



THE SHRINE OF THE MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT

PARISH NEWSLETTER

MAY 2010

BLESSED SACRAMENT'S HAITI CONNECTION

What do you get when you connect talent, organizational skills, experience, compassion, and generosity among Blessed Sacrament parishioners and their community of friends? You get a quick, productive, positive, effective response directed toward others in need. And so it was that immediately following the devastating January earthquake in Haiti, many parishioners organized to directly assist with goods and services that continue today in an on-going effort to help the Haitian people recover.

Blessed Sacrament has had a long connection with Haiti. Gael Delany, DDS and other area dentists and doctors have joined often in many volunteer missions providing dental services and teaching doctors and dentists in Haiti. Anne Devereux has worked with the Haitian government and local authorities to plan for the building of a maternity clinic in Jean Robel in the north of Haiti. Delayed, but not daunted by the earthquake, Ann is planning future fund raising activities to complement the generous past donations of Blessed Sacrament parishioners. Michelle Bowe, recently elected as Hospitaller of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta of Rhodes and Jerusalem, has been deeply involved for a long time in Hopital Sacre Coeur, the Order's hospital in Milot, Haiti. She visited the country after the earthquake, worked for many days with the doctors, nurses and townspeople, and has the perspective only direct experience can bring.

When Michelle sent a message back that many victims critically needed shoes, the men in Blessed Sacrament's Faith in the Marketplace group organized an impressively complex but effective plan to get the right size to specific victims, linking donors here with victims there. Major Garrett, Blessed Sacrament parishioner and Fox News White House Correspondent, related the "story of the

shoes' to former President Bill Clinton, and so the story of the Chevy Chase shoes traveled well beyond our neighborhood Circle.

Parents of the Chevy Chase Presbyterian nursery school, along with Brookville Pharmacy, joined the relief effort donating vitamins and supplies. The supplies reached the victims from Miami in a small plane piloted by a generous pilot from the mid-west who still ferries supplies to Haiti in his private plane, proclaiming himself, "in service to the Blessed Mother." Michelle related the ironic incongruity of Miami's airfield for private planes, usually frequented by wealthy private aircraft owners who puzzled over the rugged attire of the workers and the cartons and rope-tied boxes that replaced the designer luggage and expensive food and drink usually headed for the Caribbean.

Sacre Coeur hospital, operated by the CRUDEM Foundation, is in the north of Haiti, 8 miles south of Cap Haitien. The hospital is known to many as the "Mayo Clinic of Haiti," and in its 20 years of service to the people of Haiti, it has lowered the infant mortality rate notably, provided services from vaccinations to surgery, taught the people good nutrition and sanitation and trained Haitian doctors and nurses. The hospital provides services we take for granted such as electro cardiograms and opt homology. After the earthquake, its customary 74 beds grew quickly to 423, as cots were set up and family members, friends, and sometimes total strangers came to minister basic palliative care to the sick and injured. As Navy helicopters brought in wounded, the hospital became a textbook case of how to respond effectively to a disaster.

Many heroes emerged. They connected to other heroes; tapping into that social and business web we call "connections." A doctor treating a compound fracture of a boy with a serious infection realized

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that his bone was destroyed and made arrangements for the child to be taken to the Shriner's Hospital in Boston, where eight other young injured patients were also welcomed. There, Boston doctors will use break-through techniques to re-grow the boy's leg bone and return him to Haiti, healed.

Michelle recalled people too nutritionally weak to carry a cast and others both injured and ill with anemia. The sheer will to live kept many from dying. Michelle witnessed a woman with a life-threatening injury was receiving comfort as she lay dying. An observer suggested that she receive juice, another brought the woman pudding that she sipped through a straw. The woman rallied and lived.

Michelle, who speaks French and understands Creole, attributes the real role of heroes to the Haitian people. They adapted, they lovingly took care of each other and they tenaciously held to their faith and to hope. One vignette tells a powerful story. As some injured adults languished, many children, injured and amputees themselves, formed a parade going through the adult hospital tent singing "How Great Thou Art" in Creole. Their spirit helped some adults to leave their sick-beds and others to lift their spirits.

