By Mary W. Cox, editor

With the theme “40 and FORWARD,” clergy and delegates gathered Nov. 13-14 at St. Paul’s, Key West, to celebrate the 40th birthday of our diocese, giving thanks for our history, acknowledging the challenges of the present, and looking ahead to “what God is calling us to do.”

Delegates welcomed a “favorite daughter,” now a bishop, as preacher at the Eucharist; donated food for the hungry; recognized congregations that are making significant progress in hospitality and growth; responded positively to proposals from the youth of the diocese; and heard a call from Bishop Leo Frade and the archdeacons to continue the work of mission highlighted on banners at the front of St. Paul’s nave: “Bring them in; build them up; send them out; tend their needs; harvest God’s fruit.”

Three congregations were honored this year with the bishop’s HII (Hospitality, Invitation, Incorporation) Award for outstanding, consistent growth in weekly average worship attendance (AWA): St. Patrick’s, West Palm Beach—seven years of continuous growth; All Saints, Fort Lauderdale—five years of continuous growth; and St. Mark’s, Palm Beach Gardens’—four years of continuous growth.

Snapshots of Diocesan Convention: Episcopal Charities’ Director of Development Margaret Hudson and Business Operations Director Elizabeth Smiley (photo at left) watch the food donations pile up at the ECSEFL table in the exhibit hall; Bishop Leo Frade and his former archdeacon, Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves of El Camino Real, (in center photo) prepare to greet worshipers after the Convention Eucharist; Fr. Alejandro Hernandez of Todos los Santos, Miami, Fr. Hallock Martin of Holy Spirit, West Palm Beach, and the Rev. Christina Encinosa of Holy Redeemer, Lake Worth, (in photo at right) look like Olympic medalists with their Nehemiah awards for their congregations’ increased attendance.

40th Diocesan Convention
SE Florida looks forward

Conventional coverage online
Go to www.diosef.org and click on the Diocesan Convention link on the left side of the page to find links to:
- Bishop Leo Frade’s address to convention
- Resolutions approved
- Approved budget for 2010
- Elections and ratified elections/appointments
- Sermon by Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves
- Youth Commission Report
- Report of the 2009 General Convention Deputation
- Convention photo galleries

Palm Beach—a seven years of continuous growth; All Saints, Fort Lauderdale—a five years of continuous growth; and St. Mark’s, Palm Beach Garden’s—a four years of continuous growth.
In his address to convention Frade gave thanks for the leadership of the diocese’s first two bishops, the late James L. Duncan, and retired Bishop Calvin O. Schofield, Jr., as well as the “men and women, lay and ordained, who in the past through their sacrifice and obedience to our Lord established our church in this part of the world.”

He praised the “creativity of many in this diocese” in the development of regional and collaborative ministries during the past year, and specifically commended the three congregations—Todos Los Santos, Miami; All Souls’, Miami Beach; and All Saints’, Jensen Beach—that have attained self-supporting parish status.

He spoke of the work of the Cursillo community and its plans to share the Cursillo movement with the Diocese of Jamaica, and thanked Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida for its work in meeting human needs in our communities.

Looking forward, he announced that he plans four “visioning days” in 2010 in different locations in the diocese, at which he will ask the people of the diocese to help him determine the direction of our diocesan ministries in the next five years.

The bishop also announced that he will name the Rev. Dr. Carlos Sandoval, a medical doctor and psychiatrist, as well as priest-in-charge of St. Simon’s, Miami, as Canon for Health, a new position intended to help the diocese address a variety of public health issues.

As he did during his address last year, Frade turned to the archdeacons to report on their ministries, saying, “The three archdeacons work very hard to carry out our mission to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ.”

Archdeacon for Immigration and Social Justice Fritz Bazin, recovering from throat surgery, was unable to speak to the convention, but presented a written report of the initiatives undertaken by his office, noting work in three areas: immigration issues; the development of a diocesan Social Justice Association (see story p. 6); and ethnic (Hispanic/Latino, Haitian and African-American) ministries. His complete report is posted at the Diocesan Convention link at www.diosef.org.

Archdeacon for Congregational Development Bryan Hobbs spoke of past and present leaders, lay and ordained, who in differing circumstances have all ways been people who “don’t know ‘can’t.’”

Work with the more than 50% of diocesan congregations who have been or are participating in the Nehemiah Process has been “most fun,” he said.

(See p. 4 for a report from Hobbs on the Nehemiah Process, and a list of those who received Nehemiah awards this year.)

“I think this is one of the most dynamic, exciting, fun dioceses in the Episcopal Church and I am proud to be a part of this place,” Hobbs said. “I am so proud of our rich heritage and diversity. I am so thankful for how we have had adjusted to the challenges, joys, and sorrows of our everyday lives to live the dream of the Gospel and to be part of what God is creating.”

Archdeacon for Deployment Tom Bruttell noted some of the successful transitions in the diocese this year—the institution of new rectors, Fr. Frisby Hendricks at All Saints’, Jensen Beach, and Fr. John Tidy at All Souls’, Miami Beach; new clergy leadership bringing increased attendance at St. Margaret’s and San Francisco de Asís, Miami Lakes, with priest-in-charge Richard Aguilar, and Holy Comforter, Miami, with priest-in-charge Rafael Garcia; and attendance tripled at Church of the Resurrection, Biscayne Park, with lay pastoral leader Alberto Cutié.

Clergy need to be trained, Bruttell said, for better, stronger leadership; leadership that understands “we’re not the innkeepers at the ‘Coral Reef Motel’”—the little old motel by the side of the road in every Florida town, the place where no one’s excited about staying. Instead, we need to be “the Hilton,” he said, offering excellence.

 Appropriately, given the convention theme, “40 and FORWARD,” four of the ten resolutions passed by convention related to, or were proposed by, diocesan youth.

The convention passed an amendment to the diocesan constitution that would grant seat and voice to the Bishop and the Executive Board form a committee to develop a list of music resources for the diocese to be presented at the 2010 Diocesan Convention, and the third calling for the formation of a steering committee to study the viability of establishing a diocesan Youth Retreat Center.

An additional resolution submitted from the floor by the Broward Deanery called for the expansion of guidelines for use of youth fund reserves; this did not pass.

The convention approved resolutions to change the deadline for submission of canonically required parochial reports to reflect the current date and process for submitting these reports electronically to the Episcopal Church Center in New York; and to bring the canonical qualifications for seating of lay delegates at convention into conformity with the prohibition of clergy from being seated due to failure to submit canonically required reports by the specified time.

Three resolutions from the Clergy and Lay Compensation and Insurance Committee were approved: Clergy Compensation Guidelines for 2010; a call for the compensation of lay employees to “be given the same consideration” for increases as is outlined in the Clergy Compensation Guidelines; and the resumption of publication of clergy compensation in the Diocesan Journal.

The convention also approved a resolution to express thanks for the newly approved full-communion relationship between the Episcopal Church and the Moravian Church and to send greetings to the Moravian congregations in southeast Florida communities—three in Miami and one in West Palm Beach.

The convention approved a budget for 2010 of $3,518,253, slightly lower than the amount approved at last year’s convention for 2009, but slightly higher than the revised 2009 budget of $3,399,453 approved by Executive Board after the 2008 convention.

In the approved budget the assessment percentage for congregations will remain at the current 13.99 percent. In order to maintain this rate, diocesan staff will receive no COLA raises in 2010, and one staff position will be eliminated.

