

# CARITAS

Volume 2008 Issue 31

January 2008.



## Editor:

This Caritas has been edited and DTP'd by  
Derek Pratt  
021 6856940  
dpratt@gem.co.za

## “QUOTE...

## UNQUOTE”

I stopped believing in Santa Claus when I was six. Mother took me to see him in a department store and he asked me for my autograph.

Shirley Temple



Next Edition out on:  
**15th February 2009**

## CONVERSION OF PAUL

I am very ambivalent about Paul and what he wrote but as the Rector of a church dedicated to Paul I have to at least, once a year, look at Paul and what he wrote in a very positive way.

### Positive points

Paul's conversion was the starting point of the missionary expansion of the Christian church from a tiny sect in Jerusalem to a major influence in the Roman Empire.

Paul was also a great preacher of liberation. He stood up against Jerusalem on the matter of circumcision and the external observance of the Law. It was Paul who came to the realisation that it was not the keeping of the traditions which made a person righteous but the joyful freedom of spirit in refusing to be bound by ecclesiastical and societal conventions. Such freedom to be unconventional and to be open to the spirit must resonant with many here at St Paul's today.

We must remember that Paul presented that great charter of human liberation, "In Christ Jesus...there is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28-29).

### But yet...

Yet Paul wrote and taught things which have been used to perpetuate anti-feminist, anti-Semitic, racist, power-mongering attitudes for which the Christian church is rightly derided.

Paul took slavery for granted, commanding slaves to be obedient to masters "with fear and trembling" (Eph 6:5).

Paul instructed everyone to be subject to governing authorities because all governing authority were from God and those that exist have been instituted by God. That statement became good propaganda for all corrupt and oppressive regimes including the *apartheid* regime here in South Africa.

### What are we celebrating?

So what are we celebrating at our Patronal festival? Liberation, justice, compassion, hope for the oppressed or ideological oppression?

The answer is not either/or. Because Paul is a human being. It is the conversion of a man who is just like the rest of us - committed to liberation and justice but, like the rest of us, Paul is also an instrument of oppression - partly through ignorance, partly through weakness and partly through our own most grievous fault. We struggle for liberation and find ourselves oppressors; we work for peace and encounter our own violence; we are placed in positions of success and authority and find ourselves powerless - entrenched in the patterns of injustice.

But in the Conversion of Paul we commemorate one occasion when all this was reversed. What was Paul's conversion? It certainly wasn't from secularism to faith in God because Paul was a devout believer in God from his youth up. Nor was it a conversion of his religious practices - he was not lax in his observance of spirituality. What happened on that Damascus Road cuts across this: 'A light from heaven flashed about him. And he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul. Saul, why do you persecute me?" and he said, "Who are you, Lord?" And he said, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. . ."

Paul can be called the apostle of the great reversal. It is the reversal of his praxis, his identification with the persecuted rather than his oppression of them, that will help us understand his conversion.

Paul did undergo a profound reversal or conversion of his values and praxis but he didn't suddenly become perfect. He still sometimes championed the stronger against the weak, the master against the slave, the male against the female rather than championing their liberation and empowerment. He remained like the rest of us - capable of major blind spots. He could still be exasperatingly

*(Continued on page 3)*

# PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

## Ordination 18 December 2008

Congratulations to Revd. Pat van der Rede, who was ordained as deacon on 18 December 2008, at St Paul's. The Parish Council thanks the clergy, the lay ministers, the servers and sacristans, the organist and choir, the stewards and ushers, the wardens, and all the members of St Paul's, who played a role in the service. It was a wonderful and memorable occasion. A scrumptious tea was served in the hall after the service.

## Pastoral Care

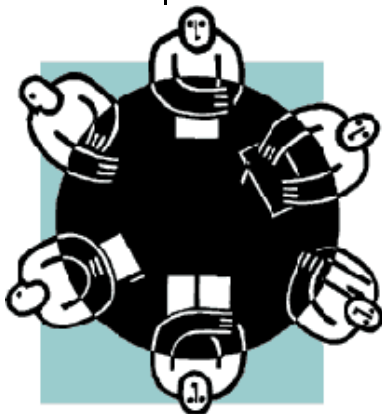
Thanks to those who contributed groceries, toys and cash donations in November and December 2008 and January 2009.

The toys collected on 30 November were donated to children at the Red Cross Children's Hospital.

