



nova notes

Newsletter of the NOVA Community March, 2005

Chair Notes

On the First Sunday of Lent, we were invited to respond to a question: "Where do you stand at this season of reflection on Jesus' journey to the Cross begins?" I answered reluctantly because I didn't really want to journey. I wanted to stay on Tabor where I could be set on fire by a mystical vision. I wanted to sit with Jesus at the well and drink deep of his wisdom. Or perhaps a stay in the desert (precluding any encounter with Satan) might put me in touch with the uncomplicated Presence of the Creator/Spirit. In other words, I wanted to be quiet, to go within, to touch soul-space.

As if this weren't a journey! It just seemed like I was being tempted to close my ears to the cry of the poor; to close my eyes to the world of war, deceit, injustice; to protect my heart from pain. Then I remembered that the Spirit led Jesus out of the desert to begin his prophetic life. I recalled that the Samaritan woman was catapulted into the outer world to share the fountain of living water springing up within her. And, just when Peter suggested they build three tabernacles on Tabor, the vision disappeared and down into the real world they went. The journey within must be taken if we are to go without, freed of all that binds us, all that diminishes us; if we are to build the City of God, if we are to set the world on fire with loving kindness and compassion.

With all of you, I look for guides to that place within me where the Divine One dwells. One teacher from our Christian tradition that most recently touched me is John Shea in his book, *Gospel Light; Jesus Stories for Spiritual Consciousness*. One

from the Buddhist tradition is Sharon Salzberg in *Loving-Kindness: The New And Selected Poems of Mary Oliver* and Rilke's *Book Of The Hours, Love Poems To God* can draw you within. As often do your reflections during the dialogue homilies and your hearts open to the pain of others.

Then there are opportunities within our own Community such as the guided meditations Anne Passin offers us. She has invited us to a Lay Spirituality Conference at the Benedictine Pastoral Center in Bristow, VA. It looks like an inclusive gathering with presenters from various religious traditions.



More immediately, the Earth itself calls us to contemplation. Snow can transform one little piece of the planet into a quiet place of peace and beauty that stills all that distracts us from our true nature. And soon the Creator/Spirit will burst forth with new life to remind us of her intimate Presence and our own daily resurrection. "Don't just do something; stand there."

Namaste,

-Marcelline Niemann

Birthdays, etc

March



Fr. Ted Keating, SM

- 2 Helen Gettys Michie
- 3 Jessica Massey
- 6 Doug McNeill
- 7 John Tarrant
- 8 Kate Connelly
Cece Michelotti
Peter Reich
Eric Robinson
- 9 John Iskander
Michael Kane
Amy Tarasovic
- 10 Joe Barrett
- 12 Mary Chaison (RIP)
Jonathan Taylor
Jim Todaro
- 13 Mary Mele
- 14 Bill Meyer
- 19 Mali Kane
- 22 Charlie Gillmarten
- 25 Ilse Yath-Cruces
- 26 Charlie Bailey
Brian Schmidt
- 28 Michael Iskander
- 31 John Taylor

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The NOVA Catholic Community Invites You To Celebrate The Eucharistic Liturgy With Us Every Sunday In Arlington, Virginia at Kenmore Elementary School, Arlington Blvd & Glen Carlyn, Arlington Va.

Liturgies begin at 10:15 am.

newsletter deadline
Sunday, March 27
Please...

Liturgies

MARCH MUSIC LIAISON

Gloria Mog

March 6 – 4th Sunday of Lent

Joe Kenna - Heinzens
I Samuel 16:1, 6-7, 10-13
Psalm 23:1-3, 3-4, 5, 6
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41 or 9:1, 6-9, 13-17, 34-38

March 13 – 5th Sunday of Lent

Joe Nangle, OFM - Amy Kyleen Lute, Mollie Kane, +
Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalm 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45 or 11:3-7, 17, 20-27, 33-45

March 20* - Passion (Palm) Sunday

Ted Keating, SM - Mary Gilmartin
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalm 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24
Philippians 2:6-11
Matthew 26:14--27:66 or 27:11-54

March 24* - Holy Thursday Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper — NOT AT KENMORE

