



Winter 2003

Saint Vivian's Vibrations

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Life's Most Important Goal

In many ways our lives are a lot like a water pond. When things are calm we can see clear down to the bottom of the pond and notice the slightest movement. But when things are unsettled everything becomes murky. Unfortunately, few of us have lives that are still and calm. For the most part, life is like a kitchen blender with its blades stirring up all that comes in its way.

As we live out our lives we all have certain goals that we would like to accomplish. Maybe we hope to lose a few pounds. So we set up some kind of diet



plan and struggle to make it happen. Or maybe we would like to take a little vacation with the family this summer so we set aside a few dollars from each paycheck. Others might want to know more about their computer so they sign up for one of those evening computer classes.

There is one goal that is often missed and it is the most important of all goals – How can I learn to live more like Christ lived? This just doesn't happen. It takes a lot of work, but it truly is life's most important struggle. For what does it profit us to gain the whole world and then suffer the loss of our soul?

-- Fr. Jack



Securing Our Future...

...by Building on our Past:

The Long Range Planning Committee

You may have seen or heard reference to a group involved with planning for our parish's future. The purpose of this report is to provide a more formal overview of efforts our parish is undertaking to prepare for the next five to 10 years.

Fr. Jack recently convened a Long Range Planning Committee that will meet over the next year. In addition to Fr. Jack, members include parishioners Joy Gunza, Kathy Hartmann, Mary Kent, Dave Nichols, Joe Staneck, Kirk Vonderhaar, and Joe Zins, plus staff members Jodie Bender, Bill Cavanaugh, and Bill Lonneman.

The group is examining carefully the parish's efforts toward meeting the goals established through the 1994-95 long-range planning project and those identified during the 2001 school accreditation process. It also is reviewing reports from the Archdiocese, data on local demographics, interviews conducted as part of the Amos Project, statistics related to the projected teacher shortage,

and data are being collected from a variety of other sources. In a concurrent effort, Fr. Jack, Bill Cavanaugh, Bill Lonneman, and Joe Zins have been attending meetings with neighboring parishes to explore ways in which we might jointly plan and collaborate in the future.

What is quite clear is that St. Vivian Parish faces two substantial challenges in the near future. The first is the serious shortage of priests in the Archdiocese, and the second is maintaining the high quality and affordability of our parish school. The Long Range Planning Committee will meet over the next year to develop a series of recommendations for Fr. Jack and Parish Pastoral Council, with the goal of developing specific plans to prepare our Parish for the next decade.

Reports on this effort will be made to the parish, so be on the lookout for them. Groups such as Parish Pastoral Council and the Education Commission also will receive frequent updates. Through this endeavor our strong parish should become even better. Feel free to contact any member of the committee if you have questions.

-- Joe Zins



Spotlight on...

Jodie Bender, Director of Religious Ed, Youth Ministry

Have you seen her? Well, maybe you have but didn't recognize her – it's the "new Jodie!" More on that later....

Jodie Ann Bender, St. Vivian's very capable Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministry, was born at Good Samaritan Hospital on March 21, 1971. She has one older sister, Julie, who is married to Gary – and they are parents of Christina and Jillian. Jodie has one younger sister, Jeanie, married to Andy – they will become parents for the first time in April. The "three J's" are daughters of Christina and George (Bunny) Bender. Their heritage mixes Greek, (Christina's maiden name is Economopoulos) and German/Irish on Bunny's side.

Jodie attended Our Lady of Victory in Delhi for elementary school, and Seton High School, graduating in 1989. She then entered Northern Kentucky University, graduating in 1993, with two Bachelor of Science degrees – one in information systems, one in management. Other scholastic achievements followed, including a Masters Degree in Religious Studies, earned at Mt. St. Joseph in 1998. She has National Certification in Youth Ministry, and DRE Mode in Catechetical Leader Certification.

On August 1, 1992, Jodie began working for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. She has been Director of Youth Ministry at Our Lady of Victory, St. James - White Oak, and part-time at Little Flower Parish. She then did a sort of "job share" position, working half time at St. Bartholomew and half time at St. Vivian in Youth Ministry, until Father Jack offered her a full time position here at St. Vivian as DRE and Director of Youth Ministry. She accepted, and began on Sept. 1, 1999.

She is currently Chairperson of the Cincinnati Youth Ministry Association, and a participant in CREA-Cincinnati Religious Education Association. Jodie actually has two programs at St. Vivian as

Director of Youth Ministry: one program for Grades 7 and 8, one program for Grades 9 thru 12.