The preacher for the convention Eucharist was Bishop Mary Gray-Reeves of El Camino Real. Gray-Reeves is a Miami native who grew up as a parishioner at St. Stephen’s, Miami, and served as rector of St. Margaret’s, Miami Lakes, from December 1998.
DIOCESAN CONVENTION
from Page 2

until she was appointed diocesan Archdeacon for De-
ployment in early 2005.

Welcoming her to convention, Frade jokingly ad-
mitted his “mistake…to share my Archdeacon for De-
ployment as a candidate for bishop of El Camino
Real,” but added that “in the short time she has been
there, she is transforming that diocese.”

“She is transforming that diocese,” but added that “in the short time she has been
there, she is transforming that diocese.”

“I am honored to be with you,” Gray-Reeves said.

“We are part of me, and I am part of you; I literally
cannot unwind myself from you, the connection is so

man was doing what the diocese was trying to do.

“We are called to feed the hungry,” she said.

(See p. 5 for more on ECSEFL’s new “Feeding
Our People” initiative.)

In his report to convention Youth Commission
President Michael Sahdev told delegates, “The youth of our diocese have truly been engaged
throughout the nation and beyond. Our passion for
Christ in this diocese is inexhaustible, and with
God’s grace we have spread His word through our
actions both at home and on a national level.”

He spoke of the success of the Happening pro-
gram and of participation by diocesan youth in
provincial and churchwide events, including his
own leadership as a member of the Official Youth
Presence at General Convention.

“The Youth Commission takes seriously the re-
ponsibility of building the next generation of
Christian leaders for our church and the world,” he
said.

He thanked the bishop for his support and guid-
ance, and acknowledged diocesan administrative
assistant for youth ministry Mary Cobiella as “the
man that they are loved. For some,

long for a life with the shepherd,

are your flesh in Madagascar.”

that we do not exist for the institu-

tion… dwelling in a neighborhood

relationship,” she said.

“It is so important to remember that we do not exist for the institu-
tion, we exist for the sheep,” she
concluded. “I stand here as a visible
presence of the institution to say
that we do not exist for ourselves.

We create a healthier institution not
for the sake of itself, but for the
sheep that long to come home, that
long for a life with the shepherd,

May we never forget that we
exist for the sheep who long for
Jesus, who long to be told they are
loved, who long to come home.

The convention also welcomed
the Rt. Rev. Todd McGregor, area
bishop for Toliara (or Tulear), in the
Diocese of Antananarivo, Madagascar,
and his wife, the Rev. Patsy
McGregor, who presented an up-
date on their ministries. The diocese
has partnered in various ways with
the McGregors since they first went
to Madagascar as lay missionaries
in 1991, and Antananarivo is one of
Southeast Florida’s companion dio-
ceses.

Bishop McGregor thanked the
diocese for prayers and financial support; for the
Standing Committee in the mid-90’s that took “the risk of
investing in the McGregors;” and for mission teams
that have visited and worked with them, both in
Madagascar and during the time they served in Kenya.

“For Tulear, you are apostolic,” he said, “and we are
your flesh in Madagascar.”

In the $2,281 received as offering from the con-
vention Eucharist was divided equally between the
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As part of its convention presentation, Episcopal
Charities asked delegates and guests to bring dona-
tions of non-perishable food items. Donations over-
flowed boxes and baskets at the ECSEFL table in the
exhibit hall; a representative basket of the food
was offered at the convention Eucharist and pre-
sented at the Saturday session of convention to the
Rev. Stephen Braddock of Loaves and Fish in Key
West and the Rev. Debra Andrew McConaughey
from St. Columba, Marathon, for Keys Area Inter-
denominational Resources (KAIR) in Marathon.

Most of the food collected went to those two
feeding ministries; but as the Rev. Donna Dambrot,
ECSEFL president, told the convention, not all the
groceries made it into the exhibit hall. “A homeless
gentleman” collected some of the food from dele-
gates on the porch and shared it with other people
on the street who needed it.

“I am annoyed, Dambrot said, but then realized the

man was doing what the diocese was trying to do.

“We are called to feed the hungry,” she said.

(See p. 5 for more on ECSEFL’s new “Feeding
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Christian leaders for our church and the world,” he
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He thanked the bishop for his support and guid-
ance, and acknowledged diocesan administrative
assistant for youth ministry Mary Cobiella as “the
life blood of the Youth Commission.”

“In a diocese that values its youth as much as
ours does, there is nothing but good ahead for us in
the future,” he said.

The convention adjourned with an invitation from
Canon Kerry Robb, interim rector at St. Mary’s, Stu-
art, to the 41st Diocesan Convention, to be held Nov.
12-13, 2010, at St. Mary’s.
Nehemiah congregations’ achievements help define ‘success’

By the Ven. Dr. Bryan A. Hobbs,
Archdeacon for Congregational Development

“Success is …
Knowing your purpose in life,
Growing to reach your maximum potential, and
Sowing seeds that benefit others.”
— John C. Maxwell

“Success” is such an elusive term, especially as it applies to the church and even more so when applied to “my” church. It is easy, although superficial, to point to increased or decreased attendance (Average Weekend Attendance — AWA) or to income, or to the number of baptisms and confirmations, or to a special ministry that had a significant impact. Such measurements are helpful, but somewhat elusive in capturing the authentic and empowering nature of “success” — at least for us in the church.

I was very, very excited with the Bishop’s Hospitality, Invitation, and Incorporation (HII) Awards and our Nehemiah Process Awards given at the 40th Diocesan Convention in Key West. They signified years of prayer, struggle, successes, failures, dreaming, perseverence, hope, and joy on the part of a cadre of clergy and lay leaders who are attempting to take their rightful place in God’s Kingdom.

On this 40th anniversary of our diocese, the Bishop awarded three parishes the HII Award for meritorious achievement in growing their AWA: St. Patrick’s, West Palm Beach — seven years of continuous growth; All Saints, Fort Lauderdale — five years of continuous growth; and St. Mark’s, Palm Beach Garden’s — four years of continuous growth. This kind of achievement demands discernment of God’s call, enthusiasm for their mission, commitment to sharing the Kingdom, a strong lay and clergy leadership team — and a whole lot of grace.

The Nehemiah Awards were also quite impressive. A full list of the congregations and clergy recognized is in the box below, but here is one example:

Attendance (AWA) increases alone were remarkable: Iglesia Episcopal Trinidad, Miami—a small mission congregation — grew 50% in its AWA in one year; Church of the Atonement, Lauderdale Lakes; Holy Redeemer, Lake Worth; and Holy Spirit, West Palm Beach, all grew 14.4%; and Todos Los Santos, Miami, grew 11.4%.

The seven years of continuous efforts by our Nehemiah parishes are beginning to show some data that corresponds with their increase in spiritual health. All of our Nehemiah Classes since 2003 increased their AWA from 2007 to 2008, and all exceeded the diocesan average AWA. Class of 2003 — 2.2% increase; Class of 2004 — 1% increase; Class of 2005 — 2.9% increase; Class of 2006 — 0.2% increase.

