

St. Mark's Epistle!

- District Six -

St. Mark's Anglican Church, District Six, Cape Town

Monthly Newsletter

3 March 2002

A Lenten message from our rector

The point of Lent is to bring about a change of heart, a change of outlook and a new perspective. A transformation that reinstalls us in our right relationship with God and with all of life. Through a 'Lord have mercy' consciousness, the taking up or taking on of sacred discipline, as our Lenten Eucharist prayer puts it, 'we grow in grace and learn to be your people, once again' (CWp.308)

This wonderful prayer announces Sunday by Sunday this process of coming home to our Father as a people of the resurrection.

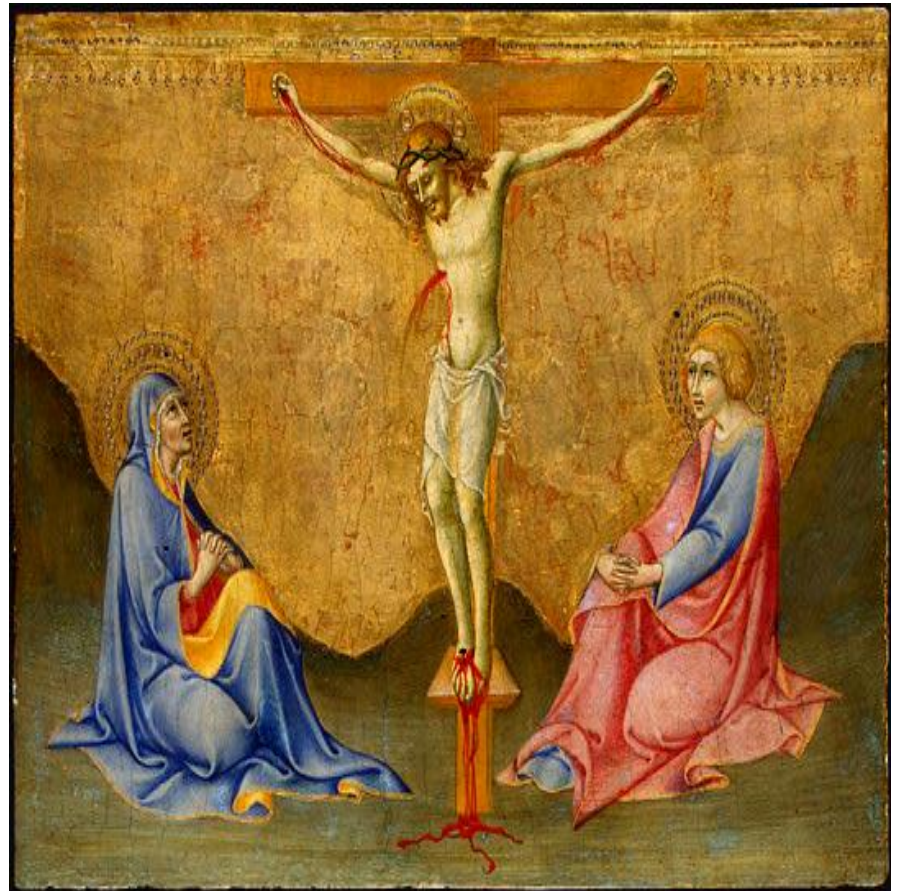
*"Through fasting, prayer, and acts of service
you bring us back your generous heart.
Through study of your Holy Word,
you open our eyes to your presence
in the world
and free our hands to welcome others
into the radiant splendour of your love".*

It is with that prayer on our hearts that St. Mark's invites you to share our Lenten and Holy Week Services so that together we may come to know the joy of the Easter festival.

Fr John

SERVICES AT ST MARK'S

Sundays	9.00am
Wednesdays and Daily during Holy Week	7.15pm
Good Friday Way of the Cross	12.00pm – 3.00pm
Easter Sunrise Service	6.30am
Easter Day Family Service	9.00am



Turning of the Soil in District 6

by
Donald & Rozanna Hendricks

After more than 35 years, the people of District Six are coming home. The first stage of this homecoming was observed on 11 February when former residence participated in a ceremony whereby the soil was turned on the spot where the first foundations are to be dug.

It was more the returning of the dust as the South Easter blew cold over a few 100 people gathering for the event. As we walked from the top of Russel St, looking down one could see many headscarves and a fest of different colours, which made the gathering look like a funeral.