Our parish responded magnificently through the largest charity collection ever at Blessed Sacrament – over \$66,000. One Blessed Sacrament parishioner in the construction field has offered his abilities, talents, and services to help. Our school children have studied the people and their culture, written letters and collected funds. We know that there are other parishioners still involved in the effort to help Haiti. Some, in a quest for anonymity, have hidden their light (and their actions) under a bushel. Please tell us your story so that it can inspire others to contribute to the on-going needs of the people. The earthquake may be past, but dire needs persist in Haiti.



*Artwork by Sydney Spottiswood
Kindergarten*

TAKE TIME FOR GOD ON VACATION

As you plan for the summer weekends and vacation, plan ahead for attendance at Mass by visiting www.Masstimes.org. This site is the dream of every techie: input a simple request and get an immediate, accurate answer. One can search by place, city name, zip code and/or phone number. Do you speak another language? The site is available in ten languages in addition to English. Are you visiting another country? Countries from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe are included. Times for confession and adoration are also listed. This is easy enough and an answer to a prayer!



*Artwork by Andrew D'Angelo
Grade 5*

FRANCISCAN MONASTERY GARDEN GUILD'S INTERNATIONAL EVENING

What can you do to assist the Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild (FMGG) beautify a community of Washington and at the same time help Haiti and/or other lands? On Friday, May 14, the Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild will hold a fundraiser at Ten Thousand Villages (TTV), located at 4959 Elm St., Bethesda, MD. Between 5 and 9 p.m. on that evening, the store will donate 15% of all sales to the FMGG.

The Franciscan Monastery Garden Guild (<http://fmgg.org/>) is composed of a small group of lay people who formed the Guild in September, 1998. The Guild's goal is to raise funds and develop projects under the guidance of the friars whose mission is in "keeping with the Franciscan tradition" to provide visitors with a garden sanctuary "where they can seek, find and unite with their creator." The Guild conducts an Easter lily and Palm Cross sale on Palm Sunday, an annual plant and herb sale in the spring and the Luminaria Lights event on Christmas Eve. The grounds of the Monastery are open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

A most unique project developed by the Guild is an herb garden at the friary entrance. The choice of herbs is based on Biblical references, and the location of the garden is in keeping with ancient tradition. The garden features four classes of herbs: culinary, biblical, medicinal, and household. Here one finds fennel, oregano, lavender, thyme, feverfew, figs, monkshood, anemone, sage, soapwort, yarrow and mugwort.

Ten Thousand Villages (www.bethesda.tenthousandvillages.com) provides vital, fair income to third world people by marketing unique and unusual handicrafts from more than 130 artisan groups of more than 38 countries and by

telling the peoples' stories in North America. Visiting the fundraiser will introduce you not only to handcrafted merchandise from around the world, but also to the cultures of the people who crafted the products. The accompanying photo of a cross, cut from fifty-gallon drums hammered flat and creatively cut by the Haitian artisans of CroixdeBouquets, provides evidence of the beauty of the artisans' work.

Visitors to the May 14 fundraiser will find the cross and other products made from recycled and

sustainably-harvested materials - everything from oriental rugs to galimoto, green geckos, and geometric shesham wood puzzles (an independent testing laboratory ensures safe toy products). Unfamiliar with those items? Find out about them at the FMGG fundraiser at TTV on Friday, May 14 (5 to 9 p.m.). See you there!



Artwork by Kiki Crecca
Grade 4



Cate
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Artwork by Cate Madden
Kindergarten

FACEBOOK FAN PAGE FOR BLESSED SACRAMENT'S YOUNG FAMILIES

The goal of this site is to foster greater communications between the families of Blessed Sacrament who have children ages 0 to 18, to strengthen the Blessed Sacrament community and to increase awareness of all programs and activities available to families. We encourage Blessed Sacrament "young families" to become a fan and post activities, schedule changes and other important information to our community. This site was organized independent of Blessed Sacrament by parishioners of Blessed Sacrament and is not an official site of the church. (After signing into Facebook, search for "Blessed Sacrament DC Young Families" and become a fan!)

JUST IN TIME

By John Dluhy, M.D.

At this point in my life here at Blessed Sacrament (I've been here since 1975), our community feels to me like St. Augustine's *City of God*.

I like the feeling of safety and being contained within that I experience here. Under the leadership of Christ, then His assistant, Monsignor Enzler, we appear to function well together most of the time: getting things done, educating our youth, worshipping and taking care of each other.