Nehemiah Awards

Special Recognition to Clergy for Applying the Nehemiah Principles and Practices


Increase in AWA from 2007 to 2008
Iglesia Episcopal Trinidad, Miami — 50%; Holy Redeemer, Lake Worth, 14.9%; Atonement, Lauderdale Lakes, 14.8%; Holy Spirit, West Palm Beach, 14.4%; Todos Los Santos, Miami, 11.4%

Increase in Plate and Pledge from 2007 to 2008
St. Paul et Les Martyrs D’ Haiti, Miami, 110%; Todos Los Santos, Miami, 57.8%; St. Columbia, Marathon, 34.3%; Holy Cross, Miami, 34.3%; St. Faith’s, Miami, 20.2%; All Saints’, Jensen Beach, 16.2%; St. Luke’s, Port Salerno, 16.2%

Increase in Easter Sunday Attendance from 2007 to 2008
St. Stephen’s, Miami, 31.4%; St. Paul’s, Delray Beach, 28.2%; St. Columbia, Marathon, 26.2%; St. James the Fisherman, Islamorada, 25.7%; Holy Family, Miami Gardens, 22.9%; St. James-in-the-Hills, Hollywood, 16.7%

Special Recognition for Generous Hospitality
Holy Family, Miami Gardens; Holy Spirit, West Palm Beach; St. Matthew’s, Delray Beach; “Bear”, St. Peter’s Key West.
Episcopal Charities launches “Feeding Our People”

The food drive at Diocesan Convention was an introduction to a major initiative by Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida, “Feeding Our People,” which will begin officially with Episcopal Charities Sunday, Jan. 24.

On that Sunday parishioners in every congregation will be asked to make a financial contribution to ECSEFL for feeding ministries throughout the diocese, as well as to bring items of non-perishable food that will be distributed through these feeding programs.

Episcopal Charities reports that congregational food ministries are seeing increased need: not only the needs of members of their communities who are hungry, but also needs of food pantries and soup kitchens for additional support, as supplies, donations and government funding dwindle.

The “Feeding Our People” initiative is a way for Episcopal Charities to respond to this growing need of its congregational outreach ministry partners. Episcopal Charities is planning a variety of programs and events in 2010 that will focus on ways to provide food for the growing numbers of hungry people in our diocese.

There will be two roundtable meetings of congregational feeding ministries to discuss challenges, solutions and the opportunities to work collaboratively. The meetings are intended to launch the diocesan Anti-Racism Commission.

Previous “Feeding Our Stories” days last year focused on black Episcopal congregations in Palm Beach and Broward Counties. The Oct. 24 event featured oral histories from St. Agnes, Christ Church, Transfiguration and Incarnation in Miami and St. Peter’s in Key West, along with a gallery of photos and artifacts from those parishes.

The first speaker, Regina Jolivette Frazier, spoke of her family’s 90-year relationship with St. Agnes, beginning with her grandfather, A.T.S. Reeves. When the white vicar, the Ven. P.S. Irving, was forced to leave town in 1921 because of threats—and a physical attack—against him for serving a black church, he entrusted the church keys to Reeves, who later was ordained as a deacon.

Frazier herself is a Roman Catholic, but her family is still intimately connected with St. Agnes: Her son is married to the daughter of St. Agnes’ rector, Canon Richard Barry.

Fr. Samuel Browne, retired rector of St. Patrick’s, West Palm Beach, gave some of the history of St. Peter’s, Key West, one of the oldest congregations in the diocese, organized as a parish in 1875.

The church was twice destroyed by storms and rebuilt; the present structure, completed in 1924, was built by parishioners, who even made the bricks.

At one time, the flourishing parish had over 500 members.

Browne said he was the first son of the parish to be ordained there. More than 450 attended his ordination to the diaconate on July 4, 1959: “people were standing outside,” Browne said.

Barr said it’s important to recognize that many clergy have come out of the black congregations of our diocese. “If it were not for these congregations we would not have had these vocations.”

Leone Culmer of St. Agnes told the group, “I was baptized in this very building [now the parish’s Blackett Hall]. I am 84 years old, and this church is 109 years old.”

She recalled as child “coming here every day of the week…there was always something here for us.”

There were more than 400 children in the Sunday School, and a boys’ choir. Then “the girls became jealous” and a girls’ choir was formed; Culmer was the secretary of that group.

In 1941 she became the parish secretary at St. Agnes, and in 1947 she married the widowed rector, Fr. John Culmer. “We were the first couple of color to be married at the cathedral in Orlando,” she said.

Her husband was the archdeacon, she said, and served all the black Episcopal churches along the east coast of Florida when they were without clergy.

“Fr. Culmer was very forward-looking,” added Barry. “He took the church to where the people were.”

Church of the Incarnation celebrated its 50th anniversary this year, said Marion Frank Major, recounting the story of how four laymen from the Liberty City neighborhood met with Bishop Henry Louttit in 1949 to discuss starting a mission congregation. The mission’s first service, led by then-Deacon John Jarrett, was held in the Liberty City Community Center on Pentecost, June 5, 1949.

The mission became a parish in 1974, with its seventh vicar, Fr. J. Kenneth Major as rector; 35 years later, he is still the only priest to serve as Incarnation’s rector.

Kathy Johnson of Transfiguration remembered
**Fr. Matthew to share new media skills at Bishop’s Spring Conference**

The featured speaker for the Bishop’s Spring Conference, Mar. 12-13, 2010, at the Duncan Center, will be Fr. Matthew Moretz, curate at Christ’s Church, Rye, New York, whose “Father Matthew Presents” videos have been sharing the Good News with creativity and humor to a growing audience on YouTube since 2006.

Moretz will give three presentations. The first will focus on the new media landscape that has developed online, “especially in terms of the democratizing direction of online publishing and viewing, the place of faith and faith institutions in our present day, the frank and sometimes raunchy culture, and how the Episcopal Church could distinguish itself in this new environment.”

The second presentation will be a full walkthrough of the development and scope of “Father Matthew Presents:” how it functions, how it is made and distributed, “and the community that I cultivate.”

In his third presentation Moretz says he will look to the future, in light of his online experience, and how dioceses and/or seminaries must assist in retooling our clergy (and laity) for the new online landscape.

Between presentations, he plans to teach some basic script-writing, and then have participants break up into groups that will each write a script for online video on some aspect of the life and teaching of the Episcopal Church, utilizing dramatic action, narrative, and images. The groups will then present their “videos” to the full gathering, with comments welcome—as would be the case online.

Additional information about the conference will be published soon on the diocesan website, www.diosef.org, and made available to congregations. Registration will be online.

For more about Moretz and to view his videos, go to www.fathermatthewpresents.com.

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**Artress will lead labyrinth workshop at Duncan Center**

The Rev. Dr. Lauren Artress, whose writing and teaching have reintroduced the ancient pattern of the labyrinth as a spiritual tool for meditation and healing, will present a labyrinth workshop Jan. 22 and 23 at the Duncan Center.

Artress is an honorary canon of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco; the founder of Veriditas, a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching the use of the labyrinth; and the author of Walking a Sacred Path: Rediscovering the Labyrinth as a Spiritual Practice, The Sand Labyrinth Kit and The Sacred Path Companion: A Guide to Walking the Labyrinth to Heal and Transform.

The January event includes a Friday evening lecture from 7-9 p.m., and a Saturday workshop from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The cost is $25 for the evening lecture only; $125 for the Saturday workshop, including continental breakfast and lunch; and $175 per person for the lecture, workshop and overnight accommodation (double occupancy).

For additional information and registration, go to www.duncancenter.org.

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**Bounce house**

*Photo by Susan Manwaring

Children attending the Children’s Sunday Service enjoyed a bounce house, part of an afternoon of fun that followed than annual worship service.**

With activities ranging from liturgical dance to tennis lessons, children of the diocese celebrated together at the annual ECW Children’s Sunday event on Oct. 18 at Holy Family, Miami Gardens.