For vacations, Jodie enjoys cruises. She and her mother go together for a sort of "re-bonding" – generally in the spring and fall. These are to the Caribbean Islands, and she's been to the Bahamas so many times the natives will soon be calling her by her first name. The next cruise is now scheduled

for after Christmas, to Cozumel, Grand Caymans, and Jamaica. Her mother speaks fluent Greek, and they hope to enjoy a trip to Greece one day. Jodie headed west to Denver in December to attend a National Conference on Catholic Youth Ministry.

Jodie enjoys sports – fitness-type exercise, i.e., riding her bike and walking five mornings a week with a friend. They wind that up by running about a half mile. ("But I really don't like running".) She's a gardener, loves yard work, and planting flowers at her home. Her absolute favorite season is Christmas. She loves decorating for Christmas, which includes unpacking and displaying her

collection of nutcrackers. She got a piano last Christmas, and is taking lessons – "for my enjoyment only – no concerts." She claims that she can be a good cook, but doesn't really do it very much. She has her favorite TV shows – everything from ER to "The Practice," but usually tapes what she wants for later viewing. If all of that isn't enough – she also does cross-stitching.

Now, back to the "new Jodie." The old Jodie had a serious weight problem, and no one knew why because it definitely wasn't from overeating. It was recognized, despite her active lifestyle, at age 18. She has had brain tumors (yes, plural) and multiple other health problems. No matter what she did, she gained more weight. She was finally referred to an endocrinologist, who determined that she had NO metabolism. At one point, she was put on a 500-calorie a day diet. She gained weight. On her own, she went to the Internet and began investigating gastric-bypass surgery. She checked every medical site, every medical library, every source she could find over the course of a year. She



Jodie Bender, Dir. Religious Ed.,
Youth Ministry



Northern Hills Ecumenical Council Unites Community

What is the Northern Hills Ecumenical Council? The NHEC is a group of churches in our area that work together for the good of the community. All churches in the area have been invited to participate.

The council works with the clergy, choir directors and lay representatives of each congregation. The NHEC was started in the spring of 1976. Its' main goal is to further ecumenical cooperation in our community through joint worship, work and prayer. We want to both learn from and respect the differences between us. The council can serve as a forum through which the churches of many faiths can work together to develop their mission in our community.

One of the activities of the Council is the annual Crop Walk. The money raised is used to help feed the hungry of the world. One-fourth of the proceeds stay in this area.

On Good Friday a Memorial Service is held featuring the choirs and clergy of the member churches. This year a service was also held to commemorate 9-11.

The Council sponsors an adult education program which features speakers discussing community concerns, problems and solutions. This year we will hear about plans for the Finneytown Streetscapes plan in February. There is also an annual pulpit exchange.

The NHEC supports Northern Hills religious and charitable programs. Valley Interfaith Food and Clothing Center is the primary agency for support. Tender Mercies and The Terrace Guild also receive support.

Participating congregations include Faith Lutheran Church, Fleming Road United Church of Christ, Northern Hills United Methodist Church, Northminister Presbyterian Church, St. Bartholomew Church, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, St. Vivian, Holy Trinity-St. Nicholas Greek Orthodox, New Beginnings Fellowship, and Inspirational Baptist Church. Joan Michael and Sue Lennert are the lay representatives for St. Vivian's.

-- *Joan Michael and Sue Lennert*

finally settled on a method called Rouxen Y Gastric Bypass, and set about locating the most highly recommended and qualified surgeon around. (This surgery bypasses part of the stomach and part of the small intestine.) The operation was performed in March, 2002. She says, "The first week was pretty bad," but after the second week, she was out and about, and doing many of her usual things. Six months after her surgery, she had lost 100 lbs., and the count now is at 120 lbs. She eats 500-1000 calories a day, and can eat anything she wants. She continues her fitness program, and reports she feels "wonderful." She also reports "only 25 lbs. to go!"

Jodie has a delightful, bubbling personality, making her a joy to be around. She hopes her students will carry the benefits of her ministry with them as they continue their lives when she no longer influences them.

Thank you, Jodie, for sharing your story. We wish you much good health and happiness in the years ahead. We are happy to have you with us at St. Vivian.

-- *Helen Limke*

CRHP Update!

Thanks to all who helped and prayed for the success of the Women's Christ Renews His Parish weekend, held November 2-3.

Twenty-four women attended. Another women's CRHP weekend will be held in fall 2003. Watch for information on a men's weekend next May.



The Christ Renews His Parish "Giving Team" was responsible for the women's retreat in November



Report on AMOS Listening Project

Members of the St. Vivian AMOS core team conducted a listening exercise among a random sample of involved parishioners, i.e. parishioners who participate in one or more activities at St. Vivian Parish, in Spring 2002.