Gather at 6:45, Liturgy at 7:00 pm
Quinn Connors, O. Carm - Social Justice Group
Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14
Psalm 116:12-13, 15-18
I Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-15

March 25* - Good Friday, Fast+ KENMORE. . 8:00 pm

Doug McNeill - Meg Tucillo
Celebration of the Lord's Passion
Isaiah 52:13--53:12
Psalm 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-17, 25
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1--19:42

March 27* - Easter Sunday

GOODWIN HOUSE — 10:00 am
Joe Kenna - J Mausert-Mooney, Tim White
Acts 10:34, 37-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
Colossians 3:1-4, or I Corinthians 5:6-8
John 20:1-9

APRIL MUSIC LIAISON

Gloria Mog

April 3 – 2nd Sunday of Easter

Joe Nangle, OFM - Walt Landry
Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
I Peter 1:3-9
John 20:19-31

April 10 – 3rd Sunday of Easter

Sidney Griffith, ST - Cackleys
Acts 2:14, 22-28
Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-11
I Peter 1:17-21
Luke 24:13-35

April 17 – 4th Sunday of Easter

Joseph Rozansky OFM - Millers
Acts 2:14, 36-41
Psalm 23:1-6
I Peter 2:20-25
John 10:1-10

April 24 – 5th Sunday of Easter

Joe Kenna - Carrolls
Acts 6:1-7
Psalm 33:1-2, 4-5, 18-19
I Peter 2:4-9
John 14:1-12



*See page 5 for details on Holy Week

Liturgy Tip Setting up for Liturgy

Liturgy planners often find the 9:30-10:00 set-up time at Kenmore to be a little frantic as they attempt to get all the details taken care of on time. The most helpful tip regarding this is – as always – prepare ahead.

The Sunday before your liturgy:

- Help with the clean-up so you will know where everything is.
- Go to the storage closet and select your linens – cloths for the altar, communion cloths, cloth for the entrance table.
- Change the backdrop screens if you don't wish to use the ones that are in place.
- Select the candles, holders, cross and any other symbol(s) you wish to use.
- Make sure the plates, cups, and pitchers are clean.
- Check that the sacramentary, the prayer sign-up book, small baskets for communion ministry and large baskets for the collection are in the storage tub.

Pack everything you're going to use for the following week in the rolling blue tub so that when you arrive at 9:30 on your Sunday everything is in one place and ready for set-up.

~Gloria Mog

NOVA Nite!

NOVA CHAIRS ARE HOSTING A MEETING & PIZZA PARTY ... PIZZA WILL BE PROVIDED

Please **bring** either a **salad** or **dessert** to share and your favorite **beverage**.

DATE: Sunday, March 13, 2005
**TIME: 6:00 p.m. – gathering & setup
beginning at 5:30.**
**PLACE: GOODWIN HOUSE – ANNE LEE
ROOM**

**4800 FILLMORE AVE
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22311**

The liturgy coordinators plan an intro and short discussion of our "**Liturgical Renewal Day**" which is planned for May 14, 1:30-5:00. The discussion on March 13 will be to get an idea what community members would like to focus on the most.

We'll have a short up-date on the matters discussed at the February NOVA Nite.

Liturgy Renewal Day

Nova Catholic Community

Saturday, May 14th

1:30 - 5:00 p.m.

Goodwin House West

Speaker and Facilitator:

Rodica Stoicoiu, PhD

*Asst. Professor, Dept. of Theology
Mt. St. Mary's College*

Ken

chaison@rcn.com

Marcelline

Marcyrt@aol.com

Marie

mlkeefe@atlantech.net

Announcements.....

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER LITURGIES

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 20

Where: Kenmore Middle School Library

Time: 10:15 a.m.

HOLY THURSDAY, MARCH 24

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).

Parking is available in the municipal lot between the State Theater and Rt. 7 and in the office condo lot next door. Please do not park in the State Theater lot.

Time: Gather between 6:30-6:45 p.m.

Liturgy begins at 7:00 p.m.

This is the one NOVA event where space is limited and an RSVP is required.

Please call Cathy Goldschmidt at (703) 527-7447 cmgolds@comcast.net by March 20 to let us know how many will attend and to receive your meal assignment. Thanks!