The afternoon began with worship led by children and youth. Holy Family’s Liturgical Dance Troupe led the procession. Sara Rolle read a prayer of thanksgiving, which was followed by readings of Luke 18:15-17 in English, Spanish and Creole by Anastasia Ferguson, Jessica Romero, and Melissa King. Christophe Chinyere led the congregation in singing “Jesus Loves Me.”

Diocesan ECW President Lillie Clarke and Bishop Leo Fraze welcomed the children, parents, adult leaders and ECW members to the day’s events.

Then the bishop called the children forward to the chancel, where he blessed the prayers they had prepared and placed in a basket, and told the children to enjoy themselves on the day dedicated to giving thanks for the young people of our diocese.

A steel drum solo by Cameron Haye concluded the service.

Then there was pizza, and an afternoon filled with fun: face-painting, hula hoops, a bounce house, basketball, tennis lessons, a football throw and a particularly animated game of musical chairs.

Some of the Episcopal Churchwomen hosting the event enjoyed themselves dancing to some songs remembered from their own teenage years—the Twist drew a great response.

The message of the day was one of joy and hope, celebrating the faith of our children.

Adapted from a report by Susan Manwaring, dioecesan ECW Board member.

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**Children’s Sunday celebration marked by worship and fun**

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**Jan. 30 meeting to launch diocesan Social Justice Association**

The Diocesan Office of Immigration and Social Justice has announced the formation of a diocesan Social Justice Association, which will bring together people from throughout the diocese to pray and work to live out the promise made in our Baptismal Covenant, “to strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.”

Members of the association will be asked to pray regularly for social justice; to train themselves and others to become aware of unfair discrimination in the church and society; and to work actively for change.

Anyone interested in this ministry is invited to an organizational gathering Jan. 30, 10 a.m.-lunch, at St. Paul’s, Delray Beach. There is no cost for this event, but registration is needed and will be available online.

For additional information email Archdeacon Fritz Bazin, jfritzbazin@gmail.com.

The Diocesan Office of Immigration and Social Justice was recently designated a Jubilee Ministry of the Episcopal Church.
Trinity will sponsor Women’s Mystical Poetry event and contest

On Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010, from 7:30 to 9 p.m., Trinity Cathedral, Miami, will offer a Women’s Mystical Poetry and Music Celebration, followed by a reception in the Cathedral Hall.

The event will present spiritual poetry and music written by women and performed by women, with brief introductions of each of the poets represented. Although it will be an interfaith presentation, the work and lives of several Christian mystics will be featured, including St. Teresa of Avila, St. Catherine of Sienna and Hildegard Von Bingen, as well as the work of contemporary female Christian poets.

In conjunction with this event, the cathedral is sponsoring a poetry competition for spiritual poetry written by women. The contest is open to all women of all faiths. Poems can be any style and must be 30 lines or fewer. Poems must be the entrant’s own work and must not have been published previously nor have won any prize in any previous competition of any kind. Entries should be mailed to: Women’s Mystical Poetry Contest, Contest Chair Brenda Mezick, Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, 464 NE 16th Street, Miami, FL 33132. The deadline for submissions is Dec. 28.

Complete contest guidelines can be found on the cathedral website, www.trinitymiami.org. For additional information contact Brenda Mezick, Bren-daMezick@MiamiSAO.com.

Dinner raises more than $73,000 for McGregor’s ministries

There was a full house—about 300 guests—at the diocesan World Mission Commission’s Nov. 15 fundraising dinner to benefit the ministries of Bishop Todd and the Rev. Patsy McGregor in Toliara, in our companion Diocese of Antananarivo, Madagascar. Proceeds from the five-course gourmet Italian dinner and silent auction, along with matching gifts of $30,000 from two anonymous donors, brought the evening’s total receipts to more than $73,000.

The dinner was prepared under the direction of Fr. Marty Zlatic, chair of the World Mission Commission, rector of St. Joseph’s—and also a chef who learned his Italian cuisine in Rome. Servers were members of youth groups from around the diocese.

“It took an army of people to pull that off,” Zlatic said.

The funds will go specifically to support the building of the “Bishop’s Gathering Place,” which will house not only the bishop’s office and residence, but also a conference and training center for the new diocese of Toliara.

Contributions to the McGregor’s ministries can be made through SAMS to www.sams-usa.org. For more information, go to www.peopleraching.org.

Harris to preach at Absalom Jones service

The Rt. Rev. Gayle Harris, bishop suffragan in the Diocese of Massachusetts, will be the preacher for the annual diocesan Absalom Jones Service, scheduled for Feb. 13 at Church of the Incarnation, Miami.

The annual observance commemorates Absalom Jones, the first African American to be ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church and founder of the first African American Episcopal parish, St. Thomas African Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, Pa. An Absalom Jones service has been held annually in this diocese since 1984.

The service, which begins at 10 a.m., will be followed by a luncheon and fashion show, sponsored by the Theodore R. Gibson Chapter of the Union of Black Episcopalians (UBE).

For more information contact Kathleen Walker, president of the Theodore R. Gibson Chapter of the UBE, at kathywalker001@gmail.com.
Dancers from the Fabulous Feet Dance Center lead the Gospel procession, carrying the Light of Christ, at the Nov. 7 service of reconciliation for Fr. Flints Hendricks as rector of All Saints'. Jensen Beach. Hendricks had been present in charge for five years; his installation as rector marked the congregation's successful return to the status of self-supporting parish.

Photo by Pat Khatimanian
today at this Diocesan Convention we are celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the creation of our Diocese as one of the 110 dioceses of the Episcopal Church. Prior to 1969 we were part of the Diocese of South Florida. In 1969 our General Convention approved the division of that diocese into three dioceses—Southeast, Southwest and Central Florida.

I also would like to point out that we are gathered here today at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, a congregation that was established 177 years ago and is the oldest congregation of this diocese and also among the most ancient congregations of the State of Florida.

We can indeed say with the author of the 12th chapter of the Letter to the Hebrews: “we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses…. Therefore let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us.”

We are celebrating our 40th year, and we are moving forward.

But as we move forward, let us remember and thank God for the lives of men and women, lay and ordained, who in the past through their sacrifice and obedience to our Lord established our church in this part of the world; men and women who, under leadership of their bishops, were able to endure whatever came their way in the midst of the uncertainty of their times.

We have a debt of gratitude to those who have preceded us, among them Bishop Henry Loutitt, Bishop of South Florida; Bishop James Duncan, first bishop of our diocese; Bishop Calvin Schofield, our second Diocesan Bishop; and Bishop John Said, who served our diocese; Bishop Calvin Schofield, our second diocese and also among the most ancient congregations of the State of Florida.

We are gathered here today, people of God who call ourselves Episcopalians, part of the Anglican Communion. We come from many different places, different theological positions, different colors of skin, different languages, different sexual orientations, different socio-economic classes, different political positions and different worship styles; but regardless of those differences we become one through the power of the Holy Spirit, and through our common belief that Jesus Christ is Lord.

It is he, our Lord Jesus, who is the bridge that interconnects each one of us, regardless of our differences, and it is through him that we can find our unity.

As I reflect back on my years with you as your bishop, I must say that we have lived through very interesting times, and some of those times, we all know, have been quite challenging.

The terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, just one year after my enthronement, was one of those challenges, not only for our country but for the Church itself. The consequences of this major terrorist attack have caused many changes and turmoil in the life of our country and the Church.