The Christmas Party, which was held on 19 December 2008 at the Rondebosch Police Station, was a great success. Toys were given to the children at the party. 80 needy people were given food packs and sandwiches at the January "Soup Kitchen" at the Police Station. 30 other people were fed at the side of Kromboom Road in Crawford. Two new volunteers joined the Soup Kitchen team in January. Our thanks go to the team and to Pat van der Rede for her leadership of these projects. Please speak to Pat v d Rede (021-6921542) if you would like to help with the projects run by the Pastoral Care Task Team. **The next "Bring-a-tin/ toiletry Sunday" will be 1 February 2009.**

An important pastoral ministry is the visiting of and the taking of communion to sick and/or frail parishioners. **Please contact the Parish Office or the clergy should you require visiting.**

The second parish walk to beat the other side of the parish boundary took place on Sunday 7 December at 2 p.m. About 10 parishioners (accompanied by a dog!) joined the walk. 10 crosses were planted at strategic places marking the boundary. Prayers were said each time a cross was planted. The walk was very enjoyable as was the tea



afterwards. The third section of the boundary walk needs to be completed but as it will involve walking to the King's Blockhouse, the decision was made to delay it until the weather is cooler.

Pam Campbell, Pam Prodehl and Len Teasdale have been transporting parishioners living at Avondrust to church on Sundays. **Please contact Pam Campbell (021-7615309) if you are able to help with this ministry.**

Plans are being made for a Student Welcome Lunch to take place on the same day as the Student Welcome service on 22 February.

## Restoration of Fry

### Memorial Chapel

The Parish Council approved an internal colour scheme and some other details presented by Michael Bester at the January Parish Council meeting. Work on the project is planned to start in the near future.

### Maintenance Committee

Tom Botha Snr reported that the damp proofing and painting of the men's toilets in the Hall has been completed. Work is pending on further external lighting works in the church grounds, including proposed spotlights on the belfry.

### Parish Office Equipment

We thank Tom and Tommy Botha for their work in installing the new reception desk in the Parish Office. The ADSL connection has been completed, thereby facilitating speedier Internet access and free-up the telephone line.

### Church Garden

A proposal for an automated irrigation system drawn up by Mick Hannon was discussed at the Parish Council meeting and suggestions made will be referred back.

### Finance

The value of the *Building Fund* stood at R217 445 on 9 January 09. The good news is that the Parish Council has received notice of a bequest from the Revd. Peter Sonn in memory of Charles and Anne Sonn.

The Parish Council agreed that the

beneficiary of Tithe Fund collected in 2009 would be the Haven Homes, Woodstock.

The value of the Parish's current account on 9 January 09 was R8057. However, the current account fluctuates a lot during the month depending on when payments are made.

## Fund Raising Committee

The Rector has taken over the Chairmanship of this committee from Lex Alport, who has resigned as chair as he has too many other activities on his plate, such as being Chair of the Board of Trustees at his block of flats. We thank Lex for all the work he has done for St Paul's while being the chair of this Committee.

## Festival Vestments (White)

The festival vestments at St Paul's are old and in a poor state or repair and need to be replaced. The Parish Council agreed that Michael Bester make enquiries about the cost involved.

## St Paul's AnHouse

Charlotte Swartz, the new Warden at the St Paul's AnHouse, reported that the AnHouse has been given a thorough spring-cleaning. Years of accumulated clutter and other rubbish has been removed. The garden has been cleared of excess overgrowth and alien vegetation.

A great deal of time has been spent on updating the administrative records at the AnHouse and work is being done on bringing the accounts up-to-date.

The summer accommodation was not well supported this year due to the economic pressures which people are experiencing.

A meeting was held with Kolbe House at which points held in common were discussed. Kolbe House and the AnHouse will apply a similar code of conduct in line with that used by UCT.

## Annual Vestry Meeting

The Annual Vestry Meeting is scheduled to take place on Sunday 15 March 2009 after a combined Eucharist at 9h00.

**Shaen Hinchliff  
20 Jan. 09**

# How to survive a sermon

by Rabbi Jonathan Romain

Many of us will be listening to sermons this week. They can be tests of endurance, but they can sometimes be life-changing.

Let's be honest and admit that an essential role for a priest, vicar or rabbi is to be an entertainer. However important other skills are – such as his or her pastoral care – the primary thing that distinguishes this service from the one last week is the sermon. The liturgy on the printed page is always the same, but what emerges from the pulpit is different, so an enormous amount hangs on it. In fact when someone comes back from church (or synagogue or other place of worship) and is asked "How was the service?" what is really meant is "What was the sermon like?"

Unfortunately not all sermons are up to standard and hence all the jokes about preaching ... like the minister who said "Before I begin my sermon I have something interesting to say" or the advice one bishop gave his trainee clergy: "Preaching is like being on a drilling mission, if you find you don't strike oil soon, stop boring."

One result is that some parishioners have developed a survival mechanism known as "sermon cricket". This is a game played in the pews by which you score a run every time the preacher uses the personal pronoun "I", gain a six whenever they wave both arms in the air, and take a wicket when they say "God".

Still, while bad sermons are an endurance test, good sermons can be uplifting or comforting; better still, they can be discomfiting, in the sense that they challenge the complacent, making us look again at the way we live or what we do (or fail to do).

