Miller from Sister Adriana Torvar in the South Sudan-Nile region of Africa (a NOVA Social Action project):

Dear Carolyn and Nova Community,

Greetings of peace and joy from Leer. Thank you very much for your love and care for us here in South Sudan. This month has been full of excitement. At the beginning of January, Sister Myriam and I asked the young mothers what they would like to learn. They asked for classes on agriculture and crop production. This week 42 women began an Agriculture course in the Vocational Training Center of the Mission. . . . The two teachers and students in the Vocational Training Center, are beginning their second year of training. In the meantime, they are already passing on their knowledge to their own people. This is a joy for us missionaries.

Another is seeing students get ready for the National Examination. From the 12 female students in "Primary Eight" who participated recently in the entrance exam for Loretto Secondary School for Girls in Rumbek, three passed the exam and interview. We are to sponsor them. I am finalizing the agreement with the school and with their parents so they will travel with me to Rumbek. . . . This is something new and we hope that everything will go well. The girls are very excited. Please pray for us.

We are also trying to facilitate the training of 50 teachers among the Nuer people here in Leer. Sister Agata is preparing to teach a group of St. Bakhita children. There are about 60 boys and girls from 10 to 14 years of age in this group. The situation in the country is very tense because of the coming elections, but with confidence in God's providence we have to go on and bring hope to the people.

I am sending you a picture of my community. It was taken in November. . . .Construction at the back is the Kindergarten, which we hope to open soon.

Greetings to each one of you, and thank you for what you share with us.

A big hug.

Con carino,
Adriana



Theology for a Small Planet

A collection of essays by Clyde Christofferson © 2009-2010

Part 2: From Kindness to Social Justice

B. Life and Society

The most difficult subjects can be explained to the most slow-witted man if he has not formed any idea of them already; but the simplest thing cannot be made clear to the most intelligent man if he is firmly persuaded that he knows already, without a shadow of a doubt, what is laid before him. – Leo Tolstoy, from Chapter III “Christianity Misunderstood by Believers” in **The Kingdom of God is Within You** (originally published 1893)

We are a stiff necked people, as the good book says many times (Exodus 32:9; 33:3-5; 34:8; Deuteronomy 9:6; 9:13; 10:16; 31:37; 2 Kings 17:14; 2 Chronicles 30:8; 36:13; Nehemiah 9:16-17, 29; Proverbs 29:1; Acts 7:51). These biblical references all concern failure to listen to God, but the problem is far more general. All too often we become set in our ways.

Thus it is that “social justice is the Church’s best kept secret”. Our faith is so encrusted with barnacles that it needs a thorough cleaning to venture with enthusiasm into the waters of institutional reform, although the reform of social structures and institutions is precisely the focus of social justice as it has come to be defined since the 1891 encyclical *Rerum Novarum*. The insight of *Rerum Novarum* is that unjust social structures and institutions have been created by us and therefore can be reformed by us.

We begin with the small kindnesses of everyday life. The community’s program of social action extends these kindnesses to a host of services that resonate with our sense of what is right and good. We also support organized efforts like SALT that lobby for state legislation and funding on behalf of those in need, and groups like Network and Bread for the World that do such lobbying at the federal level. Our friends at the Center for Concern are perhaps most directly focused on the institutional dimensions of social justice. And although our voice within the institutional Church is small, our long standing concern about the status of women as ministers within the Church is also a matter of social justice.

But institutional reform may seem a stretch, especially when no particular agenda for reform resonates broadly among those served by the institution. Is that the reason “social justice is the Church’s best kept secret”?

That may be one reason, but there is another and more fundamental reason. The insight of *Rerum Novarum* is not seen as cut from the same cloth as concrete works of justice for the poor. To many Catholics, institutional reform often appears an unwelcome addition to what they have been taught. What I argue in this paper is that social justice flows quite naturally from the same wellspring that connects us to the small kindnesses of everyday life. Thus

the subtitle “From Kindness to Social Justice”. To see that connection it is helpful to step back and take a wide angle view of where we have come from. Part “A” of that view was “Mostly Physics”, going back to the Big Bang. For reasons which will become apparent, it was important to go back that far. I tried to make the journey palatable by using it to describe the origins of the gold wedding bands Judy and I exchanged some forty years ago.