General Convention 2003 and the consecration of the bishop of New Hampshire also caused divisions in our Church, and we need to own that, in order to be reminded that there is always a price to pay when you stand for justice and equality.

In the past The Episcopal Church paid dearly for our stand for justice; we paid for our stand on Civil Rights that led to the loss of many members of our Church, especially in dioceses in the southern part of the United States.

Another recurring challenge for us in this part of the United States is that we are in the path of the hurricanes. Also during my time as your bishop we have faced the avian flu and at present, the swine flu.

And sadly, during these past years the United States has been involved in two wars that seem endless and that have caused many casualties and affected our economy.

Distressing also have been the two collapses of our economy that we have encountered during this past decade. One of them happened after September 11, and the other one during the past year and a half; the effects of which have caused great pain in all of our communities.

At present the financial outlook seems to be improving, and our prayers are that unemployment, foreclosures and depression will become a thing of the past.

No one could say that we have gone through easy times.

Yes, it has been hard; yes, these crises and challenges have affected all of us; but we have endured and we have persevered with our mission. We can indeed do all things through Christ who strengthens us.

But let us not lose sight of the fact that all of the above calamities that we have encountered during these past years are nothing new.

Those who lived between the wars hesitated to do the mission that God had given them. During the time that God gave them, they experienced two major world wars, plus the Korean and Vietnam wars; they persevered during the worst Wall Street financial collapse of American history in the 1930s and through the major unemployment of those days.

They also had to deal with various strains of influenza, like swine flu, and other pandemics like polio; they lived through horrible, devastating hurricanes that repeatedly damaged their church buildings. They also had to face several conflicts in our church that brought division, as we took a stand against slavery, against discrimination and segregation based on race; when marriage was forbidden between persons of dif-

Letters to the Editor

The Net welcomes letters to the editor. All letters must include the name, address, phone number, and if available, email address, of the writer. Parish affiliation is also requested, when applicable.

The Net reserves the right to refuse publication, and to edit letters for length, spelling and grammar.

News & Information

The Net invites news of parish ministries and activities, as well as commentary on church-related issues and events. Whenever possible, all material should be submitted electronically or on a disk or CD. Documents sent as attachments or on disk should be in Word, or in a format that can be opened in Word. Printed material should be an original document or a clean photography that can be scanned — no faxes.

Please include with all material the name, address, phone number and if available, email address, of the contributor. Parish affiliation is also requested, when applicable. The Net reserves the right to refuse publication and to edit all contributions. Photographs should be high-resolution digital files or clear prints of film photographs, preferably on glossy paper. Photographs sized for a web-site are generally too small for print. Do not send hard prints made from digital photographs.

All material – letters, articles or photos – should be submitted electronically to: Episcocar@aol.com, or by mail to: Mary W. Cox, Diocese of Southeast Florida, 525 NE 15 St., Miami, FL 33132-1411.

Net Deadline

The next Net deadline is Jan. 10. If you have an announcement or calendar item for events in late February, March or April please have the information to The Net by Jan. 10. E-mail to Episcocar@aol.com or mail to Mary W. Cox, DoSEF, 525 NE 15th St., Miami, FL 33132-1411.

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fertent races who loved each other. Divisions took place due to our acceptance of birth control and our pastoral stand on the remarriage of previously divorced persons, and 33 years ago a major conflict took place due to our approval of the ordination of women to the priesthood and the episcopate.

That was the time that those who preceded us had to face, but now is the time that God has given for us to live…

You and I as ministers of the Church have a mission to do as we face the next 40 years. Are we going to face the future with vigor, in order to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ, or do you prefer to wait for the better times that may never come in the future?

Well, let me tell you something: That time in the future is for others to fulfill, others that will come after us, but for you and me this is the time that God has given us to do his mission.

I will never forget what the late Bishop Herb Thompson of Southern Ohio said to me in his sermon the day of my enthronement as your diocesan bishop, Sept. 16, 2000.

Bishop Thompson said that I must never forget the fact that in the end the reality is that I am only the interim bishop between the second and the fourth bishop of this diocese. You see, this is the time that God has given me as the third diocesan bishop of Southeast Florida, and my mission is to continue building upon the work of those that were here before me and to prepare the way and strengthen the church in order that someday the fourth bishop will continue building upon our common work…

I give thanks to God that he has given me the strength to serve you and this diocese as the interim bishop between the second and the fourth bishop, but I am also aware that time passes quickly. Therefore, I want to make sure that the years I have ahead as your bishop will be used in a creative way.

I have some clear ideas of how to proceed, but I want us to work together in discovering God’s will for us on how to proceed, and to determine what kind of diocese we want to hand to the fourth bishop when he or she gets here.

I am in the process of preparing four Visioning Days to take place in 2010 in different parts of the diocese. The dates and venues will be announced before the end of this year, and anyone in the diocese will be welcome to participate, whichever of one the gatherings is most convenient.

What I am proposing is for us to concentrate on what we believe that God is calling us to do during this time, yours and mine, as interim ministers of this diocese, especially during the immediate future, the years from 2011 until 2015. I am aware that some of this visioning has already been taking place.

We know that the creativity of many in this diocese has allowed us to develop regional ministries, such as the shared ministry of All Saints, Ft. Lauderdale, with the Church of the Intercession and El Centro Episcopal Todos Los Santos.

In the Deanery of South Palm Beach we lead the cooperation of two Boca Raton congregations, St. Gregory’s and the Chapel of St. Andrew. In the North Palm Beach Deanery, St. Mark’s, Palm Beach Gardens, is sharing ministry with St. George’s, Riviera Beach. I know there are other collaborative ministries that are developing — these are only a few examples of the creative work happening in our diocese.

Let me also share with you an initiative that has taken a long time to get here. I spoke of it at my very first diocesan gathering, called First Step, at St. An-

First Step, at St. An-

The Net, December 2009

“TGIF” pool?

Duncan Center Director Alison Walsh shows off the model of proposed improvements to the Center, including a swimming pool that Bishop Leo Frade is calling the “TGIF — Thank God It’s Frade” pool.

 drew’s School in Boca early in 2001. There I talked about my desire to start a ministry among the many Brazilians that live in our diocese.

I don’t know if you know that the three towns in the United States with the largest populations of Brazilians are found in our diocese, more specifically in and around Pompano Beach. We have been working with Fr. Tim Thomas and Dean Bernie Pecaro, both rectors of churches in the Pompano Beach area, in order to coordinate the beginning of this ministry. We now have a Portuguese-speakin person to start this ministry. He is the Rev. Jose de Jesus Sanchez, who is here with his wife Glenda, I ask your prayers for the success of this ministry.

I also want to commend the ministry that has taken place in several Hispanic congregations of our diocese. Todos Los Santos, Miami, this past year became a self-supporting parish. In addition to that, the growth of places like Holy Cross, Miami, and Holy Comforter, Miami, are exciting as they, too, move closer to self-supporting parish status.

It is good to share with you the news that in addition to Todos Los Santos, two other churches, All Souls’, Miami Beach, and All Saints’, Jensen Beach, have become self-supporting parishes.

I also would like to mention the strengthening and revitalization of our Cursillo Movement. I want to thank many that have made this possible, and in particular I want to thank Dede Lewis for her effort and support to make this possible.

I am also happy to announce that with the approval of Bishop Alfred Reid we are in the process of exporting the Cursillo Movement to the Diocese of Jamaica, with the cooperation of the Diocese of the Bahamas and Turks and Caicos, which also has a strong Cursillo Movement. This is indeed an exciting day.