That may mean the minister has to say some unpopular things – but personally I would far prefer a sermon to be a slap in the face than a limp handshake. As Rabbi Hugo Gryn

once said "A rabbi whose congregation does not want to run him out of town is no rabbi."

At its best, a sermon can change lives. I shall never forget John, a good-looking 40-year-old, tall, well dressed with jet-black hair. After one particular service I noticed he was looking a little pensive. But I had an even greater shock when I saw him in the High Street two weeks later: his hair had turned completely grey.

When I gently commented on the change in his appearance, he replied: "It was your sermon, rabbi, when you said we should put aside the pretences in our lives and the false identities we hide behind. My hair went grey long ago, but I dyed it and nobody knew. But I always felt awkward about it, as if I was cheating people. Your sermon made me decide to be myself and get rid of the hype."

It may be a relatively trivial incident, but for John it was a major turning point, and it testifies to the process of change that a sermon can cause. It also highlights the fact that sermons should talk not only about the glories of God or international issues, but also about the problems of humanity and speak openly about the personal issues that most people bring secretly into the service with them.

So maybe it's worth visiting your local place of worship to hear what's going on at this festive season ... although it might be wise to take a cricket card just in case.

Originally published in the Guardian on Tuesday 23rd December 2008. Used without permission.



(Continued from page 1)

inconsistent, yet he did encounter Jesus as the persecuted one; and he did recognise from that point onward, that the face of the persecuted is the face of God. And this is what we celebrate.

"I am Jesus who you are persecuting...". It is in the persecuted; in the victim we will encounter Christ or not at all. The point is not that we need to do more praying, or more academic theology, or more churchy things; the point is that we need to start to listen to the voiceless, to recognise how we collude in societal structures of violence and oppression and to see in the faces of our victims the face of Christ, and to receive from their hands the healing of our blindness.

## Shutting up and listening

Like Paul we won't always get it right. But like Paul we could do a lot worse than spend three days in silence, shutting up and listening to our victims - letting ourselves see what our society looks like from the underside. We might not like it, we might not even agree with them but we should sit still for a while and listen. And when I say listen - I don't mean advise, counsel or rescue - I mean listen. The point is not that we should immediately start rushing around setting the world to right again, from our superior perspective and omnipotence. What we need to do is to learn to attend, listen, to see in the ones we have been victimising the face of Jesus and to receive from them healing for our blindness and direction for our lives.

So the Conversion of St Paul is not a triumphal celebration that one who was against the Christian faith is now for it, but rather it is a constant reminder that we are all human and we who have already been converted to the Christian religion still need a reversal of our praxis - the way we live our lives - so that we who are blinded by the light of Christ can be healed and see again and identify ourselves with those we persecuted and oppressed and in whom we will see Jesus.

## FAITH AND THE BEAUTY OF ART CREATION

For most Christians, their religion is about "the good" — the ethics that are part of our core beliefs — and "the true" — what they assent to, what they believe. The way believers serve their community, and the way they treat others, is essential to being Christian. So too are the truths held dear — the creed of the faith.

And yet Scripture refers continually to something else as well: to what theologians would call the disclosure of God's glory. That means, in lay language, that not only the good and the true are integral to our faith but so is beauty. Our aesthetic experience is a source of values as well.

**Catherine Pepinster (Editor of The Tablet)**

In the previous two *Caritas* editions there were articles praising the music we are blessed to have at St Paul's. The one I wrote myself to encourage more members of the morning congregations to attend Choral Evensong. The other was an unsolicited article by Chris Rainer Pope which spoke about the wonderful liturgically performance of Victoria's *Requiem* on All Souls Sunday. Because I receive so few contributions for *Caritas* from parishioners I included this article although it was saying much the same thing as my article had the month before. (Although ask teachers and they will assure you that repetition is the best way of learning!)

I didn't want to give the impression that I was trying to 'flog a dead horse' because good music at St Paul's is anything but 'dead' but two articles in consecutive months did look a bit desperate! Then I saw the above quotation in the Credo Column in the Times newspaper from Saturday 7 December 2008. Catherine Pepinster went on to say:

*Pope John Paul II spoke on several occasions of the importance of beauty, saying that the beauty of Man, conveyed in the work of artists, expresses the beauty of the Creator. And in the Creator, he said, truth, goodness and beauty are as one. Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel, he said, was like a sacrament. The mystery of the Incarnation is revealed to us through such great works of art. They are visible ways of communicating the invisible. Christians have an extraordinary heritage, thanks to the genius of men and women who have*



*conveyed faith through the arts, from Leonardo to Michelangelo, from Bach to Mozart. The simplest images make use of creative talent to connect us to God. ...*

*[G]reat art is one way in which those who have had no connection with religion do find a glimmer of God. Without faith, the aesthetic experience can indeed be an empty one, but it can also lead to transcendence, to a connection with the divine.*

We who worship at St Paul's are blessed not only with good music to enhance our worship but also with good architecture, wonderful stained glass windows and beautiful and carefully crafted altar frontals and communion vessels. When our parish council discusses building maintenance and repair, the look on some people's faces seem to be saying, "What has this to do with the Kingdom of God?" Well, I think Catherine Pepinster has put this into a wonderful perspective.