GOOD FRIDAY, MARCH 25

Where: Kenmore Middle School Library

(Please enter in silence.)

Time: 8:00 p.m.

EASTER SUNDAY, MARCH 27

Where: Goodwin House WEST (near Baileys Crossroads), 3440 S. Jefferson St., Falls Church

Time: 10 a.m.

In keeping with past custom, there will be an agape following the Easter liturgy.

Please bring something to share. Beverages will be provided.

Conference on Lay Spirituality

Saturday, April 16, 2005

8:30 AM – 3:30 PM

- To discover new symbols for dynamic lay spirituality
- To explore elements of lay spirituality
- To engage in significant conversations that recognize, build and fully integrate lay spirituality into the Church community

Keynote: New Symbols for Dynamic Lay Spirituality

Melanie Starr Costello PhD., Psy. A

(Story, symbol, images that ground or center and make a connection with one's soul, The Self)

Workshop Theme: The Tree

THE ROOT - Rootedness – Rev. Jane Piver – Episcopal

THE SHOOT - Nurture – Matushka Sasha Safchuk – Orthodox

THE BRANCH - Relationships – Rev. Joseph Nangle – Catholic

THE BUD - Harmony – Dr. Ellen Cronin – Quaker

THE BLOOM - Creativity & Vision – Ms Jo Ann Staebler – Presbyterian

THE HARVEST - Balance – Rev. Jeff Carter – Church of the Brethren

Location: Benedictine Pastoral Center

9535 Linton Hall Road, Bristow, Virginia 20136

Cost: \$60.00 per person (\$50/person for groups of 3 or more)
Lunch, refreshments & materials included

Registration: Telephone (703) 393-2485

Email bpcosb@comcast.net

Fax (703) 361-0254 (to Attn: "BPC / Sr. Louise")

I Find You in All These Things

I find you in all these things,
to which I am a brother in all,
in which minuscule seed you minutely hide yourself
and in the Great, you greatly reveal yourself.

This wondrous game of power
which unfolds itself in submission:
stretching through the roots, thickening in the trunks,
and resurrecting through the treetops

~Rainer Maria Rilke

Announcements.....(continued)

First Official Nova Facilities Planning Meeting Tuesday March 8, 2005 - 8 PM

There will be an one hour meeting at my house on 3/8/05 at 8 PM to discuss the process for considering new gathering space and the designation of assignment.

The meeting will start promptly at 8:00 and will end by 9:00. The doors will open at 7:30 PM for those who want to gather earlier for refreshments. Please let me know if you would like to participate.

Call for directions if needed(703-538-6545).
Address: 7208 Gordons Rd, Falls Church, VA 22043.
(Off Rt 7 and Rt 66, exit 66 in Falls Church).

~Glen Passin



The bosom of America is open to receive not only the opulent and respectable stranger, but the oppressed and persecuted of all nations and religions, whom we shall welcome to participate in all of our rights and privileges, if by decency and propriety of conduct they appear to merit the enjoyment.

~ George Washington

Richmond Report from Delegate Adam Ebbin

February 5, 2005

Bad Bills Pushed Through in Last-Minute Crush *

Immigrants were targeted by measures that would hurt them at home, at school, and on the roads. The House passed a bill that would deny worker's compensation benefits of compensation for injury or wrongful death to undocumented workers. I argued that it does not encourage illegal immigration to give the family of someone killed on the job enough money to ship their body home.

Similarly mean-spirited was an initiative to ban undocumented people from state colleges and universities. This law would mostly affect children brought to this country when they were very young who often spend years "technically undocumented" while waiting for federal immigration officials to make a final determination of their immigration status. We should be encouraging them to make as great a contribution to the community as possible, not trapping them in low-wage jobs or driving them out of productive society all together.

*Excerpted from Adam Ebbin website.

Read full report on

<http://www.adamebbin.com/020505.htm>



Barbara Formoso's Fairwell Party....



Thank You, NOVA ...

from Action Africa, Inc.

2903 Mills Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20018
Phone: 202-529-8350 www.actionafrica.org

Please extend Action Africa's thanks to the NOVA community for their contribution of four hundred dollars that will be used for our medical clinics in Nigeria. Thanks to NOVA'S donations we held a highly successful medical clinic this December which was preceded by an intensive HIV/AIDS prevention education session to help change behaviors and change attitudes towards the disease.