And now let me say something about our Duncan Center. I am very happy to share with you the good news that it continues in the black and is flourishing indeed. The occupancy keeps increasing and our Duncan Center has become a vital part of our ministry. We are now in the process of starting a new effort to raise the funds for a swimming pool and gardens.

In the past you named the Duncan Center to honor our first Diocesan Bishop James L. Duncan; you also named the chapel for Calvin O. Schofield, Jr., to honor our second Diocesan Bishop. Well, I don’t want to be left out: I would like to have a pool and name it the TGIF Swimming Pool, and TGIF stands for: “Thank God it’s Frade.” At the exhibit hall next to the church you will find a model of the proposed TGIF Pool and Gardens, so please make an effort to go and see the proposed project that will make the Duncan Center more attractive and marketable.

I also want to invite you to a birthday party next year; on April 18 we will celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the Duncan Center…

I also want to announce that I will be naming the Rev. Dr. Carlos Sandoval as Canon for Health. As I mentioned earlier, we have been facing one pandemic after another — HIV/AIDS, avian flu and now the “swine flu,” H1N1. Today’s issue of USA Today reported that swine flu has swept through about 22 million Americans from April through October of this year, killing an estimated 3,900 people, 540 of them children, according to the Center for Disease Control.

Dr. Sandoval is a medical doctor and a psychiatrist, as well as a priest of our diocese, and we will work with him to make sure that we protect ourselves from illness during these days ahead of us.

I would be remiss if I did not mention an organization in our diocese that has been working very hard to help the needy in our midst. I refer to Episcopal Charities of Southeast Florida, which under the guidance of its new director, the Rev. Donna Dambrot, and a very dynamic board, has brought new energy to its ministries in recent months. I thank Episcopal Charities for the initiative asking delegations to bring to convention a donation of food for those in need in the Keys…

Before I end, allow me to make some comments about other important issues.

First let me say to you that during this coming triennium we will be involved in discussing the Anglican Covenant that eventually will be presented to the Anglican Communion. Some have already come out to support the Covenant and others to attack it. Well, the proposed Covenant is not out yet and we will wait to have the complete draft in our hands in order to study and analyze it after it comes out.

I also want to mention something that has been in the news recently in reference to the invitation of the Pope in Rome for Anglicans to join their church. One of the newspapers of Miami came out with a headline that read: “Stampeded of Anglicans and Episcopalians to join the Catholic Church.”

Well, the rumor of our demise has been greatly exaggerated. The reports from around the world where our Communion has flourished show that even the most conservative groups have declined the invitation. As I check around other dioceses the report shows a lack of enthusiasm to the invitation.

But let me say this, too, not to brag, but because it needs to be said: The number of Roman Catholics, lay and ordained, that are received into our church continues increasing.

Our doors will remain open to those who want to come to our church.
Eight guilds represent SE Florida at Acolyte Festival

By Demetrius Jones

Acolytes from eight churches represented the Diocese of Southeast Florida at this year’s National Acolyte Festival on Oct. 10 at Washington National Cathedral. St. Anne’s, Hallandale; St. James-in-the-Hills, Hollywood; Church of the Incarnation, Miami; Church of the Resurrection, Biscayne Park; Historic St. Agnes, Miami; Holy Cross, Miami; Holy Family, Miami Gardens; and Trinity Cathedral, Miami.

Bishop Leo Frade came with the group from Church of the Incarnation. This was the first time that our diocesan bishop attended the Festival with the acolytes of Southeast Florida.

When I attended the Festival two years ago, I think there may have been more acolytes who made the trip. Two years ago we were not in the economic crisis that is now impacting our budgets, and acolyte guilds were coming from everywhere. However, despite the difficulty for all churches of raising funds for the trip, acolyte guilds from as far west as California still came to Washington, D.C., to celebrate, each guild bringing approximately ten acolytes.

St. Anne’s acolytes were praised for our precision in the procession down the cathedral aisle. We’ve created a move called the “shift,” which is the rotation of the six torches around the cross and back into the original order of procession. The shift is executed after we acknowledge the bishop and before we continue processing to our places.

We also executed the “kick step,” which is similar to a military march step. While many of the acolyte guilds paced quickly through the cathedral and didn’t stop to reverence the bishop, we were slow and took our time.

Because of our style of procession, we noticed our parish’s acolyte guild being pointed out by many people from other churches saying, “Look at St. Anne’s!”

Bishop Frade gave our guild thumbs-up for our performance at the cathedral; he said we were “outstanding,” and his wife stated she is very proud of us.

I want to thank Mr. Brown, our acolyte master, for his training for the past seven years. It’s because of the long hours of practice time he has given up to us that we were able to perform with such precision.

Two years ago, our youngest acolyte, Amari Rainford, who was then three years old, made the spotlight as the youngest acolyte present—maybe the youngest acolyte in any Episcopal Church. Now five, he remains the one of the youngest acolytes in our diocese, along with Joshua Parker, also five, from Holy Family.

When asked by Bishop John Chane of the Diocese of Washington what church he belonged to, Amari exclaimed “I don’t know!” in front of the whole cathedral congregation. After the service was over, Amari said to his dad, “You never told me the name of my church!” He knows now, and we’re all proud—of our youngest acolyte, of our St. Anne’s team and of all the acolytes who represented Southeast Florida this year.

Florida.” Our acolyte master and trainer Maceo Brown heard some of the acolytes from other churches saying, “Look at St. Anne’s!”

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Over the course of two days we became one body of human love, loving each other the way that Christ asked us to love one another. All 43 participants came in not knowing each other, and yet by the time closing ceremony came around, we had shared tears of sorrow, tears of joy, an amazing religious experience and much more.

To me, the last part of the weekend was the ideal of what Christ asked of us all: We became one body in Christ, and we will never stand alone.

After the Happening weekend, I can honestly say that our diocese has some of the greatest teens—noble, kind and loving. The kids I met will forever be a part of my life, and the gift they gave me in accepting me and sharing so much with me left me rejuvenated and ready to conquer anything that comes my way.

I highly recommend Happening as an encounter that every teenager should experience. Through Happening, we can share Christ’s love with one another and become the Church that Christ created.

Daniel Ledo is a member of St. Stephen’s, Miami.

Youth share their faith at diocese’s Happening weekend

By Daniel Ledo

“Instead of going to church or youth group and having adults tell you what faith should be like, Happening is a bunch of youth talking to you about their own faith. It’s easy to relate to.”

That is how one of the youth at Happening 25, Oct. 23-25 at Camp Choee in south Broward and Palm Beach Counties, described the weekend, and that is what Happening was like for me, too.

As soon as I arrived, I was welcomed by the other youth and was immediately accepted. This ease-of-acceptance became a blessing for me, and I will never forget the experiences we shared.

There were 43 “Happenings” from 13 congregations in all parts of Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties. The team included 22 youth, representing seven congregations, as well as eight full-time and five part-time adult leaders, from 10 different churches.

Bishop Leo Frade spoke at the closing, and called us all to be active participants in our parishes and in the diocese.

Over the course of two days we became one body of human love, loving each other the way that Christ asked us to love one another. All 43 participants came in not knowing each other, and yet by the time closing ceremony came around, we had shared tears of sorrow, tears of joy, an amazing religious experience and much more.

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I highly recommend Happening as an encounter that every teenager should experience. Through Happening, we can share Christ’s love with one another and become the Church that Christ created.