We stood around listening to speeches from Alan Roberts, Anwar Nagia, Terence Fredericks and

Seeraj Desai, talking about the first homes to be built, and not to have a cut-off date for late applicants - to much applause of the crowd.

Most of the sound blew away in the wind, which made it difficult to hear other speeches. After 30 minutes we went home to put on warmer clothes and returned a few minutes later to find only a handful of people returning from their prayers. It was hard to see where the twelve elderly residents had turned the first soil marring the spot where the first foundations will be dug.

We left with much disappointment because many Christians felt that they were not represented in numbers.

What is Lent?

Lent is a forty-day period before Easter. It begins on Ash Wednesday. We skip Sundays when we count the forty days, because Sundays commemorate the Resurrection. In most churches, the decorations are purple or blue, royal colours to prepare for the King. Lent is a season of soul-searching and repentance. By observing Lent, the Christian imitates Jesus' withdrawal into the wilderness for forty days.

Lent in the 1930s, 40s or 50s - or perhaps even earlier was when you gave up something - like food or going to the movies - in order to do penance for sin. Today, Lent has regained that "baptismal" emphasis. We still can practise fasting, prayer, almsgiving, with the purpose of recalling our Baptism and deepening our commitment to Christ.

Ashes are an ancient symbol of repentance, and also remind us of our mortality. "...for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." - *Genesis 3:19*. Being marked with ashes at the beginning of Lent indicates our recognition of the need for deeper conversion of our lives during this season of renewal.

The ashes used in this ceremony are made by burning the remains of the palms blessed on the Palm Sunday of the previous year.

Lent is about conversion, turning our lives more completely over to Christ and his way of life. This always involves giving up sin. The goal is not just to abstain from sin for the duration of Lent but to root sin out of our lives forever. Conversion means leaving behind an old way of living and acting in order to embrace new life in Christ.

Our journey through these forty days should be a movement ever closer to Christ and to the way of life he has exemplified for us. Lent is the primary time for realising our need for repentance of sin, because Lent is the season for baptismal renewal.

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

More time given to prayer during Lent should draw us closer to the Lord. Fasting is more than a means of developing self-control. It is often an aid to prayer, as the pangs of hunger remind us of our hunger for God.

Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? (Is 58:6-7).

The Lord works in mysterious ways

by
Ivan Jonker

It is Wednesday, 20 February 2002 - the first Wednesday evening service of the Lenten Season. It is a balmy, sticky evening as we reach the doors of the church. My first thoughts as I enter, "Oh! Oh! Five people in church - not many are going to turn up at tonight's service."

As we settle down people start trickling in, in groups, whilst a lay minister is asking for matches to light the candles on the altar. A non-smoking lady hands over a book of matches - which she carries around in her bag just in case of an emergency. By this time our numbers have swelled to about fifty. A distinctive spiritual hush hangs in the air, as everyone is busy with silent prayer and meditation.

The service is started with the inspirational chorus, "*Kyrie Eleison*" - (Lord Have Mercy). Fr John reads from the Bible and suddenly exclaims, "Where are my glasses?" An audible chuckle echoes from the congregation, as he has them perched on his nose. He starts reading again and suddenly there is a depressing, negative, "Ah!" from the congregation - the lights went out; a power failure - we are in darkness. The time, 20:02 - 20.02.2002.

A few seconds of silence, then a few members get up to find the source of the problem, and try to restore "The Power of Light". Extra candles are lit from the candles on the altar whilst another lay minister finds a torch for Fr John to continue. Seated in the darkness Father assigns us to form groups and try to recall and discuss, "A dark moment / hour in your life (emotional / spiritual / physical) when a

text in scripture had brought you through and showed you the light."

After about twenty minutes of group - and open discussion, the lights suddenly went on - much to everyone's relief. We could continue the rest of the service in light. The events of the evening had set me thinking. A thought provoking experience that started me contemplating (my own personal interpretation) what God might be trying to say.

Someone will be the original source of light - it might be you - remembering Christ became the light (for us) of the world. Your leader could be temporarily blind - unable to lead you on the way. After all he is also only human. It is up to you, personally to search your soul, try and solve the problem, and find the source and power of the light that is in Christ.