Sincerely,
/s/ **Chris Egbulem**, President

HUGE Thanks to the Haulers!

Action Africa can now really have official headquarters thanks to the efforts of some NOVA muscle. Chris Iskander, Peter Goldschmidt, Brian and Steve Schmitt did yeomen's work last Saturday carrying beds and other paraphernalia down three floors to basement storage, dismantling and hauling recliners and other broken furniture to the street, and moving more than forty boxes of books, supplies, air conditioners, etc. There is now floor space that has not been seen in years for us to work with.

Chris Egbulem had Catholic U. students and Africans in need of shelter living on the second floor above the Amen Foundation for 15 years. At one point, he says that there were 15 African religious living there. But now that he is making a push to grow Action Africa, Inc. from the base that NOVA has provided for free medical clinics to HIV/AIDS prevention education, sponsorship of children through primary school and other projects in sub-Saharan Africa, he needs real office space. This is the gift that strong backs and agile minds gave him—there was plenty of problem-solving needed to move furniture much larger than the door and stairway.

Now, if there's anyone interested in exercising their spackling and painting expertise, just let me know and we can definitely provide the opportunity! Again, thanks, gentlemen for your hard work.

~Marie Keefe



from St James Parish, (Valerie Dixon's Church)

95 ROUTE 2A (POQUETANUCK)
PRESTON, CT 06365
(860) 889-0150

Thank you very much for your generous offerings of at least \$850.00 for God's work through His church, designated especially for the **Isaiah Prison Ministry**, for 2004.

Established in 1734, Saint James Episcopal Church in Poquetanuck has been serving the community through the love of God for over 250 years. Beyond our weekly worship services, we support an extensive prison ministry, send children in need to camp, raise money for heart research and cancer - support, distribute food and gifts at Thanksgiving and Christmas/ and provide a meeting space for AA, Boy Scouts, and Cub Scouts. We offer short-term counseling and referral services to those in need and we offer a loving, supportive, and caring hand wherever and whenever we can.

In Christ's peace,
/s/ **Rev. Jaclyn Sheldon**, Vicar



NOVA grieves ...

Our community notes and mourns the recent deaths of family members –

- ◇ Warren Reich, — his brother William Reich;
- ◇ Rosemarie Annunziata, — her father
Nicholas Petitti;
- ◇ Jim & Bernice Todaro, on the death of their
daughter Lisa (Elisabeth Marie Friedman).

“As long as we can love each other, and remember the feeling of love we had, we can die without ever really going away. All the love you create is still there. All the memories are still there. You live on – in the hearts of everyone you have touched and nurtured while you were here...Death ends a life, not a relationship.”

~Mitch Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie

Remembrances of Bill Reich

The Nova Newsletter asked Warren Reich to submit for publication a poem he read last December 28 at the funeral service for his brother Bill Reich, together with other memorial thoughts about his brother, sent to him by Nova members Mary Helene and Nick Mele, who now live in Bellingham, Washington. At the service, Warren said that his brother dealt with deep turmoils in his life in the 1960s through his extraordinary talent for poetic writing. The sample that Warren read was the following poem that Bill wrote in 1966, the year after he “started life over again” in Barcelona:

Winter Beach

I love my life along the sea's edge
and walk the line that borders human kind
with sand and scrub-hedge on bank and ledge

A snowy winter desert by the sea
Remnants of rituals of summer-kind
Beer cans and fish heads and torn towels
And bowels of frozen sea-birds
and seashells and salt-smells are mine.

And the sea just sits there
and sips and soaks up sand
in deeper green and dark blue draughts.

- William P. Reich, 30 XI 66

The following exchange of correspondence occurred in February 2005 between the Meles and Warren:

“Dear Warren, Nick and I want to offer you our condolences on the death of your brother. We remember him with respect and affection from our years in the Peace Corps. He offered us guidance when we were making decisions; he provided leadership for the group as a whole; and he was a gracious host to hordes of hungry volunteers. We hold him in our hearts. And you - in your loss. With a hug, Mary Helene.”

