

# THE SCEPTRE

VOLUME 50, NO. 7

CHURCH OF THE ADVENT OF CHRIST THE KING

DECEMBER 2009

*An inclusive parish of The Episcopal Church in the Anglo-Catholic tradition*

## FROM THE RECTOR

*Father Paul*

Advent is upon us once more, and it is time again to contemplate the four last things: Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell. Death, we cannot avoid; heaven, we assume is our due; and judgment and hell we consign to myth and cease, in any real way, to believe in. So what is it that we need to do as this new Church year begins? How are we to consider those things that determine us and make us look at ourselves as we really are?

While the four last things have become the last things we think about I do believe that Advent is an opportunity for us to contemplate our relationship with God and with each other. If I were to die tonight what are the things I would regret? Not so much the bucket list of movie fame but more of where have I failed in relationship. What hurtful things have been done to me and how have I reacted? Do I give as good as I get or am I someone who tries to reconcile when things get tough?

This has been a hard year for most people and a test of our ability to trust in a good and gracious God. I know that at times I have felt like giving up and I am sure that many of you have as well. I also know that at times I have been tempted to blame individuals for the trials I would rather not face. I hope that as I reflect on this during Advent I can recognize what is my failing, what is the shortcoming of my fellow Christian, and what is just the way things are, and so move on to forgive myself and my neighbor and strengthen my resolve to live the life God has given me to live with a grateful heart. Then I will be able to approach the celebration of the great feast of the Incarnation with a renewed habit of gratitude. ✚

You are invited to the Rectory Christmas Tea to be held on Tuesday, December 29, 2009. Open House from 4pm to 7pm. Please RSVP to [rectory@barloweburrows.com](mailto:rectory@barloweburrows.com) so that we can have an approximate count of those we are catering for.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

**On Christmas Eve**, there will be the Vigil at 10:30pm followed by the Midnight Mass at 11pm. Evensong will be at 6pm as usual.

**This month there will be several masses at 6:30pm:** on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> for the monthly requiem; on Tuesday the 8<sup>th</sup> for the Immaculate Conception; on Monday the 21<sup>st</sup> for St. Thomas the Apostle; on Monday the 28<sup>th</sup> for St. John the Evangelist (transferred); and on Tuesday the 29<sup>th</sup> for the Holy Innocents (transferred).

**Each year, Church of the Advent is gloriously adorned with flowers, greens, and plants during the Christmas season.** These decorations not only celebrate the spirit of the season, but they can also be memorials to those whom we love, be they among the quick or the dead. Names of donors and memorial inscriptions will be in a special insert to the Christmas bulletins; however the parish office needs that information in time to do this. Please make sure our Treasurer has your contributions and inscriptions by Sunday, December 20<sup>th</sup>. ✚

## JANET IN NOLA LAND PART THREE

I got here to New Orleans with high hopes to remain involved in ministry to prisoners. I very optimistically began querying every priest and parishioner I met regarding prison ministry, specifically to Angola, the Louisiana State Penitentiary.

In what I would call typical Episcopalian fashion no one seemed to know who did it, who ran it, or when it happened but they all thought someone or other at this or that parish may be involved. Sadly, even more often they thought they knew someone who *might* know someone...sigh! The Episcopalians don't seem happy with six degrees of separation, I thought. Perhaps we are addicted to the magical number 39, as in articles of religion or buttons on a cassock.

I did not give up and finally at a Wednesday evening mass a kind woman quite assuredly told me that T\_\_\_ most definitely went to Angola several times a year and miracle of miracles there he was! "T\_\_\_, this is Janet LaRue and she is interested in Angola Prison Ministry."

"Oh great," he responded turning towards me. "Did you want to donate money or bake cookies for the men that go up there?"

*Insert long pause here....*

*I needed the time to pick my jaw up and push my cartoonishly bugging eyeballs back into my eye sockets.*

"The Episcopal Church has been ordaining women for 30 years and you are telling me that women cannot go to Angola?" I sputtered.

A long conversation ensued. Condescending on one side and defiant, powerful and righteous on the other. Well, I held my own anyway. I eventually interrupted his explanation of what they did by quoting Mathew 25 and assuring him I "got" the concept of visiting prisoners. I imagine those of you that know me will find this typical and amusing both.