We know much more today about the cosmos than we knew when Pope Leo XIII penned *Rerum Novarum*. In retrospect, the wisdom of that document seems both overdue and prescient. Why had the Church not seen this before, instead preferring to support the divine right of kings? But more than a hundred years later we are still searching for a rationale that is persuasive to those who think our focus should be “good works,” and who think “institutional reform” goes too far. What we now know about the cosmos provides a perspective that sees the reform of social structures and institutions as simply one more creative phase in the continuing unfolding of an awesome creation.

“What we now know about the cosmos” is, of course, mostly science. Or at least it begins with science. Yet there is some evidence, useful for seeing cosmic evolution as good and gracious, that few would call scientific. Everyday kindnesses are that kind of evidence. Why do such kindnesses resonate in the human heart? This resonance is consistent with creation being the handiwork of a loving God sharing existence with the likes of us, independent beings able to love one another – beginning with such kindnesses – and thereby image this awesome and loving God.

Hold that thought for a while longer. It’s a different kind of understanding about the connection between this life and a transcendent existence. A traditional view, out of the Old Testament, finds a commanding God expecting obedience and rewarding obedience with eternal life. Awe of God translates into a sense of reverence for the sacred writings that have been handed down and the stories recounted in these writings. Jesus had a different view, of course. The small kindnesses that we take for granted are signs of the reign of God, here and now. We are invited to

Theology for a Small Planet (continued from previous page)

share in an awesome mystery, and we begin with everyday kindness. We share that recognition in the Eucharist, which every Sunday reminds us that the reign of God is present in our midst and among us. We are not an enclave in a foreign land, a lonely outpost in a hostile world. Quite the contrary. These kernels of human kindness are rooted in a cosmic evolution the scope of which evokes awe and reverence.

But we remain a stiff necked people. Jesus was frustrated that many contemporary Jews didn't seem to appreciate the simple but evident signs of the times. They wanted signs and wonders, but ignored what was in front of them.

Why are we so stiff necked? Instead of seeing ordinary kindness as a sign of the kingdom, we seek what seems grand and extraordinary. It is as if only the extraordinary adequately praises God. Look at our history. One path we have taken is to vision the extraordinary out of sacred scripture. The Church has been quick to find support in "nature" for biblical understandings, and then slow to change these understandings. This has become a part of how our faith tradition tells its story. Who is this God of ours, and how did he bring us into the picture?

We knew nothing, and presumed the Bible could tell us something. We saw an understanding of nature in Genesis, but in retrospect it makes more sense to reverse the logic. The understanding which we seek can be informed by the natural world, which is God's "book" as well. But we are impatient as well as stiff necked. We knew we were loved by God, and that this love was personal. We were central to creation. Should not nature confirm this truth? Aristotle's Earth centered view of the universe not only confirmed our centrality, but it was also authoritative, and reigned for more than a thousand years as part of the Christian story. And so entrenched was this concept that evidence to the contrary was not well received. Galileo suffered under house arrest at the end of his life for advocating the Copernican heliocentric view. It

was not until John Paul II that the incident received a formal apology from the Vatican.

How are we to avoid such embarrassments? If Tolstoy is correct, an obvious suggestion is that our faith would be better served if we refrained from forming an opinion, so that when the time is right the heart will be open. This is perhaps unrealistic, since faith is always seeking understanding and for that purpose uses whatever tools are available at the time. In the early Church the teachings of Aristotle on nature seemed reliable, in particular his conclusion that the Earth stood at the center of the universe. It is only later that we have discovered otherwise, but as the Church in Galileo's time found, stories tied to faith are difficult to change. When the stories were developed we didn't have the clarity we now have about science. St. Augustine understood the problem, and advised caution about reading truths about "nature" into faith stories, but once these stories are "received" by the community what can be done? Galileo bore the brunt of that resistance to new ideas.

Is there any realistic alternative for dealing with science in our faith stories? Or are we condemned to being a "stiff necked people" who misunderstand their Christianity, as Tolstoy complained? Just as surely as we are here not to escape from this world but to act lovingly in it, so too our understanding of this world should inform our faith. We probably have to live with the difficulties, and be willing to eat crow from time to time when yet something more about "this world" tells us that we have misunderstood our Christianity. Tolstoy's lament will always be with us.

With this as preface, I now venture into what "this world" is telling us about the evolution of life and society, and how social justice is an integral part of that unfolding.

TO BE CONTINUED