“Dear Warren, This is a time of sorrow for all who knew Bill. Mary Helene has said it as well as I could, but I will try -- in the Peace Corps years, Bill was an island of calm and a refuge of sanity, as well as care-giving (and food-giving!) to any volunteer who crossed his threshold. I am sure he has his reward and look forward to seeing him again even as I share a measure of your grief -- In sympathy, Nick.”

“Dear Mary Helen and Nick: Anna and I were in Sydney for two months, and just returned this past week. Upon our return I found your very touching notes regarding my brother Bill. I have read them twice now, and both times they brought tears to my eyes. You have given me a view of my brother that I never had before -- a sort of Peace Corps shepherd, it sounds like. Your remembrances are a wonderful gift to me and Bill's wife and his siblings.... You have provided a magnificent condolence.... I always felt Bill was an extraordinary human being -- very gentle, and very spiritual, and very concerned about the downtrodden. But you made me see Bill doing things I never knew about before, and for that I will always be grateful. Peace and Love, Warren.”

“Dear Warren, Thanks for your kind words. After thirty years, Bill is still vivid in memory because he was, as you say, a kind shepherd to a group of Peace Corps volunteers. To share our remembrances with you was the least we could do. Many others who benefited from Bill's guidance and concern while in the Peace Corps would write much the same of him if they had had the good fortune to reconnect through a member of his family as we did. God bless, Nick.”

NOVA grieves ... (continued)

*Eulogy for Nicholas Petitti
February 10, 2005*

My father's journey began 91 years ago in Faeto, Italy. He was the first-born of four sons. Even at 90 he still was getting a kick thinking about the way he used to drink milk directly from the cow's udder and recalling how amazed the villagers were that he, a 5 year old rode about on a full-grown horse...and bare back at that.

His was the rural life that one finds in an isolated mountain village in southeastern Italy where his family owned and operated a farm, raising sheep, wheat and corn. Mountain streams fed the village wells with water that my father characterized as the most delicious in the universe and it was clean and safe to drink.

The village had once been under French military domination and the dialect spoken there was part French and part Italian. My father's family name: Petitti, is an Italianized version of the French word, "petit" and a good example of the mix.

Now, there was nothing "petit" about my father, physically or mentally and nothing "petit" about his dreams and vision and values. As an adult, my father traded his horse riding for a ride in his own Cadillac, but owning and driving a Cadillac was one of the very few interests my father had of a material nature. His interests were truly of a different kind because he was, at core, a very simple man, not unlike his origins.

My father was also a very quiet man, inclined more to listening than to speaking. And he was not proud or boastful, except about two things: his family and his work at the screw machine products factory he helped found.

My father arrived in this country when he was 15 when his family immigrated here. He spoke no English, but by the time he was 30, he and his brother, Vito, had founded West Side Screw Machine Products Company in Newark, NJ. With the help of their brother John, who is with us today, they developed the company into one of the most productive and respected in the region.

In 1937, shortly before founding the company, he was reunited with a childhood friend from Italy. Dad traveled to Connecticut just to see this friend. Her name was Olga and she was an accomplished seamstress, a beautiful woman with many talents and high intelligence. They married a year later and, together they

built a marriage that lasted 65 years and were blessed with four children, 9 grandchildren and one great-grandchild. Eight of the grandchildren and his four children are here today, a wonderful reflection of their love for him. The accomplishments of all of these children were many and he was proud of each and every one of them. Their careers and interests which give testimony to his influence in their lives, include teaching, gardening, finance, business and sales, medicine, law, animal care and management, athletics, foreign languages, governing, and environmental management and policy.

My father was also a kind man, a gentle man in every sense of the word. Those traits were part of the goodness that others saw in him. Last summer, he shared with me what he considered to be his formula for success as a manufacturer, indeed, his life. He spoke about the mutual respect that characterized the relationship of the brothers, finding quite marvelous that they could work together in complete cooperation. We never argued, he said, and we never kept accounts of who was working more and who less. He spoke about integrity, noting that, on any one day, we all did what we had to do to get the job done to keep our promise to our customers. "That's why we were successful," he told me, "we made a promise and you could bet money we would do the job and on time." He spoke about commitment and excellence saying that, although he was an owner, it was nothing for him to put in 12, 14 sometimes 18 hours on the job; six days a week; reluctantly taking even time for lunch, eating on the job, his favorite ham and cheese sandwich and a pear. His explanation, was quality control; he felt he had to be there if he wanted to be sure each and every job was done right.

