

Community of Christ
Fairbanks Branch Happenings
January 4, 2006

The theme for this Sunday is "Baptized in the Spirit"

In the Spirit always
Not just when it feels like it

BAPTIZED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

by Harold Cohen, S.J.

Prior to His ascension Jesus told His apostles, "Before many days you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." He added, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses" (Acts 1:5-8). The Apostles prayed for the coming of the Holy Spirit with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and a group of about one hundred and twenty. On Pentecost they were "baptized with the Holy Spirit" and were transformed into new creatures, bold witnesses for Christ.

Pentecost comes to each of us in the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. In Baptism we receive the Holy Spirit and become God's children and members of the body of Christ. In Confirmation we receive a new fullness of the Spirit and are empowered to serve the Church and bear witness to Jesus.

Often we do not allow the Spirit we have received to be as active in us as He wants to be. To use an analogy, He is like chocolate syrup poured into a glass of milk--it goes to the bottom of the glass until stirred up. But when it is stirred up, it permeates the milk and transforms it into something new. We can learn how to "stir up" the Spirit--and how to receive more of Him--from Jesus in the Gospels:

"If anyone thirst, let him come to Me, let him drink who believes in Me. As the scripture has said, -Out of His heart shall flow rivers of living water.? Now He said this about the Spirit which those who believed in Him were to receive" (John 7:37-39). "If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13)

The Lord teaches us that first we must thirst for God; we must desire more and more of His Spirit. Then we must believe that Jesus is faithful to His promises and will indeed give us His Holy Spirit. Finally, we must ask God for the Holy Spirit. We must pray with perseverance, asking, seeking, knocking, believing that "everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened" (Luke 11:10). We can follow the example of the early Church by praying for the Spirit in union with Mary and the apostles as they did at the first Pentecost (see Acts 1:12-14).

What can we expect when we are "baptized with the Holy Spirit" ? We can expect an immediate or gradual experience of deeper union with God, our loving Father and with Jesus, our Lord and Friend; a fresh appreciation of Scripture; a greater love for others and a desire for Christian fellowship; the fuller presence in our lives of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience and more (see Galatians 5:22-23); the receptions of one or more of the Charismatic gifts of the Spirit such as discernment, service, prophecy, praying in tongues, healing (see 1 Corinthians 12-14).

This gift of a new fullness of the Holy Spirit is, I believe, the grace of our age. "Ask and it will be given to you!"

Above excerpted from www.ccrno.org

Announcements:

Sue Turner has graciously agreed to be the Congregational Missionary Coordinator for the Fairbanks Congregation. She has been invited to attend the Leadership Meeting at Sionito in February. Thanks again Sue for responding again to a call of service and leadership. Please keep Sue in your prayers as she starts this new role.

The following is a message from Carole Caesar regarding the formation of a choir at Fairbanks. Monica Livingston is an experienced Choir Director and has agreed to serve the Fairbanks congregation in that capacity.

Monica will be introduced to the congregation on **January 8th** at the 11:00 o'clock service. Hopefully, her nine year old son Melvin will also be in attendance.

There will be a brief meeting with Monica and all who are interested in participating with the choir immediately after church. In the meantime, please be considering your preference for a rehearsal time. The suggestions currently being considered are Thursday evenings at 7:00 PM and Saturday afternoons at 2:00 PM.

January 8th - Ordination of Ron Saur to office if High Priest – Round Rock- See article below

The following is a schedule of those that are currently scheduled to deliver the message for the 1st quarter. This is not the "official list" and is for informational purposes only. Please refer to the worship schedule in the fellowship hall for changes. To be posted next week
January 8th – David Romig

The worship and nursery schedules have been posted in the family center for October through December 2005. Please check these .

Nursery Schedule:

We need volunteers for the nursery. Please see Andrea Watson.

Please review the prayer list in the Sunday bulletin. If you have added someone to the list please update Leo Caesar with any new information and current status of the prayer concern. Please contact Leo Caesar if you wish to add/remove someone from the list.

Calendar & Mission Center News:

The Coastal Bend Mission Center is proud to announce that the Coastal Bend web site is up and running! You can visit the site at www.coastalbendmc.org

Jan 8th – Ordination of Ron Saur- Round Rock

Feb 10-12th 2006- Silent Retreat at Cenacle House

The Coastal Bend Mission Center Worship Service for the Ordination of Ron Saur to the office of High Priest that was previously scheduled for the September Mission Center Conference has been rescheduled for January 8, 2006 to be held at the Round Rock Congregation.

Date & Time: January 8, 2006 - 10:30 AM

Location: Round Rock Congregation
Cedar Park Public Library
550 Discovery Blvd.
Cedar Park, TX 78613-2200

Guest Ministry:
Bill and Barbara Gardner (New England Mission Center)
Dale and Jan Jones
Mark Euritt

BBQ Lunch will be provided by the Round Rock Congregation Free Will Offering to benefit Roofs Over Africa. (For planning purposes, we need to know how many will be planning to stay for lunch. Please mail a note or send an email to Cheryl Saur (csaur@nat.com - 7002 Evans Drive, Round Rock, TX 78681) or Betty Beatty (bbhambon@msn.com - 1911 Old Mill Road, Cedar Park, TX 78613-5370) if you will be staying for BBQ.

February 10-12, 2006 - Annual Silent Retreat at The Cenacle Retreat House

420 N. Kirkwood, Houston, TX 77079 Sponsored by Live Oak –Marlene Krueger - Retreat Spiritual Director. Those interested are invited to participate in this opportunity to experience the Spirit of God in new ways. This will be a silent retreat except for discussion of experiences during a Saturday evening activity. Some direction will be given on how to direct your thoughts, but the most important thing is that you allow the Holy Spirit to direct you. You may bring inspirational reading materials, Bibles, journals, or other materials that you feel will help you to be in a deeper relationship with God as you meditate during the day. There is an outdoor labyrinth for meditation. Spiritual Directors from the Cenacle will be on hand for individual spiritual counseling to those desiring and administration will also be available. A free yoga class and/or massage therapy (\$35/half hour) may be provided based on advanced interest. Silence is sometimes a difficult thing for us to do in this busy world of ours and it can be a little scary. The reward can be a quiet reflective time between you and God. You can use the silence to listen for that still small voice or to rest in the Lord. The weekend will be what you make of it and can be a powerful tool for healing and restoring the spirit, if that is what you seek. Check-in will be at 7:15 PM on Friday, February 10th and the retreat will conclude with a Sunday morning service followed by lunch.

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The cost of \$130 per person includes a private bedroom with lavatory, community toilets and showers, and all meals, beginning Saturday breakfast. Towels and bedding are provided.

Number included in this registration: Female _____ Male _____

Interests: Yoga _____ Massage Therapy _____ (\$35/half hour; paid separately to therapist)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State and zip: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email: _____

Please complete the lower portion of this form and send it by January 6, 2006 to:

Community of Christ, P.O. Box 16685, Sugar Land, TX 77496-6685.

Payment should be by check payable to Community of Christ. Please send payment with the registration form. If you have any questions, please contact Marlene by phone at 970-577-0657 or email: markru_99@yahoo.com

I will be sending out periodic e-mails letting everyone know what is “HAPPENING” at Fairbanks. Please let me know if your e-mail or other contact information changes.

Mark your calendars and **participate, enjoy, reach out!!!!!!**I pray that everyone have a safe and happy week.

Martha Romig