This was not a statistically quantitative survey. The sample size was small (55). The respondents are more active in the parish than average. The respondents gave voluntary responses about what they liked, disliked and thought could be better about their parish and their community. Because the respondents knew the interviewers were members of a social justice organization in the parish, responses may be favorably biased to social justice activity.

Parish Likes

Strengths of the parish mentioned most often include our pastor Fr. Jack, the openness/welcoming nature of the parish, the sense of community/fellowship, the school, and the good people.

Parish Concerns and Critiques

Most frequently mentioned as concerns were environmental factors such as our inbreeding, lack of diversity, distance and not reaching out to new parishioners. Second most often mentioned were temporal matters, such as financial stability, future clerical staffing (pastor, assistant, deacon) and long-range planning. The third most frequently mentioned area was concern about youth programs. Multiple mentions were given to PSR kids not being included or treated differently and over-emphasis on winning in athletics.

Parish Opportunities for Improvement

More outreach to African Americans was mentioned most frequently. Increased social justice was mentioned next. Improved social interaction via a variety of means was mentioned third most often. Several items in the

categories of ecumenism, spiritual, temporal and school were mentioned once or twice each.

Finneytown (College Hill) Likes

The good location and safety/low crime rate were mentioned most often. The diversity of the neighborhoods and positive racial interactions were also frequently mentioned.

Finneytown (College Hill) Concerns

Most frequently mentioned was the status of the Finneytown school system. Next was the decline of the shopping at Brentwood Plaza (and in College Hill). The changing socio-economics of Finneytown was mentioned often. Crime and drugs were also a frequently mentioned concern. Multiple mentions were given to quality of life, neighborhood cleanliness and the challenge of subsidized housing.

Person Cares About Most

Most frequently mentioned was family, followed by faith/religion and the parish school. Children, Finneytown schools, a strong parish, women's status, ecumenism, racial diversity and helping people also received multiple mentions.

-- *Dave Lennert*

AMOS Public Meeting A Great Success

At the AMOS Public Meeting at Zion Baptist on September 26, the various task forces challenged county commissioners, public school officials and teacher union representatives, OKI SORTA and Covington officials to work with them on jury selection, education, transportation and housing issues.

St. Vivian's delegation numbered 51 and received a round of applause during the roll call. Our Music Ministry's performance was outstanding and people called for an encore. Thanks to our musicians and everyone else who attended. We look forward to doing it again next year.

-- *Dave Lennert*



Parishioners Take in Reds Game and Concert

Approximately 40 St. Vivian Parishioners, including Father Jack, attended the Reds-Padres ballgame on August 11, 2002. The purpose of the event was camaraderie, baseball and the Michael W. Smith concert, which was held following the game. The Reds even saluted our group with a scoreboard notice.



Michael W. Smith performs at Cinergy Field, August 11, 2002

Little did the 28,000-plus ball fans, including 6,000 concertgoers, know what the Lord had in store for them that day! With the score tied in the bottom of the 9th inning, the game was delayed over 90 minutes by rain. The Lord blessed us with the much-needed rain and also displayed His power and majesty by including thunder and lightning with the downpour. This required the evacuation of the upper deck of Cinergy Field. Following resumption of play, the Reds failed to score, forcing the game into extra innings. Aaron Boone provided a thrilling Reds' 9-7 victory with a dramatic two-run homer in the bottom of the 12th inning.

Actual playing time for the game was four hours, 30 minutes. With the added 90-minute rain delay the 1:15pm game ended six hours later at approximately 7:15pm.

The rain-soaked field required relocation of the concert stage from second base to right field. The concert finally began just before 8 p.m.! To his credit, Michael W. Smith presented an awesome one-hour concert featuring many of his current gospel hits. The inspired, but weary, concert crowd departed just

before 9 p.m. after nearly an eight-hour stay at Cinergy!

Undaunted by the extra long afternoon and evening, several of the St. Vivian's group continued celebrating at the Finneytown La Rosa's at 10 p.m. that night! Another interesting sideline to the day: Parishioner Tom Miller and his son, Brian, who attended the game and concert, spent nearly as much time at Cinergy field that day as it took Tom's other son, Scott, to drive home to Cincinnati from Durham, North Carolina!

