

# SAINTS ALIVE!

Second Sunday in Lent, February 17<sup>th</sup> 2008

Volume 3 Number 4

## FROM THE DESK OF THE RECTOR

Dear Parishioner

**'Once more the solemn season calls, A holy fast to keep.'** We have come to the season of Lent once more. I believe that the entire body is called to a period of penitential devotions. I am heartened by the response I have seen so far, in respect of the standards set by persons for their observance of Lent. Church attendance has shown a positive difference and it is hoped that much more is going on, as we refit and service our spiritual armour.

We have mentioned the analogy of a boat on dry dock, explaining the need for this dry docking and some of the work undertaken. As I write, I refer to the fact that the *'T&T Express'*, one of the Tobago fast ferries, is out of service from February 12<sup>th</sup> for gear box inspection. The notice in the *'Trinidad Express'* explains: 'this activity is part of our planned maintenance schedule and is necessary to ensure that the vessel maintains optimum performance'. Now that is the key! We would like to maintain optimum spiritual strength and performance in the regular schedule of things.

On Ash Wednesday, I called attention to joining our brothers and sisters in England in what we can call an *'energy fast'* – the deliberate practice



of reducing energy consumption by turning off unused appliances and lights. A further suggestion was to remove a light bulb from one significant position at home, as an ongoing reminder and, when Lent is over, replace it with an energy-saving bulb, such as we are using in the Church. In this way, the good intent of the fast will continue to make a difference. Our energy fast will, of course, be added to the other rules we have set ourselves for the season.

We must pray for each other and our parish as we undertake these important Lenten exercises.

We have welcomed a new Assistant Priest, referred to, in our context, as 'the Curate', but more accurately described as the 'Assistant Curate'. She is Rev'd Shelley-Ann Tenia. She is enthusiastic about her ministry and we look forward to the benefits of a mutual sharing in ministry at All Saints'. Thank you for the warm welcome you have extended to her. Reverend Tenia has been patient in waiting on the repairs being done to the Flat. Much more work than we anticipated was required; it is now proceeding with dispatch.

This weekend, we are hosting a *'Teen Discovery'* programme for our young people, and others from the region and our schools. Young persons between 15-20 years were invited to spend the weekend in a residential programme of spiritual exercises. One Bishop Anstey student reported it as 'giving herself to God for the weekend'. Canon Neil Roach, of the Diocese of the Bahamas, is the chief facilitator, with Mrs. Betsy Peterson as director. Many willing and able parishioners form a great team to minister to the youth. Thanks to the many parishioners who contributed to the preparatory stages of this programme. The stage is set and, with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, lives will be touched in crucial ways.

Finally, I wish to thank you for your continued patience with our ongoing development works. We are at the final stages, but new challenges are being presented. However, a number of persons are at prayer and, in due course, we shall put all challenges to rest and move on to new ones. May I exhort you to remain in prayer as we strengthen and ready ourselves for the tests of the wicked one. **'Christian never tremble; Never be down cast; Smite them by the virtue of the Lenten fast.'**

Yours in Christ  
Claude Berkley (Rev'd Canon)

## TO LOVE GOD AND TO USE HIS GIFTS TO HIS GLORY

### ***MEET REVEREND SHELLEY-ANN TENIA***

**Last Sunday's bulletin** provided you with a skeleton outline of the life and experience of our new Assistant Curate, Rev'd Shelley-Ann Tenia. But, at risk of a measure of repetition, ***SAINTS ALIVE!*** would like to add some flesh to those bare bones! This is in keeping with our policy of properly introducing you, the parishioners of All Saints' and the Chapel of Ease, to our clergy.

**Let's start at the beginning.** Shelley-Ann was born in San Fernando in 1976, the second child of a family with four children. The family backgrounds of her parents were very different; this, she believes, has been very helpful in permitting her to see different perspectives on issues and, with three brothers, she was always made to keep her feet firmly on the ground (as anyone who has lived in a house full of brothers will readily understand) – another experience that has served her well.