Daniel Ledo is a member of St. Stephen’s, Miami.
The Blessing of the Animals has become an annual event in many of our congregations. The Oct. 4 Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, whose joy in all of creation is recalled in stories of his friendship with birds and animals, provides an opportunity for congregations to welcome their neighbors—both four-legged and two-legged.

At parish day-schools, like St. John’s, Homestead, and St. Stephen’s, Miami, stuffed animals (and even a plastic dinosaur) were blessed, along with the living creatures. Zoo animals received a blessing from Fr. Greg Mansfield, chaplain at St. Mary’s Hospital in West Palm Beach, and an exotic visitor from a wildlife rescue organization came to St. Thomas, Coral Gables. Parishioners at St. Margaret’s and San Francisco de Asís, Miami Lakes, could request “house calls”—Fr. Richard Aguilar blessed pets in their own homes.

For a gallery of animal blessing pictures from around the diocese, go to www.diosef.org, click on “News and events,” “Images and multimedia,” and look in “Diocesan photo galleries.”

Here are a few of the best, chosen by a panel three diocesan communicators: Jim DeLa, Diocese of Southwest Florida; Herb Gunn, Diocese of Michigan; and Melodie Woerman, Diocese of Kansas. Thanks to these judges for their expert help.

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**Feeding baby...**

Fr. Mario Milian (right) watches as Fr. Roger Tobin, rector of St. Thomas, Coral Gables, carefully feeds the baby lion that came to be blessed on the Feast of St. Francis.

**Little girl, big pet**

A father and daughter wait for their very large pet to be blessed at St. Joseph’s, Boynton Beach.

**Yikes!**

Fr. Roger Tobin tries to figure out exactly how to bless this pet from the Environmental Science classroom at St. Thomas School.

**Peace**

Two of the animals blessed at Church of the Advent, Palm City, greet each other in the spirit of St. Francis.

**Blessing Mr. Turtle**

Kristen Winter, and sons Tommy and Charlie make sure that “Mr. Turtle” (hidden in his box) gets a blessing from Fr. Steve Fregeau at St. Mary’s, Stuart.

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Photos above and center by Cristy Carbajales

Photo by Georgia Handy

Photo by Aric Ireland

Photo by Thomas Winter
Two parishes offer support for job seekers

By Mary W. Cox, editor

Looking for a job in a time of rising unemployment doesn’t necessarily begin with updating a resume—sometimes it begins with prayer.

The St. Mark’s Evangelist, Ft. Lauderdale, and Bethesda-by-the-Sea, Palm Beach, have both begun offering weekly support groups that provide job-seekers with practical help in skills like networking and writing resumes, but also offer spiritual support and a community in which those who are looking for work can share their experiences and find encouragement.

Jim Wells, a member of St. Mark’s with a background in finance, had started a job search support group at his former parish in New York, using skills and insights he had learned when he was between jobs himself.

He began the group at St. Mark’s in late August. The group has been small—six people, at most, Wells said at an Oct. 21 session—but the results have been encouraging.

He emphasizes empowerment, urging job-seekers to figure out what they want, find out which companies offer opportunities for that kind of work, and then “go for it.”

“Do you want to fill the requirements of someone else’s flow chart, or do you want to fulfill your own dreams?” he asks.

One of those attending the Oct. 21 meeting was Nimal, a recent immigrant from Jamaica with a background in computer science. His wife had also participated in the group, he said, and had recently found a job in a field she loves, marketing and communications.

Obituary

Deacon Peter Wallace, member of The Mighty Band of God

The Rev. Peter Wallace, deacon at St. Ambrose, Ft. Lauderdale, died Oct. 30 at age 76, after several years of declining health.

Born June 2, 1933, in Buffalo, NY, he attended Vanderbilt University on a scholarship and was a veteran of the Korean War. His ashes are to be interred in Arlington National Cemetery.

As a contractor, he built much of the City of Plantation, and during the years he served as volunteer sexton at St. Ambose, he built the main altar and organ loft at the church.

Wallace served on the board of St. Laurence Chapel, but he was best known in the diocese as a leader in the Cursillo movement—and as the string bass player in The Mighty Band of God, a group that has led music at Cursillo weekends, ultryas and many diocesan events.

During his preparation for ordination Wallace suffered several catastrophic heart problems, including a massive stroke that impaired his ability to read, but was eventually able to be ordained to the diaconate on Nov. 19, 2005.

Fr. David Peoples, priest-in-charge at St. Ambrose, re- called, “Through hard work and determination Peter regained much of what he lost and served fully as a deacon—with distinction—despite physical limitations.”

Wallace is survived by his wife, Eileen, and two stepsons, Michael and Mark Tibbetts.

Stokes receives Lilly Foundation grant for sabbatical

St. Paul’s, Delray Beach, and its rector, Fr. William “Chip” Stokes, have been awarded a $47,685.00 grant from the Lilly Foundation’s National Clergy Renewal Program for 2010. The purpose of these grants is to fund sabbatical time for full-time clergy serving in active parish ministry. Family members are also often included in the grant award and the St. Paul’s grant proposal was intentional in including the full participation of Stokes’ wife, Susan, the parish’s director of Children, Youth and Family Ministries, in the sabbatical.

The Stokes’ sabbatical, which the proposal called, “From Wilderness to Wilderness: Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude,” will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in Ways of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Stokes’ sabbatical, which the proposal called, “From Wilderness to Wilderness: Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude,” will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude, will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in The

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The Stokes’ sabbatical, which the proposal called, “From Wilderness to Wilderness: Sounds of Silence, Songs of Solitude,” will begin in July of 2010 with their participation in the Sewanee’s Writers’ Conference at the University of the South in Sewanee, Tennessee. They will return to St. Paul’s for the balance of the summer, and then leave for extended sabbatical time following Labor Day Weekend.

Their extended sabbatical will take them to the St. Thomas Retreat Center in Cody, WY, where they will explore the concept of centering prayer and have an opportunity to visit Yellowstone National Park.

In late September they will journey to Jerusalem, where they will participate in “Ways in the Wilderness” a course of continuing education offered by St. George’s College, which will include journeying into the deserts of Sinai and Egypt while exploring the desert tradition in both the biblical and monastic experiences.

Following “Ways in the Wilderness” they will travel to Ireland, visiting family and exploring family roots on Susan’s side while also engaging in reflection about the Celtic Christian tradition and visiting monastic ruins in and around Ardree.

After this, they will travel to the Lake District in England where Chip will consider Wordsworth’s conception of “reflection in solitude” and take time to do some creative writing.

They will return to their ministries at St. Paul’s the first weekend of Advent.

Throughout the sabbatical, the program at St. Paul’s will offer connections with the Stokes’s sabbatical experience, including courses on centering prayer; the Desert Fathers; Celtic Christianity and Wordsworth and Recollection in Solitude.
St. Joseph’s and BSA make baptism ‘extra special’

By Christopher Hagman

All baptisms are special. At St. Joseph’s, Boynton Beach, the Brotherhood of St. Andrew makes baptisms extra special: Each newly baptized child receives a hand-made faith chest built by members of the Brotherhood.

The chests are filled with gifts—most of them, like the chests, hand-made—from parishioners and ministry groups in the parish. Each chest contains a Bible, a Christian music CD and age-appropriate books. The “Sassy Sewers,” led by Marla Peck, make a personalized quilt for each infant and young toddler. Parishioner Sherry Thomas embroiders a personalized burp cloth or towel with a picture of a sheep and the words, “I’m in God’s Flock” for each baptized person. Professional ceramist Sally Antonelli, hand-paints a porcelain cross with the baptized person’s name and date of baptism. Olive Gill crochets a lamb for the babies and toddlers.