-- *Tom Miller*



Winter Calendar

Jan. 2	School Reopens
Jan. 8	Child Protection Class, 7 pm
Jan. 18-19	Little Sisters of the Poor collection
Jan. 20	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday, school & rectory closed
Jan. 25	Market Day
Jan. 31	FANS Spaghetti Dinner
Feb. 8-9	CISE second collection (inner-city schools)
Feb. 15	Valentine's Day Dance
Feb. 17	Presidents' Day - no school, rectory closed
Feb. 22	Children's Toy & Clothing Sale, FANS Karaoke/Mardi Gras, Market Day
Feb. 23	PTA Pancake Breakfast Community-wide meeting on the future of Springfield Township at Northminster Presbyterian
Mar 1 & 2	First Sunday Collection for the Needy
Mar 3	Free Spirits Monthly Meeting
Mar 5	Ash Wednesday
Mar 9	Fellowship - Coffee & Donuts
Mar 13	Parent/Teacher Conferences
Mar 14	No School - Teacher In-Service
Mar 15	St. Patrick's Day Party
Mar 17	No School - Teacher In-Service
Mar 22	Market Day Pickup FANS Coffee House
Mar 28	Third Quarter Ends
Mar 29	Blue and Gold Banquet



To Infinity and Beyond!

In the fall of 2001, my daughter's fearless Girl Scout Leader, Pam Irvine (Troop 4611), had an idea for a field trip. This wasn't just any field trip, it was SPACE CAMP! She invited Troop 5212 to share in this wonderful adventure. The paperwork was completed, a bus was reserved, and fundraisers and allowances were saved for this wonderful experience to take flight.

Two weeks before departure, my wife received an e-mail from Pam. The subject line read, "Houston We Have A Problem." The problem: No BUS! The bus company that was sent the final balance went bankrupt. Parents were contacted and an emergency meeting was held to figure out how to salvage the trip. Through the generosity of Al Humbert our trip was back on schedule.

On October 11, Troop 4611 and Troop 5212 and chaperones boarded the bus to head for Huntsville, Alabama for Space Camp. We had a great ride down with plenty of videos to watch including, "Apollo 13."

The last rest area we stopped at had a full-size Saturn rocket on display. We stretched our legs and had some "Kodak moments." As we approached Space Camp, chaperone Randy Kent announced, "Looks like we made a wrong turn and we are approaching the rest area again." The bus ride was long (approximately eight hours). I heard sighs and someone say, "Are we ever going to make it?" They soon realized that Mr. Kent was joking and we actually were in the parking lot of Space Camp.

We checked in and met our wonderful counselors and settled into our sleeping quarters. Everyone was given an activity book that was completed by the scouts as they toured the museum, writing down space history facts. The scouts all enjoyed riding the simulators (chaperones too!), which included G-Force, a centrifugal Force Simulator where the children experienced 4-1/2 G's. Space Shot was a simulator that was a vertical acceleration ride which propelled the children 100 feet into the air in approximately one second. Whoosh!



Girl Scouts and their counselors in front of the main entrance at Space Camp



Mary Kent enjoys a spin on the Multi Axis Trainer. The adults could try many of the simulators.



The girls walking under a model of the space shuttle Pathfinder.

Upon arrival, a briefing to meet the counselors and learn about sleeping arrangements.

One of the indoor simulators was called a "multi-access trainer." The scouts received an opportunity to experience the difficulty of manipulating objects in zero gravity.

Although we did not have an opportunity to see any of the I-Max movies (due to equipment failure), we toured another camp called, "Aviation Challenge." This is not advertised to the general public. Its popularity has been generated solely by word of mouth recommendations. Aviation Challenge focuses on fighter pilot training and

survival skills. The scouts received an opportunity to view several historical jet fighter aircrafts as we toured the aviation challenge facility.

All of this could have not been possible if Pam Irvine hadn't come up with the idea and Mr. Humbert did not fund our bus trip. The scouts and parents of Troop 4611 and Troop 5212 would like to again thank Mr. Humbert for making this trip a reality. His kindness and generosity will never be forgotten.

-- *Eric Price*





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Vibrations Needs You!!



This newsletter belongs to the whole church community. Please think about what you would like to see in Vibrations and call or drop a line.

This should be more than a record of what's happened and a list of what's to come.

Would anyone like to write a

column? Interview parishioners on some topic? Let us know what your parish group is doing? Submit a poem? Let us know about one of the parish's unsung heroes? Or help in any way with the newsletter? Please let us know. Thanks.

—Pat Frey

Visit St. Vivian's Website
www.stvivian.org



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Next deadline is February 1, 2003. All entries should be typed or neatly printed, double-spaced, with your name and phone number. Please e-mail articles to pfrey@fuse.net or submit items to the rectory. **It would be helpful to have articles on a disk, if you do not have e-mail.** Include photos whenever possible.

Vibrations reserves the right to edit articles for length, clarity, accuracy, spelling, grammar and punctuation.