**She attended St Gabriel's RC Primary School** until success in the Common Entrance took her to St Stephen's College in Princes Town. This is a considerable distance from home, so she stayed with her grandmother in Cocoyea Village during the week. She enjoyed the rich and varied school life with the many opportunities for leadership development that is available to students in our good Anglican schools. While her Form V class was regarded by the School as 'the attitude class' – 'bright, active, assertive and full of opinions', the School recognised Shelley-Ann as 'the most helpful and productive student' of her year. She earned academic achievements – nine CXC and three Cambridge A level passes, and a pass in the General Paper, while participating in many extra-curricular activities. These included Young Leaders (which taught her that she wanted to work as a 'helping professional'), choir, debating, drama, Inter-School Christian Fellowship and sport – netball, basketball, track and field and marathon running. This prompted the question, 'so you will be joining Fr Chatfield in the CLICO marathon on Sunday February 24<sup>th</sup>?' Contrary to appearances, she claims she is not fit, but will be 'prayerfully cheering him on'. (We all should do likewise, as he seeks to raise funds for St Thomas, Chaguanas; the route passes All Saints', so perhaps we can provide him with some visible and highly audible support, too?)

**A life history like this** would have led most students to UWI, but her mother was determined that UWI was not

the place for her daughter. Further, Shelley-Ann wished to study psychology, which was not offered by UWI, so she moved to Virginia, again staying with a family member. Two years at a Community College gave her an Associate Degree in Education, enabling her to move on to the long-desired degree in psychology at Old Dominion University.

**At this time 'the priesthood was nowhere on my radar'.** But Shelley-Ann comes from a deeply religious family and she grew up in the Church. She was ready for confirmation at age eight and indeed, was selected to read the Epistle at her confirmation service at St Barnabas, Pleasantville. Immediately thereafter, she became an acolyte. She says she was always spiritually aware and observant and her Christian development was influenced, in particular, by her two very strong grandmothers and two of her teachers, coincidentally both teachers of Spanish.

**Arriving in Virginia,** she sought but did not find an Anglican Church and, unaware that in that part of the vineyard, Anglicans are known as Episcopalians, she attended a nearby Baptist Church. Inevitably, she got involved, teaching in the Sunday School and helping with the Youth and the Young Adult/Singles Ministries. Balancing study and working to pay for this, together with finding herself in a minority group for the first time in her life, were maturing experiences which helped her into adulthood.

**After graduating in May 2000,** Shelley-Ann returned home and began to work with the Credo Foundation. While her work, mostly with boys, was profoundly challenging, it was not fully satisfying. Reflecting on this, assisted by her spiritual director, brought her to the understanding that she needed to be involved in more spiritual work; it was now that she began to feel a deeper call to the sacred ministry. But 2001 was a difficult year, with the loss of several senior and much-loved family members, including a grandfather, 'the keeper of the family stories'.

**She had always intended** to return to USA to do a further degree in Social Work but she changed course, opting instead for a Masters in Divinity at the Virginia Theological Seminary. While the idea of entering the priesthood was growing ever stronger, she came to recognise that it was, in reality 'the evolution of something God began in me as a child'. However, it wasn't until her

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final year that her vocation became clear. Shelley-Ann was Ordained by His Lordship, Bishop Bess, to the diaconate at the Chapel of the Virginia Seminary on May 14<sup>th</sup> 2005, at the close of her final year.

**On completing her study**, Rev'd Shelley-Ann was attached to the parish of St John in Barbados for five months. She then returned to her home parish of St Barnabas for a further five months. In June 2006, she was appointed Assistant Curate at the Holy Trinity Cathedral, where she led a very busy life, gaining broad experience with active involvement in many areas of the life of our Cathedral parish. Her Ordination to the Priesthood, again by His Lordship, Bishop Bess, took place on October 28<sup>th</sup> 2006, the Feast of St Simon and St Jude.

**Rev'd Tenia's most recent move** brings her to us at All Saints' where she says her welcome has been 'gracious and cordial'. She believes all her training will play a significant role 'as I live out my vocation and serve God's people... I am a psychologist, social worker, counsellor, tutor, mentor, chaplain..... I also understand that God will continue to transform me as I journey, so that I will become a fuller version of myself. I pray and hope that same transformation for all of God's children'. Initially, she expects to be involved at our schools, St Ursula's, Bishop's Centenary College and Bishop Anstey High School, and in visiting the many 'sick and shut-ins' of our parish, as well as the regular rotation of preaching. But All Saints' is a large and busy parish and, as she settles and learns more about us, her duties are sure to expand.

