



The Circuit Rider

Life in the Big Bend Episcopal Mission – March 2003

Elaine Ponton Ordained Deacon



The weather was cool, and St. Mark's-on-the-Mesa in Albuquerque was crowded on Saturday afternoon, February 22, 2003. Several people from the Big Bend Mission were in attendance when Elaine Ponton and Bill Locke (St. Mark's) were ordained deacons by Bishop Kelshaw.

In his sermon, the Bishop told a story about his visit to the Green Door Pizza in the old city of Jerusalem and his invitation to dinner by the owner. He related that sitting down to a meal with someone in the Middle East is not the casual social affair we think of in the western world. When eating dinner with someone in the Middle

East, a special relationship is established in which those in attendance become advocates for each other even to the point of death. His host completed the meal by expressing his commitment to this relationship and expecting the covenant to be mutual... no small task in the Middle East of today.

Bishop Kelshaw went on to say that it is this kind of commitment even unto death that we undertake as we celebrate the Eucharist. Jesus has already suffered death for us, and we affirm our commitment to Him.

The ordination was followed by a reception hosted by St. Mark's. Cakes were baked in honor of each ordinand. After the reception, everyone from the Big Bend Mission enjoyed dinner courtesy of Elaine's stepdaughter Berry.



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Judy Probst Appointed Bishop's Warden

Judy Singleton Probst, our new Bishop's Warden, was born in Kerrville, TX. She started attending church in the Big Bend Mission in 1995. Judy is retired from teaching Art Education and third grade (most recently at the Terlingua School).

Judy and her husband Jack (retired from teaching, coaching, and school administration) were married 39 years ago when they were both students at Sul Ross. They have a daughter (Jennifer) and a granddaughter ("K.C."), who are both "regulars" at St. James'.

Many of us know and appreciate Judy's talent for crafts and interior decorating. She also likes gardening, landscaping, and



Texas/southern history. Judy says, "Being a part of the Big Bend Mission has brought tremendous pleasure in meeting new people and new light to our spiritual life." She is also owned by 3 cats and one very fine Corgi named "Coonie."

Help us With the New Recreation/Youth Center

The call to ministry in South Brewster County has touched the heart of Beth Garcia, and the Big Bend Mission is committed to help. Beth has worked hard to formulate plans for a place where young people in the Study Butte/Terlingua area can congregate, have some fun, and learn new things in a secure and healthy environment. Beth is working on renting a building and needs both financial help and donated items.



The items needed include a TV, VCR, videos, video games, foosball and similar games, a pool table, ping-pong tables, weights, other exercise equipment, a jukebox, books and magazines, desks, computers, camping gear, volleyballs, basketballs, badminton set, a microwave, comfortable chairs, sofas, etc. A van is also needed for transportation. Some members of the Big Bend Mission have already committed to help-

ing this project get off the ground. If you can help with a financial donation or have leads on the needed equipment, contact Judy or Elaine.

Bishop of Alaska to Speak at Small Church Conference

The Church of the Holy Mount in Ruidoso, NM is hosting a diocesan conference for small church clergy and lay leaders on Friday (evening) and Saturday, March 21-



22, 2003. Representatives from the Big Bend Mission are already signed up to attend. The title of the conference is: At Work in the Lord's Remote Vineyards: Raising up Leaders in Ministry for Churches in Smaller Communities.

The speaker will be The Rt. Rev. Mark MacDonald, bishop of Alaska. Bishop MacDonald's diocese is widely acknowledged to be the crucible and the model for ministry in smaller communities. Bishop Mark himself is recognized as one of the most articulate and thoughtful strategists for the future of local ministry.

Anyone interested in attending this conference should contact Judy for additional details.

Hospice Sponsors Bereavement Group

A bereavement group for anyone mourning a death will be starting in Alpine.



Sponsored by Rural Hospice, the group will meet at the Hospice office, 604 East

Ave. F (behind the Outback Bar and Grill) on the last Tuesday of every month beginning March 25, from 6:30 to 8pm. This bilingual service is free, and registration is not required. All are welcome whether death is recent or years past. Our goal is to provide a safe place for people to talk or just listen. For further information, contact Judy Eron at 371-2795 or Sara Acosta at 837-9952.

Lent, Pancakes, and Shrove Tuesday

The liturgical seasons of the church year seem to come and go quickly. The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 5th. Lent is a season of penitence and fasting, during which we prepare for the Easter season. The Tuesday preceding Ash Wednesday is called Shrove Tuesday. It gets its name from an old English term to "shrive," meaning to allow someone to confess his sins and be assured of God's forgiveness. Shrove Tuesday is also called Mardi Gras or "fat Tuesday" from the French "mardi" (Tuesday) and "gras" (fat) because on that day families used up the fats kept around the house which would not be used during Lent. Since pancakes are a standard way of using fat, the day is also called Pancake Tuesday.

On Shrove Tuesday, St. Paul's will host a pancake supper in the church's parish hall. The supper is sponsored by the men of the Mission, is free of charge, and is open to the whole community. Serving will be from 5-7 pm. All the men of the BBEM will be contacted and invited to participate in some fashion. For further information, please call Jack Murray at 729-4699.

Bishop Dolli, Bishop of Lui, Sends Word About the Sudan

The Rt. Rev. Bullen A. Dolli writes, "The Diocese of Lui can only be reached from Nairobi or Uganda by road or plane. On Wednesday, November 13, 2002, I managed to travel to Lui from Nairobi through the noble assistance of Samaritan's Purse. During the 48 days in Lui, I was able to confirm 430 Christians from different parishes. Two new churches built of thatched grasses were also dedicated to the Lord."



The Frazer Memorial Cathedral, Lui

Over 10,500 people gathered at Lui Cathedral for Christmas services. During the Christmas feast following the service, a game involving "filling the bottle with water from crying" was played (an easy game for many because crying comes so easily to people traumatized by war). Renovations of the Cathedral were partially completed. The Diocese of Lui is in dire need of \$5,500 to fix shutters and finish the roof so rain will not blow inside. Funds are also needed to construct a school, conduct a financial management workshop for the parishes, and to meet diocesan expenses. Bishop Dolli is appealing to us for our support.

Last Month's Question: What is a "sacrament"?

Answer: A sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace. The primary sacraments are Baptism and Holy Eucharist.

This Month's Question: What is "grace"?



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Contact Judy, Elaine, or Seth.

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Thrift Shop Nears Completion

In the last few weeks, a crowd of workers have descended on the new Big Bend Mission Thrift Shop in Study Butte. Special thanks go out to Jerry Mitchell, Jack and Judy Probst, Cliff and Maxine Haislip, Jenny Turner and the Girl Scouts, Reagan Reed, Charles Blizzard, Hugh Scanlen, Elaine, Judy, Seth, and others we may have forgotten to mention. The building is now ready for use, although we are waiting on electric service and a sign needs to be installed. Cliff and Maxine Haislip have taken on the task of sorting the clothing and other items and getting the shop ready for its grand opening.



The shop will take all types of donated items including serviceable clothing, household items, furniture, electronic equipment, tools, etc. Items too large for the building will be photographed and displayed for sale on a bulletin board at the store. If you have items to donate, please let Judy or Elaine know. They will help with arrangements for delivery to the shop.



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