

# SOUNDS

Of

Volume 40 No. 02

January 10, 2010

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*Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan didst proclaim him thy beloved Son and anoint him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with thee and the same Spirit liveth and reigneth, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen*

## FROM THE RECTOR

When St Paul catalogued the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22), he had one grand omission: A theological sense of humor is essential, if not for salvation itself, then at least for staying in the Church. One of the things which vexes my spirit is the smug self-righteousness that seems to pervade so many of our ecclesiastical affairs. It has not always been thus, but maybe these times are so discouraging that our ability to laugh at ourselves and human foibles has been diminished. If we can no longer smile, then we may rest assured Satan does in consequence of our stone faces.

Here is a case of something that is not a laughing matter, but which had its comical dimensions. On a recent Sunday, I walked over to the shopping center across the street to pick up an item or two for home. Coming straight from church, I wore a clerical shirt (the black one with the round, white collar, just to be clear). As I walked past the entrance to the chicken restaurant, a woman abruptly charged out of the door, exclaiming an oath that included our Lord's Name. Just as the words flew from her lips, her eyes saw me. I walked on by, but in a quick moment I heard her calling me, "Father. Can I speak to you a moment?" She apologized as though I were the one offended, and she seemed genuinely embarrassed. She compounded matters by saying, "I am Catholic...I mean, Roman." She was clearly flustered.

I assured her that any time she felt the need or desire to call upon the Name of the Lord, she was welcomed to do so in St Francis Church, that we had just done that very thing, albeit in a more appropriate sense and with better syntax, and I invited her to join us some day soon. She promised she would, and I hope she makes good on this peace offering. I could not resist adding the observation that she

must have very poor luck indeed, to blurt out such a cry of frustration only to have a priest be her single hearer. Indeed, on this very morning I had slipped out of a grocery store in the other shopping center to avoid speaking to a couple who should have been in church but had not been (although they had time to buy snacks for the Redskins game!). I did not wish to embarrass them, but then I did encounter another soul who literally and spiritually had erred and strayed.

The whole affair struck me as worth a good laugh. We have all said things we wish we could erase from memory. Some of them are even blasphemous, which means the reckoning of our sins committed has grown by yet another entry. Driving home from a diocesan convention once, I was "rear-ended" when a young man mildly struck the rear end of my car down at Macomb Street and Massachusetts Avenue. When I got out to check for damage, he exclaimed, "O God, I have hit a priest!" (The collar is a dead giveaway.) I was so relieved that no damage had been done - either at the convention or to my car - that I was able to smile at his discomfort, and quickly offer a word of absolution. Having perpetrated two rear-end accidents in my teen years, I was more sympathetic than I might otherwise be. Yet the real reason for my equanimity in both cases was the humor of the moment, and the truth than no real harm was done. In both instances the offending parties knew their conduct could be improved, which is not a bad lesson for any of us to learn. And woe to the pompous souls who think no banana peel will ever find its way under our own feet.



## OUTREACH COMMITTEE FOR 2010

The first meeting of 2010 for the Outreach Committee of St. Francis will be Monday, **January 11 at 7:00pm**. If you have ideas on activities that St. Francis could pursue as part of its outreach efforts or are interested in knowing more about what the committee does or feel free to join us. We will have preliminary discussions on how to distribute the funds raised by the House Tour, as well as other plans for the coming year. We welcome input and new ideas. Please join us. If you have any questions, contact Andy Jordan at marionaj@aol.com.

## A WORD OF PRAISE AND GRATITUDE

The Flower Guild gives very special thanks to all those wonderful volunteers who gave so generously of their time this Christmas season to help to decorate the church. They were: **Jean Canada**, our organizer; **Nancy Byrd**, **Polly Sager** and **Christine Tetrault** who decorated the altar area; **Gussie Moravec** who created the pew stand arrangements and **Cathy, Hilary, Colin and Olivia Stanhope** who braved the heights and hung the roping around the church. All the rest—the window wreaths, special arrangements for the Mion & Chapel windows, swags and other pieces were created by **Carol Jarvis**, **Lorrie LeClair**, **Coreta Osborne**, **Edee Perry**, **Adrienne Rosen**, **Sue Tendall** and **Sue Tull**.

As always, we thank **Mr. Thai** who works tirelessly behind the scenes and whose help is always invaluable and the **Troha family** for their boxwood contributions!

Last, but not least, we extend our gratitude to all who gave so generously to the memorial fund. Without those gifts, we would not have been able to purchase the flowers and greens which made the church so very beautiful this Christmas.

Thank you one and all!

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\* **A WEATHER REMINDER** \*  
\* On occasions of inclement weather any \*  
\* alterations in scheduled activities, \*  
\* including worship services, are announced \*  
\* on the voice mail system of the church \*  
\* (301/365-2055, press #3), and on the \*  
\* parish website: \*  
\* [www.stfrancispotomac.org](http://www.stfrancispotomac.org). \*  
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## NOMINATIONS FOR THE VESTRY

Nominations by petition for election to the Vestry are invited by the Nominating Committee. Persons interested should submit a petition signed by ten parishioners in good standing no later than January 17<sup>th</sup>. The annual meeting is January 31<sup>st</sup>. Please contact the Rector for any additional information.

## WSF BOOK CLUB—JANUARY 28TH

The Book Club will meet on the 4th Thursday in January, at 7:30 pm in the Youth Room. We will discuss *Cutting For Stone* by Abraham Verghese. Everyone is welcome.

*“Abraham Verghese is a doctor, an accomplished memoirist and, as he proves in Cutting for Stone, something of a magician as a novelist....Filled with mystical scenes and deeply felt characters—and opening a fascinating window onto the Third World—Cutting for Stone is an underdog and a winner.”*—Jocelyn McClurg, *USA Today*

## ST. FRANCIS THRIFT SALE DATES

### Friday & Saturday, March 26th and 27th

We will start to collect items on Sunday March 21<sup>st</sup> for this very popular event. Everyone loves a bargain, especially in tough economic times. Call the office at 301-365-2055 for drop off locations. Please remember that we do not take Electronics or TVs.

**COMING UP AT SAINT FRANCIS EPISCOPAL CHURCH**

For more information, please visit our website at [www.stfrancispotomac.org](http://www.stfrancispotomac.org)

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 10**

8:00am Holy Eucharist  
9:00am Holy Eucharist  
Adult Education Hour  
11:15 am Morning Prayer & Baptisms

**MONDAY, JANUARY 11**

7:00 pm Outreach Committee—Kincaid Lib.

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 12**

10:30 Grounds Committee  
5:30 pm St. Nicholas Training Choir  
5:30 pm St. Clare Girl Choir  
7:00 pm Centering Prayer—Undercroft  
7:30 pm Communications Committee

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13**

10:00 am Holy Eucharist  
11:00 am Rector's Bible Study  
5:30 pm Jr. High Bible Study

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 14**

8:30 am Parish Life Committee  
5:00 pm *Sounds* Deadline for 1/24/10  
5:30 pm Sr. High Bible Study  
7:30 pm St. Francis Choir  
7:30 WSF Annual Meeting—Kincaid Lib.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 15**

7:00 am Men's Bible Study

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 17**

8:00 am Holy Eucharist  
9:00 am Morning Prayer  
Adult Education Hour  
11:15 am Holy Eucharist



The Scripture appointed for the First Sunday after the Epiphany  
Isaiah 42:1-9; Acts 10:34-38; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22; Psalm 89:1-29 or 89:20-29

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