

The St. Vivian Times

SUMMER/FALL 2008

For Teens

GETTING TO KNOW: FR. PAUL

By Guest Reporter
Carrie Wurzelbacher

What makes a teenage boy devote a lifetime to his faith? It was with this question and many others that I interviewed a very upbeat and cheerful Father Paul Gebhardt.

As a young man Father had often thought of becoming a priest but, unsure, he tried to ignore the calling. It wasn't until his late high school and early college years that God's calling became too persistent to disregard, God was knocking and there was no avoiding it. His parents (to his annoyance at that age) were thrilled. His friends, well, they got used to the idea.

As a priest, Father finds inspiration for his homilies by asking God, "What is it You need Your people to hear?" He believes that a homily should be kept short and to the point, saying, a priest should "spit out what he wants to say and sit down."

Though highly respectful of the church, he believes that practices such as banning books and music are ridiculous, because they only encourage young teens to participate in whatever has been banned.

When asked to give advice to the world's teenagers, Father said, "I would hesitate to do that because I know that none of them are going to take it." When pressed further though, he advised us "to love and love deeply in all matters of your life."

As a priest Father Paul lives this motto, and serves his faith well.



St. Vivian's Olympic champions display their medals.

TEENS COMPETE IN YOUTH MINISTRY OLYMPICS

Inspired by the dramatic competitions taking place in Beijing during the 2008 Olympics, St. Vivian Youth Ministry held its own Olympics at the youth meeting on August 19.

Troy Elsen had a surprising come-from-behind victory, taking gold in the all-around competition. Elsen had a rocky start in the first event, the javelin throw, when he accidentally threw the javelin on top of the school building, abruptly ending that event for the other competitors.

As the competition continued, Elsen secured a victory with a impressive performances in the wall-sitting and penny-catching events.

Final rankings:

- 1st Place - Troy Elsen
- 2nd Place - Jason Copenhaver,
Josh Hafele (tie)
- 4th Place - Drew Bartell
- 5th Place - Sarah Kent,
Adam Zust (tie)

*For more information about St. Vivian Youth Ministry
Contact: Jeanne Schaefer, Director of Youth Ministry, 728-4332*

*To receive text message reminders
about youth ministry events*

E-mail your name and cell phone number to:

jeanne.schaefer@stvivian.org



FROM THE EDITOR

This has been a tough year. Not for me personally, but over the past couple of months I've known people who have been through very rough times. A really bad break up. The death of a parent. The death of a close friend. A planned adoption that fell through just before the baby was born. A terminal and life-altering diagnosis. It's times like these that force us to ask, "How can God allow such suffering?"

When I was in college, my 24-

year-old sister-in-law died suddenly in a car accident. It broke my heart to lose her. It broke my heart to see my brother and my family suffer so. It broke my heart to realize that a person full of hope and potential could be taken away forever in one tragic second. I was pretty mad at the world for being so rotten and cruel. It wasn't until years later, when I read a reflection titled "Love Deeply," that I understood that my broken heart could be, not just a

burden, but also a source of tenderness, strength, and love.

The reflection below is dedicated to all my friends who I referred to in the first paragraph and the many people who are coping with broken hearts without my knowing. May you each stand straight in your pain and let the soil on which you stand become richer.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Schaefer

Director of Youth Ministry

LOVE DEEPLY: BY HENRI NOUWEN

An excerpt from, [The Inner Voice of Love: A Journey Through Anguish To Freedom](#)

Do not hesitate to love and to love deeply. You might be afraid of the pain that deep love can cause. When those you love deeply reject you, leave you, or die, your heart will be broken. But that should not hold you back from loving deeply. The pain that comes from deep love makes your love ever more fruitful. It is like a plow that breaks the ground to allow the seed to take root and grow into a strong plant. Every time you experience the pain of rejection, absence, or death, you are faced with a choice. You can become bitter and decide not to love again, or you can stand straight in your pain and let the soil on which you stand become richer and more able to give life to new seeds.

THE PAIN THAT COMES FROM DEEP LOVE EVER MORE FRUITFUL. IT IS LIKE A PLOW THAT BREAKS THE GROUND TO ALLOW THE SEED TO TAKE ROOT AND GROW INTO A STRONG PLANT.