He spoke about his concern for workers. He and his brothers reportedly never fired anyone. Instead, if the worker could not learn a particular job, they would keep assigning him a different task until either the worker learned to do the job assigned or left on his own accord.

Few activities could compete with the two major commitments in his life of family and work. There were some, however, that bear mentioning: bowling, gardening, the Jersey shore, and his faith. He took bowling very seriously and he could still rack up a 200 score in his eighties. He had a wonderful flower and

(Continued on page 10)

NOVA grieves ... (continued)

(Continued from page 9)

vegetable garden for as long as he could bend a knee and he grew some of the best tomatoes this side of heaven. The Jersey shore was his summer haven. In 1979, he and my mother started living full time in this loving community. His commitment to his Christian faith and the church in which he worshipped was evidenced by his faithfulness to the liturgy, by his membership in the Knights of Columbus, the Holy Name Society, by his volunteer work at bingo nights and as a Eucharistic minister. Rather than talk about his faith, he lived it by showing his regard for the needs of others.

Let me share with you my father's last three comments to me before I left him on Wednesday of last week. I asked him if there was anything I could do for him before I left. He said, "Sit down and relax." When I said I needed to get home, he said, "Be Careful." And when I kissed him good by he said, "Thank You." That was my father, putting his own needs aside whenever possible, stating a concern for the welfare of others and not his, and expressing gratitude for the smallest gesture of care and love.

While working on this remembrance, I came to the conclusion that no one person can capture all that my father was. Because each of us has a part of his story to tell, it's more realistic to think of his life, not in terms of time, whether that be a short eulogy, 91 years of life, or three comments made to one person on one day, but rather in terms of how he touched each of us with his love and left us with a memory, a thought, a value, a dream. Thought of in this way, my father remains part of my world and your world notwithstanding his presence with God.

I end with some lines from a poem that captures how I plan to think of my father now that he is gone. Perhaps you will too.

Weep not for me now that I have passed.
Remember the laughter, the affection, and the joy
Cherish the memories, our hopes and dreams.
Hold fast to the love that we shared.
Be happy with the time we spent together.
For I am not really gone,

I am the wind in the trees and the song of a bird.
I am moonbeams in a midnight sky and a glorious rainbow after the storm.
I am morning dew and freshly-fallen snow.
I am a smile on a stranger's face, a gentle touch, a warm embrace.
Listen to the wind for my message of love.
Watch the sun rise and set in the sky with me.
Feel my essence encircle you with warm memories.
Open your heart to know...I am not gone.
Reach deep into your soul...You will find me.
I am here.
Have no fear.
I am with you,
Always.



NOVA grieves ... (continued)

Reflection on the Life of Lisa Todaro

The untimely death of a beloved person is a double dose of suffering. First there is the loss of a precious person, and then the suffering of the loss of bearings in a world that we thought would run according to our expectations. For you Lawrence, this is a double tragedy, your new bride no longer at your side, and a moment of intense pain as you have to lay her to rest, and so many hopes and dreams as well.

The death of a child, even an adult child, is said to be an exceptionally hard grief to bear. It seems untimely and out of order, for we expect elders to leave us before the young. Bernice and Jim, you too are faced with this double pain, with expectations overturned, so suddenly and with such tragic force for you as you say good bye to your dear Lisa.

And for Anna, for Peter, the loss of your sister is the loss of the third point of your triangle of siblinghood. The geometry of your life taken away, much too soon, much too soon.

Etched in your minds, perhaps, are your last conversations, words spoken, or unspoken, or the last times together, or even memories of her as a young girl, or a teenager, a student at UVA, Harvard Law and a practicing attorney in Boston. Pictures in our minds that we would like to animate with sound, wanting to hear her voice again, her laugh, see her smile, see her prepare for a closing, or work on the Kerry campaign. I can still see her now, in her first communion dress, at NOVA in the mid 70's, with the group of young girls that year, so excited to be making their special communion together. (She wore a navy blue dress with a jumper in white, with a lamb on the front. And she was beautiful with her frothy blond hair) These are dear memories and as we remember, our spirits lift a little, but just a little.