So today I wrote to the unrepentant murderer Glen, who I introduced you to last month, and asked him if I could visit him. I hope so.

Today is Thanksgiving and I am thankful for Glen.

*Janet LaRue*

## 4TH SATURDAYS: REVISITED/REVISED



The Contemplative Mass that has been a part of our pattern has languished for a couple of months for various reasons and so we will discontinue it for the present. With some planning and input from others I hope that we can revive something along these lines in the future. From the fourth Saturday in December in its place we will experiment with Holy Hour, a devotion that I have a strong attachment to and one that I believe will enrich the prayer life of Church of the Advent. This will be Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 5pm. with silent prayer. There will be brief meditations offered at 5:15, 5:30, and 5:45, and the ceremony will conclude with Benediction at 6pm. You are invited to come for all or part of the prayer.

*Father Paul*

## CHANGE OF EDITORS

I began editing and producing THE SCEPTRE during my second year on the Vestry in 2005. Beth Arms will now inherit the job of wielding this fancy stick and I wish her well.

Next year I will be taking a "sabbatical" for an indeterminate period (if people who are already retired can use that concept). I have a backlog of personal passions that need my undivided attention.

As I leave I want to acknowledge Michael Fullam, the invaluable teammate I've had in putting this together nearly every month for most of the past five years.

This is the Rector's newsletter and he has been generous in his appreciation and has allowed me a free hand in representing him. Presumptuously I think I have been true to what his intentions may have been. THE SCEPTRE has been part of Church of the Advent for half of a century and I'm very pleased I had a role to play in keeping it alive.

*Lewis Brown*

## DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- 2** Brother Jude Hill, SSF – priesthood  
Rod Thompson – birthday
- 5** Paul Burrows – confirmation
- 6** John Porter – baptism  
Martha Stookey – birthday
- 11** Michael McGinley – reception  
Daniel Schwartz – birthday  
Daniel Schwartz & Christopher Fredricks – marriage
- 12** Basil Parker-Matthews – confirmation
- 13** Lizette Larson-Miller – baptism & confirmation
- 14** Michael Barlowe – priesthood  
Jack Fredricks – priesthood
- 21** Tom Veitch – baptism
- 28** Bob Kossler – confirmation

## ARS POETICA

### ADVENT

A crystal beaker  
gathers water.  
Its sculpted edges  
become clearer  
as it grows.  
It glows.  
Its patterns and shadows  
reveal the light.  
Our sight  
improves, moves  
within the flares.  
It will be full.

*Lewis Brown*

## THIS MONTH'S CELEBRANTS & PREACHERS AT HIGH MASS (11:00AM)

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5 (5:00PM)**

*EVE OF 2ND ADVENT*

*LATIN HIGH MASS*

CELEBRANT: FATHER ROD THOMPSON

PREACHER: FATHER ROD THOMPSON

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 6**

*2ND ADVENT*

CELEBRANT: FATHER PAUL BURROWS

PREACHER: SHEILA CRISP

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13**

*3RD ADVENT*

CELEBRANT: FATHER PAUL BURROWS

PREACHER: IRENE TANABE

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19 (5:00PM)**

*LATIN CHANT MASS*

*EVE OF 4TH ADVENT*

CELEBRANT: FATHER ROD THOMPSON

PREACHER: DEACON ALEX MARTIN

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20**

*4TH ADVENT*

CELEBRANT: FATHER PAUL BURROWS

PREACHER: BROTHER JUDE SSF

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 24 (11:00PM)**

*MIDNIGHT MASS*

CELEBRANT: FATHER PAUL BURROWS

PREACHER: FATHER PAUL BURROWS

**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 25**

*CHRISTMAS DAY*

CELEBRANT: FATHER LOUIS NEWTON

PREACHER: FATHER BASIL PARKER-MATTHEWS

**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 27**

*HOLY INNOCENTS*

CELEBRANT: FATHER PAUL BURROWS

PREACHER: FATHER ROD THOMPSON

*I am bringing  
you good news  
of great joy  
for all  
the people*



# The Sceptre

DECEMBER 2009

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BLESSED ARE YOU AMONG WOMEN, AND  
BLESSED IS THE FRUIT OF YOUR WOMB.

LUKE 1:42