Let us connect with the divine through well-maintained and preserved religious artefacts and fine music and let this aesthetic experience be a way of evangelising.

### A prayer by Janet Morley for the Conversion of Paul.

O God against whom we struggle, you speak with the voice of the persecuted and call the oppressor to turn to you;  
confront in us the violence that we enact or consent to,  
that our strength may be made perfect in weakness,  
and we may put our trust in you,  
through Jesus Christ. Amen

## Programme for February

### Sunday 1st FEBRUARY

08:00 & 09:30

Holy Eucharist

Theme: The Presentation of Christ in the Temple

Preacher: Fr Derek Pratt

### Sunday 8th FEBRUARY

08:00 & 9:30

Holy Eucharist

Theme: Jesus the Healer

Preacher: The Revd Pat van der Rede

### Saturday 14th FEBRUARY

#### VALENTINE'S DAY PLATTER PARTY

Tickets R40

Bring a platter and your own "liquid refreshment" music and venue included in price

### Sunday 15th FEBRUARY

9:00am Sung Eucharist

Theme: 175th Anniversary of opening of the first church building  
Preacher & President: The Most Reverend Thabo Makgoba, Archbishop of Cape Town and Metropolitan of the ACSA

17.00(5pm) Choral Evensong

### Sunday 22nd FEBRUARY

08:00 & 9.30 Holy Eucharist

Theme: Welcome to the UCT Students of 2009

Preacher: Fr Derek Pratt

President: Fr Christopher Swartz

### Wednesday 25th FEBRUARY ASH WEDNESDAY

07:00, 13:00 (1pm)

Holy Eucharist

19:00 (7pm) Sung Eucharist

Preacher & President: Fr Derek Pratt

### LENTEN PROGRAMME

#### DO-ABLE EVANGELISM

1. What is Evangelism?
2. Liturgy and Evangelism
3. Pastoral Care & Evangelism
4. Prayer & Evangelism
5. You & Evangelism

This will be a programme of Sunday sermons with a follow-up in discussion groups on Wednesday evenings.

# 175th Anniversary of the open of the Church

**ARCHBISHOP THABO'S VISIT  
SUNDAY 15th FEBRUARY 9am**



**THEN**

**NOW**



## ST PAUL'S ANGLICAN CHURCH RONDEBOSCH

### Postal Address

P O Box 7  
Rondebosch  
7701

### Street Address

Church Street  
Rondebosch  
7700

Office Phone & Fax : 021 689 4720

Email: [stpauls@netdial.co.za](mailto:stpauls@netdial.co.za)  
[dpratt@gem.co.za](mailto:dpratt@gem.co.za)

Website: [www.stpaulsrondebosch.co.za](http://www.stpaulsrondebosch.co.za)

### Mission Statement of St Paul's Parish incorporating the Anglican UCT Chaplaincy

... to be a united fellowship of diverse people dedicated to worshipping God and spreading the Gospel in the power and compassion of the Holy Spirit.

# smalls

# Barno

**Branded stationary & promotional goods**

**Suppliers to St Paul's Choir of plastic covers for the new hymn books and new anthem books**

**Contact Monique Smit**

**021 531 7571**

**[monique@barnoplastics.com](mailto:monique@barnoplastics.com)**

**[www.barno.com](http://www.barno.com)**

### Staff at St Paul's

**Rector:** Fr Derek Pratt

021 685 6940

0794968123

**UCT Chaplain & Assistant Priest:**

Fr Christopher Swartz

021 685 6295

**Parish Secretary:**

Mrs Arlene Christian

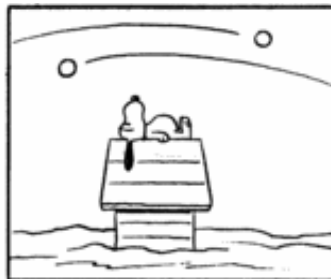
021 689 4720

**Musical Director:**

Mr Grant Brasler

0842077502

## Back Page Humour: Even Snoopy has trouble with the Peace!



**ANNUAL VESTRY MEETING  
OF ST PAUL'S, RONDEBOSCH WILL TAKE PLACE  
ON SUNDAY 15th MARCH 2009  
AFTER A SINGLE EUCHARIST SERVICE AT 9AM**