For it is also true that our grief is intense and our questions abound. When the whys resound in our heads, and seem to overwhelm all other thought, it is important to know that these questions are inevitable and yet they have no answer. For the mystery of why some lives end earlier than others remains that, a mystery which we on this side of the grave can never find the answer.

And when the anger comes, this too is inevitable, for it is human and normal to feel rage that a dear one has had life ripped out, suddenly without warning.

In our faith, we believe that God receives these questions of why, and God receives our anger and rage, and that God receives us in our sorrow and our distress. God embraces us even at those moments when we feel least that God even exists or is present in the world. It is our faith that at these very moments of despair, God hears our prayers, our heart ache just as God heard Jesus from the cross crying "my God my God why have you forsaken me?"

And too, in our faith, we look to the cross, to the way of the cross, to understand human suffering. That way of the cross, the Stations of the Cross, each inform us of the hardships of life, the falling and the getting up again, and the bodily pain that Jesus suffered. But two moments of the 14 stations are especially pertinent to our situation this afternoon, as we remember our dear Lisa.

Lawrence, Bernice and Jim, Peter and Tanya, Anna, and Christopher, Muriel and Allen, Karen and David, for you, this is an intense cross that has been thrust upon you unbidden, and without warning. It is yours to bear in a way that we who surround you cannot know directly. Yet, we are here, in testimony to love and family, friendship, and community. We are here in testimony to that moment on the way of the cross when Simon of Cyrene lifts the cross off Jesus back, and carries the cross for Jesus for a while. We are here in witness to the moment when Veronica wipes Jesus' face with a cloth. Both of these acts are what we pledge to do for you and with you.

Over the months and years ahead, you may need to speak, of your sorrow and heartbreak. May we be there for you, to listen, to hear, to absorb your pain, with no time table put on the grieving process nor limits on when it should be over. Let us stand with you and lift the burden for a while. Let us wipe your brow, and comfort you with the small gestures that cannot fill the void, but speak of our caring and love.

(Continued on page 12)

(Reflections, continued from page 11)

We can't undo what is done, nor make the pain go away, as much as we wish to do that. Reality takes hold of us even as we push it away, and yet in facing what is real, there is comfort too. For what is real is that a beloved person has left us, yes, but it is also real and true that she was, is, and remains always, beloved. What is real and true is that she remains in our hearts as a vibrant person, a loving daughter and daughter in law, a loving sister and sister in law. To Isabella her godchild, and to James and Sophia, she remains in their hearts a devoted and very special aunt. And she remains a dearly beloved bride. This is the reality that sustains even when the anguish may seem unbearable. May this reality sustain you even when the anguish seems unbearable.



And what is also real and true is that we will walk this way of the cross with you, lifting your burden as we might, and wiping your brow as we can. Knowing that at the end of the story, the way of the cross leads to nothing less than resurrection, hope, and a love that never ends. Amen

~Clare Guzzo Robert
February 8, 2005

Weep Not For Me

**Weep not for me though I am gone;
into that gentle night.
Grieve if you will but not for long,
upon my soul's sweet flight.
I am at peace,
my soul's at rest.
There is no need for tears.
For with your love I was blessed;
for all those many years.
There is no pain,
I suffer not,
The fear now all is gone.
Put now these things out of your thoughts.
In your memory I live on.
Remember not my fight for breath;
remember not the strife.
Please do not dwell upon my death,
but celebrate my life.**

~ Constance Jenkins

Love Does That, Love Frees

Once in a while, like the Samaritan woman, we are aware of the eyes of Jesus looking into our eyes and for a few seconds we are free of all that binds us, all that diminishes us. We are free to express our thirst for the life that springs from the ever-flowing fountain of God's love.

**We Are Fountains Of Living Water,
Called To Be A People Of
Walking Good News**



Receive a NOVA blessing, and have a very, very Happy Easter!



March, 2005

NOVA



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