We as individuals should interact with each other - spiritually and on other levels - as co-members of the church, and maybe, just maybe we might be the source of light to someone who is experiencing darkness.

More significantly, at this specific time - the beginning of Lent - we are grappling in darkness (our lights are non-existent) but through serious commitment during this period, self denial and some serious soul searching we might at the end of Lent see "THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL." Read *John 3:19-21*.

May you have a spiritual, enLIGHTened and blessed Lenten season. **V**

Almsgiving is a sign of our care for those in need and an expression of our gratitude for all that God has given to us. Works of charity and the promotion of justice are integral elements of the Christian way of life we began when we were baptised.

Holy Week, which precedes the Crucifixion, Passion of Christ, and His Resurrection on Easter Sunday, starts with Palm Sunday - the procession of palms - when Jesus entered the city on a donkey.

On Maundy Thursday, we imitate Jesus in the washing of His disciples' feet.

This ritual reminds us to serve God and one another.

As part of our observance of Good Friday, we venerate the cross on which Christ died. The veneration challenges us to be willing to accept the cross, too, for it is the only way to resurrection.

Easter is the principal feast of the ecclesiastical year. Commemorating the slaying of the true Lamb of God and the Resurrection of Christ, the corner-stone upon which our faith is built. It is also the oldest feast of the Christian Church, the connecting link between the Old and New Testaments. **V**

An Anglican Prayer Book

Due to a shortage of prayer books in our church, the PCC have looked at ways to address this problem. The solution put forward is to encourage all parishioners to purchase their own copy. A list will be posted on the notice-board at the back of the church. Please fill in your name and number of copies you would like. The cost is R45.00 per copy. Once all the monies have been collected, the books will be ordered and distributed. **V**

ST. MARK'S T-SHIRT Have You Got Yours Yet?

On Thursday, 29 November 2001, our church opened its doors to tourists. As part of the launch, various memorabilia were on sale, including mugs, T-shirts and post-cards. The T-shirt sports the new logo, and is available in black with a white logo, or white with a black logo. For a mere R35.00 you too can be the proud owner of one these soon-to-be collector's items, which will serve as a reminder of this historic occasion. **V**

QUOTABLE QUOTE

We can easily forgive a child who is afraid of the dark. The real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.

- Plato

THANK YOU

to

Formeset Printers

22 Kinghall Avenue

Epping Industria

Tel: 507 9000

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for printing the newsletter.

Survivor Reunion

No, this has nothing to do with the television series. This year sees our church celebrating its **115th Anniversary** on 25 April. A reunion is planned and coincides with Freedom Day on Saturday, 27 April. The celebrations will kick off at 2.30pm at the church.

All past members of St. Mark's church, schools and community centre are invited to attend. It is to be an afternoon of memories, anecdotes, music, and gathering of old friends.

Refreshments will be served. Please contact Vanda Adams on 461 1059 for more information. **V**

Pledge News

Thank you to all those who have renewed their pledge commitment for the year 2002. At the time of going to print we now have 79 people pledging a total of R11,050.00. We need to do two things. One, make sure we actually pay this pledged amount **on time**. Even one missed month causes a serious cash flow problem for the church, and two, raise this number to 100 by Easter. Don't forget if you are not paying a pledge or if you haven't renewed your commitment, someone else is paying for the blessings you receive from St. Mark's! **V**

ORGANIST WANTED



An organist is required at St. Mark's District Six. Please contact the rector, Fr. John Oliver on **448 1006** if you feel you are suitably qualified.



Life

I asked God to take away my pain.

God said, No.

It is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole.

God said, No.

Her spirit was whole; her body was only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience.

God said, No.

Patience is a by-product of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is earned.

I asked God to give me happiness.

God said, No.

I give you blessings. Happiness is up to you.

I asked God to spare me pain.

God said, No.

Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me.

I asked God to make my spirit grow.

God said, No.

You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful.

I asked for all things that I might enjoy life.

God said, No.

I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things.