My time spent each day at Mass or one of the other activities I attend seems like the best hours of the week. I feel our community is a foretaste of heaven – NOW, here on earth.



Artwork by Amieh Lumbré
Grade 8

DANA GIOIA TO RECEIVE NOTRE DAME'S LAETARE MEDAL

Dana Gioia, poet and former chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts, will receive the University of Notre Dame's 2010 Laetare Medal. He will be awarded the medal, the oldest and most prestigious honor given to American Catholics, during Notre Dame's 165th University Commencement Ceremony on May 16 (Sunday).

"In his vocation as poet and avocation as arts administrator, Dana Gioia has given vivid witness to the mutual flourishing of faith and culture," said Notre Dame's president, Rev. John I. Jenkins, C.S.C. "By awarding him our University's highest honor we hope both to celebrate and participate in that witness."

A native of Hawthorne, Calif., Michael Dana Gioia was educated in Catholic elementary and secondary schools before, as he has joked, he "traded down" for Stanford University, from which he was graduated in 1973, and Harvard University, from which he earned a master's degree in comparative literature in 1975, studying with the classical translator Robert Fitzgerald and the poet Elizabeth Bishop. He returned to Stanford to earn a master's of business administration degree in 1977.

Even while pursuing a business career from 1977 to 1992 with the General Foods Corp. in New York, where he served as vice president of marketing, Gioia wrote and published widely. He also served as poetry and literary editor for numerous magazines and won recognition for his own poems, including the Frederick Bock Award for Poetry in 1986 and the 1992 Poet's Prize. He left General Foods in 1992 to begin writing full time.

Gioia has published three full collections of poetry, including "Interrogations at Noon," which won the 2002 American Book Award. He also has published eight smaller collections of poems, two opera libretti and numerous translations of Latin, Italian and German poetry. In addition to editing more than 20 literary anthologies, he also writes essays and reviews in such magazines as *The New Yorker*, the *Atlantic*, the *Washington Post Book World*, the *New York Times Book Review* and *Slate*. His 1992 volume "Can Poetry Matter?" – which was widely discussed in both the United States and abroad – often is credited with helping revitalize the place of poetry in American public life.

From 2003 to 2009, Gioia served for two terms as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts.

He is credited with revitalizing an agency through which he sought to strengthen bipartisan support for public funding of arts and arts education, to champion jazz as a uniquely American art form, to promote Shakespeare readings and performances nationwide, and to distribute NEA grants more widely.



In a lecture in 2000, Gioia argued that art and Catholicism mutually flourish because "the Catholic, literally from birth, when he or she is baptized, is raised in a culture that understands symbols and signs. And it also trains you in understanding the relationship between the visible and the invisible. Consequently, allegory finds its greatest realization in Catholic artists like Dante."

Gioia divides his time between Sonoma County in northern California and Washington, D.C., where he is a parishioner at the Shrine of the Blessed Sacrament.

The Laetare (pronounced Lay-tah-ray) Medal is so named because its recipient is announced each year in celebration of Laetare Sunday, the fourth Sunday in Lent on the Church calendar. "Laetare," the Latin word for "rejoice," is the first word in the entrance antiphon of the Mass that Sunday, which ritually anticipates the celebration of Easter. The medal bears the Latin inscription, "Magna est veritas et prevalebit" ("Truth is mighty, and it shall prevail.") Established at Notre Dame in 1883, the Laetare Medal was conceived as an American counterpart of the Golden Rose, a papal honor which antedates the 11th century. The medal has been awarded annually at Notre Dame to a Catholic "whose genius has ennobled the arts and sciences, illustrated the ideals of the Church and enriched the heritage of humanity."

Gioia is the second poet to be awarded the Laetare Medal, following 1964 recipient Phyllis McGinley. More information on Gioia is available on his Web site at <http://www.danagioia.net/>.

Source: <http://newsinfo.nd.edu/news/14862-laetare-medalist/>



Artwork by Callahan Pels
Grade 6

As always, thanks to our wonderful Blessed Sacrament School artists and to Ms. Judy Kearns, their art teacher.

Contributions of articles/photos/information for the monthly newsletter are always welcome. Please send material to: newsletter@blessedsacramentdc.org.