In addition to the gifts in the faith chests, parishioner Joan Fox creates individual small banners for each baptized person that attach to a large banner. The large banner is part of the procession at every baptism, and each January at a family worship service all those baptized in the previous year are presented with their banners.

Our chapter has been making faith chests for several years. Although the project is not difficult, it is a commitment of money and time. Throughout the year our chapter has fund-raisers, like pancake and spaghetti dinners, which raise money to pay for materials. Periodically, we order enough pre-cut wood from a wholesale cabinet manufacturer in North Carolina to make about thirty chests. Our chapter buys hardware locally and custom cuts some of the screws.

We are fortunate to have Brothers like Bob Lees, Jeff Nurge and Dennis Paul who have good wood working skills. They show others what to do or how to assist. Several Brothers work on each faith chest, which takes about two hours to build. Our chapter has built hundreds of faith chests and has learned from our mistakes. Now we have a solid system of how to make them right.

Children’s Minister Dee Zlatic keeps us informed about the number of upcoming baptisms. Whenever we get low on faith chests, I call a working meeting on a Saturday morning—usually at someone’s garage. We start early and work until mid-morning or noon. The working meetings sometimes include bagels and juice and are excellent fellowship opportunities for current and new members.

St. Joseph’s rector, Fr. Marty Zlatic says, “In our baptismal covenant the congregation promises that we will do all in our power to support this person in his/her life in Christ… The faith chest presentation becomes a visible sign of our continued support for this spiritual journey together and enables us to begin marking the moments of the spiritual milestones that we, as a spiritual family, will share together as that child continues to grow in wisdom, stature and in the eyes of God.”

It is awesome to give a family a hand-made faith chest that contains gifts that represent so much love and caring. Through the years our chapter has received much gratitude and appreciation from families who have received faith chests filled with gifts from various ministries.

Christopher Hagman is chapter director of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew at St. Joseph’s. This article is adapted, with additional material from St. Joseph’s Director of Children’s Ministries, Dee Zlatic, from one published in the summer 2009 issue of the St. Andrew’s Cross.

Parish lecture series will explore religious pluralism

Photo by Ric Filer

Brotherhood of St. Andrew members (left to right) Dennis Paul, Bob Lees and Jeff Nurge present faith chests to a family at a baptism service at St. Joseph’s, Boynton Beach.

The theme of this year’s series is “The Dynamics of Religious Pluralism.” Subsequent lectures

Parish lecture series will explore religious pluralism

St. Andrew’s, Lake Worth, begins its fourth annual free lecture series on Sunday, Jan. 3, with a presentation by Dr. Nathan Katz on the Dalai Lama.

The evening will begin with a potluck supper at 5:30 p.m., followed by the lecture at 6:30.

The theme of this year’s series is “The Dynamics of Diversity: An Exploration of Religious Pluralism.” Subsequent lectures are set for Saturday evenings—Feb. 6, Mar. 6 and April 24—beginning with worship at 6 p.m., followed by a potluck supper, then the lecture at 7:30 p.m.

Topics include “Palestinian Judaism in the First Century: Understanding the Semitic Mind of Jesus” (Feb 6); “Sharing the Legacy of Abraham: The Forefather of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam” (Mar. 6) and “Haitian Vodou: Its True Face” (April 24).

Thank you, gracias, merci!

Thanks to everyone who has made a donation to The Net! By the second week of December we had received $4,279 from faithful subscribers—nearly $600 more than was received by the end of January this year in response to the 2008 appeal. In our present economic difficulties, this represents an extraordinary commitment to communications ministry in our diocese.

Thanks go also to all of you who continue to submit the articles, photographs and information that make The Net worth reading.

— Mary W. Cox, editor
All Saints leads ecumenical approach to social justice

By Todd Hoover

Four hundred people from 25 churches and temples gathered at All Saints, Ft. Lauderdale, on Nov. 10 for the Broward Organized Leaders Doing Justice (BOLD Justice) Community Problems Assembly.

All Saints helped found BOLD Justice in 2007, and members of the congregation have joined with 1,800 other multi-faith worshippers to bring social justice changes to Broward County. Through the power of people in the pews working together to demand change, BOLD Justice has convinced county leaders to provide low-income rental housing; a dental plan for the uninsured; and reforms in the unemployment claims process. BOLD is a direct action agency not a direct service agency.

In the past year, Broward County has funded $2.4 million for the rental units with 350 already built and 263 units under construction. Top leaders from Nova University, the Hospital Districts and the American Dental Association partnered together for the first time to finalize opening up dental care to the uninsured and low-income residents. The Rev. Rosa Lindahl-Mallow of All Saints and Centro Hispano Todos los Santos chaired this dental committee and aggressively pushed these leaders to do the right thing; she wouldn’t take no for an answer.

This year BOLD has demanded that the county commission require Work Force One to fix clerical errors at the local centers so that unemployment claims would be expedited. Over thirty percent of initial claims were “flagged”, delayed—for weeks at a time in some cases—to due to clerical errors. Reforms to the claims process literally saved lives: There had been a spike in suicides of laid-off working men in their 30s, who had never experienced a recession and had reached the point of desperation.

The week before the big action assembly last spring, the county commissioner responsible for requesting the change told us the commission wouldn’t do it. Once he walked into the church and saw over 1,500 people at the assembly, he immediately said “yes”—and the needed reforms were made within 30 days.

At the Nov. 10 meeting the members from all the participating religious organizations voted that Crime/Community Relations be the issue for 2010. This broad issue will be narrowed down and specified once the newly formed research committee investigates the most pressing need in this area and develops a recommendation.

On April 22, 2010, all these people of faith will gather together for the Nehemiah Action Assembly, at which they will present the issue, along with a workable solution, to county leaders.

For more information on becoming a part of BOLD Justice or involving your congregations with ecumenical social justice initiatives in your community, contact Todd Hoover at todd@allsaintsfl.org.

St. Andrew’s supports work of breast cancer survivors

Berti Longobardi, a parishioner at St. Andrew’s, Palmetto Bay, is a five-year breast cancer survivor and an active member of Miami’s first and only all-breast-cancer-survivor competitive Dragon Boat team, Team SOS Miami.

Save Our Sisters (SOS) is an organization that works to raise breast cancer awareness and provides both financial assistance for women who cannot afford mammograms, and support and guidance to women battling the disease.

Dragón Boat racing is adapted from a Chinese tradition, and has become a popular sport with breast cancer survivors not only for its health and fitness benefits, but also for the friendships and personal empowerment it provides.

On Oct. 9 about 100 parishioners and friends came to St. Andrew’s to view a new documentary film produced for WLRN-Channel 17 about the SOS Dragon Boat team. Longobardi and several of her teammates were present for a question-and-answer period after the film. Donations were requested for SOS, and the parish raised nearly $900 for the organization’s work.

Sharing Thanksgiving

Thompson Sunderaj of St. Matthew’s, Miami, gives all the fixings for Thanksgiving dinner to a young woman at Bethany Church of the Nazarene in Miami. Parishioners Emile Young (at right, in the truck) and Janelle Aizpurua (center left, in pink shirt) were part of the team that gathered, packed and distributed the food. St. Matthew’s Thanksgiving Basket Outreach ministry is now in its 18th year; the parish works with German Izquierdo, director of the Edison Neighborhood Service Center, who knows where there are families who need the food and finds a neighborhood church to host the distribution.