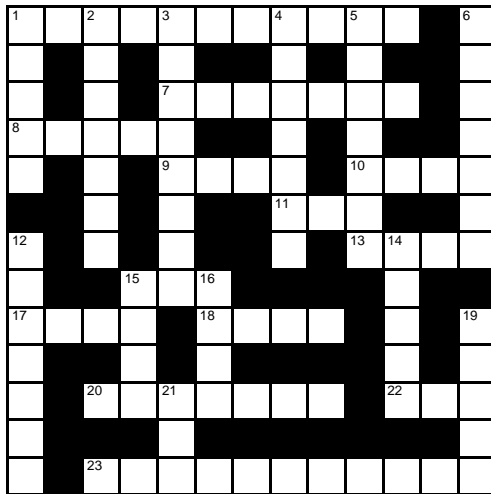
I ask God to help me LOVE others, as much as he loves me.

God said...

Ahhhh, finally you have the idea.

Author Unknown

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1 The land between two rivers; the region between the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers (11)
- 7 A Christian from Joppa also known as Dorcas (7)
- 8 Mother-in-law of Ruth (5)
- 9 Flat hollow unleavened bread. (4)
- 10 The second son of Adam and Eve. (4)
- 11 Frozen water (3)
- 13 Jacob was tricked into marrying Rachel's elder sister first. (4)
- 15 God told Noah to build this oblong floating house (3)
- 17 Who said, "Am I my brother's keeper?" (4)
- 18 This kind of person (soul) will suffer hunger. (4)
- 20 The original country of the Philistines. (7)
- 22 Noah took this number of each animal into (15 across) (3)
- 23 Fifth book of the Old Testament (11)

DOWN

- 1 The "bread" which fell from Heaven to feed the Israelites (5)
- 2 A very wise king that ruled over Israel (7)
- 3 Pharaoh's officer who bought Joseph from the traders (8)
- 4 She became David's wife after the death of her mean husband Nabal (7)
- 5 Abraham's eldest son, by Hagar the concubine (7)
- 6 The name of the Philistine woman who betrayed Samson (7)
- 12 The eighth plague of Egypt (7)
- 14 Jacob was tricked into marrying Rachel's elder sister first. (5)
- 15 A prophetess, and daughter of Phaniel (4)
- 16 Saul's father (4)
- 19 Black, hard wood (5)
- 21 An Edomitic city ruled over by Hadar (3)

Bible Reference

Across: 1 Genesis 24:10, 7 Acts 9:36, 8 Ruth 1:3-4, 10 Genesis 4:2, 11 Psalm 147:17, 13 Genesis 29: 23, 15 Genesis 6:14, 17 Genesis 4:10, 18 Proverbs 19:15, 20 Amos 9:7, 22 Genesis 6:19.

Down: 1 Exodus 16:4,31, 2 1 Kings 1:34, 3 Genesis 39:1, 4 1 Samuel 25:39, 5 Genesis 16:15, 6 Judges 16:4, 12 Exodus 10:12, 14 Genesis 29: 23, 15 Luke 2:36, 16 1 Samuel 9:3, 19 Ezekiel 27:15, 21 Genesis 36:39.

JUST FOR LAUGHS

A mother was teaching her three-year-old the Lord's prayer. For several evenings at bedtime she repeated it after her mother. One night she said she was ready to solo. The mother listened with pride as she carefully enunciated each word, right up to the end of the prayer. "Lead us not into temptation," she prayed, "but deliver us some e-mail. Amen."

A boy was watching his father, a pastor, write a sermon. "How do you know what to say?" he asked. "Why, God tells me." "Oh. Then why do you keep crossing things out?"

DID YOU KNOW

The word CARNIVAL is another name for Shrove Tuesday, the last day before Lent. For centuries it was customary to fast by abstaining from meat during Lent. Some people called the festival *Carnival*, which is Latin for farewell to meat; *carnis* = flesh + *levare* = put away. Other names for Shrove Tuesday include *Mardi Gras* and *Fasching*.

Great people talk about ideas. Small people talk about other people.
- Tobias S. Gibson

HAPPENINGS

CAKE SALE

Our next cake sale is on Sunday, **11 March 2002**.

BINGO

The next Bingo will be held on Saturday, **13 April 2002** at the Cape Technikon.

YOUTH

The Youth of St. Mark's meets every Friday at 19h30. Join us at 35 Beresford Road, University Estate.

ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING Sunday, 28 April 2002

Please Support Our BUILDING FUND

Bank : **Standard Bank**
Branch : Victoria Road (4709)
Acct. Type : Savings
Acct. No. : **07 480 558 4**

FROM THE BIBLE

John 3: 16-17

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (KJV)

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