The more you have loved and have allowed yourself to suffer because of your love, the more you will be able to let your heart grow wider and deeper. When your love is truly giving and receiving, those whom you love will not leave your heart even when they depart from you. They will become part of yourself and thus gradually build a community within you.

Those you have deeply loved become part of you. The longer you live, there will always be more people to be loved by you and to become part of your inner community. The wider your inner community becomes, the more easily you will recognize your own brothers and sisters in the strangers around you. Those who are alive within you will recognize those who are alive around you. The wider the community of your heart, the wider



the community around you. Thus, the pain of rejection, absence, and death can become fruitful. Yes, as you love deeply the ground of your heart will be broken more and more, but you will rejoice in the abundance of the fruit it will bear.



The Times for Teens is looking for material to be published in future editions. We welcome poems, movie reviews, commentaries, articles, etc. If you have an idea for our next issue, send it to jeanne.schaefer@stvivian.org.

ST. VIVIAN TEENS GO TO NEW ORLEANS

This summer nine St. Vivian teens, along with eight adult parishioners, went to New Orleans to help rebuild homes destroyed in Hurricane Katrina. Why would our teens want to go through the effort of raising money for a big trip, only to spend that trip working hard in heat and humidity for someone else's benefit?

Adam Zust, a sophomore at St. Xavier High School, said, "When I first saw the horrific telecast of the hurricane, my heart went out to the people who have lost all they had. Since I am fortunate enough to have my house in one piece, I feel that I

should make a difference in someone else's life."

Chris Hanson, a junior at St. X, expressed the same concern for others, saying, "In my everyday life I don't usually have the opportunity to make a really big difference in other people's lives. This mission trip will give me the chance."

The St. Vivian crew worked on six different homes, saw hurricane damage first-hand, met lots of new friends, and also got to enjoy some of New Orleans' most popular tourist attractions.



Left to right: Jeanne Schaefer, Travis Bauer, Emily Brunzman, Matt Wurtzler, Malia Zimmerman, Kelly Heekin, Richele Boucher, Josh Hafele, Adam Zust, Michael Wurtzler and Chris Hanson



Hanging drywall on the ceiling takes teamwork.



Crazy guys with hammers.



Watching a "moving statue" perform in Jackson Square.



Examining a house ripped to pieces by Katrina



Demolition is the coolest job ever!



Yep, we saw 'gators!



Air filters protected us from mold, chemicals, and dust.



We began each morning in prayer and song with the HH2G employees and another visiting youth group from Texas.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

St. Vivian Ministry Fair

Sept 20-21, following all masses

The ministry fair is a celebration of the many ministries, charities, and social events that are a part of life at St. Vivian. Come and explore all the opportunities for teens. Have you ever thought about becoming an usher, lector or Eucharistic minister at mass, volunteering with Children's Liturgy of the Word, joining the choir, performing in the St. Patrick's Day play, supporting the scout troops or going on the next mission trip to New Orleans? This is your chance to find out all you need to know about any parish organization. Or, if you're just looking for fun, stop by the youth ministry table and challenge your friends in a round of Guitar Hero!

High School Youth Meeting

Sunday, Oct 5, from 7-10pm

Join us in the Youth Room on the first and third Sunday of every month for games, prayer, movies, and time with friends.

High School Youth Meeting

Sunday, Oct 19, from 7-10pm

Junior High Halloween Party

Saturday, Oct 25, at 7:30pm

High school students are needed to help host a Halloween Dance Party for the junior high. Come early to help with decorations and registration, and then enjoy pizza, music, and refreshments for the rest of the evening. Don't forget your costume!

High School Youth Meeting

Sunday, Nov 2, from 7-10pm



Prepare Affair: Service Day

Saturday, Nov 15, from 9am-1pm

Join your friends and other parishioners on a mission to clean gutters and rake leaves of our elderly or disabled neighbors. This is a really fun way to earn school service hours. (Registration required)

High School Youth Meeting

Sunday, Nov 16, from 7-10pm

High School Youth Meeting

Sunday, Dec 7, from 7-10pm

High School Youth Meeting

Sunday, Dec 21, from 7-10pm

Perfect North Slopes

Saturday, Dec 27, from 9am-6pm

(Registration required)