**She expects to move into the Curate's apartment** soon – currently, she lives at her parents' home and drives to and from Port of Spain daily. General Brown is working hard to bring the renovation work quickly to completion.

**It was, of course, necessary to ask** Rev'd Shelley-Ann the obvious question – 'How do people react when they learn that you are a priest?' Her response, 'after the shock passes, there is always a comment about how wonderful that is; probably they don't know what to say, but don't want to be unkind! Most people are surprised that I appear to be a real and down to earth person.' This seems less a comment on Rev'd Shelley-Ann than a revelation of people's perceptions of priests! She says that she 'has met discomfort, confusion, insecurity' in addition to 'warmth and acceptance'. Are Anglicans in Trinidad and Tobago

really ready for women in the priesthood? 'Despite our challenges and the seeming ambivalence about change, particularly as it relates to female clergy, I do think we are making ourselves ready.....That there are eight others who have walked before me to prepare the way and continue to walk the path is testimony to that.'

**The difficult question *SAINTS ALIVE!*** posed was 'was there a temptation to earn a comfortable living as a psychologist/counsellor?' She chose to answer this question. 'There was. And temptation to earn a more comfortable living as a priest in the USA ..... People remind me that I must like 'sufferation' if I choose to stay here. Most ... wonder why I'm a full-time priest and not doing a secular job also..... (However) I don't think that being a full-time priest is better in any way than any other form of living out one's vocation. I simply understand that at this time in my journey, this is where God wants me and where He wants me to bear fruit'

**Rev'd Shelley-Ann seeks to maintain balance** in her life. She has enjoyed studying and is committed 'to life-long study and learning as an act of worship and fellowship with God', she enjoys her work and, when she can, she enjoys reading, liming with friends and family, outdoor activities, dancing and, for relaxation, she says she likes to knit. She hopes to learn drumming and storytelling. With her 'young people' style of e-mail address, socasweet@....., she telegraphs her taste in recreational music!

**The Saints have already shown** that we are ready to welcome as our new Assistant Curate this lively and deeply spiritual young person, who truly believes that God wants her to be a priest in this Diocese at this time. 'I am committed to seeking God out, listening and endeavouring to be obedient and faithful'. We can only admire her commitment. Life in the priesthood will assuredly bring difficulties but, for Rev'd Shelley-Ann, the rewards will far outweigh the problems. And so, we look forward to assisting her as she settles, to getting to know her better and to opening ourselves to the new approaches she will, in time, bring to us. We pray that God will strengthen and empower her as she embarks on this new and very challenging phase of her life. ***SAINTS ALIVE!*** wishes her well in her ministry at All Saints'.

***SAINTS ALIVE!*** wishes to thank Rev'd Tenia for her honesty cooperation, and openness in the production of this article.

**VISION 2010 AND BEYOND – VISION DAY IV, FEBRUARY 9<sup>TH</sup> 2008**

**The fourth session of our VISION 2010** process took place last Saturday (February 9<sup>th</sup>) at the Chapel of Ease. The goals for the day were:

1. To work towards Vision and Mission Statements appropriate to the way we now see ourselves, as reflected by the projects currently in progress.
2. To receive progress reports from the champions of the various projects elaborated at **VISION DAY III**, in May 2007.

The attendance was deeply disappointing; it has decreased steadily, from a high of 80 persons at the first session to just 35.

**In his introduction**, Canon Berkley provided some background information, explaining that the All Saints' Think Tank, 'a group of strategic reflecters' had identified a need for a three-five year plan, hence the instigation of the **VISION 2010** process. As persons from the corporate world, they believed that 'business thinking' needed to be applied. (For the uninitiated, this involves such concepts as Vision and Mission Statements, clear statements of core values, goals and objectives and, of course, the production of a continuously evolving Strategic Plan in which 'milestones' are regularly celebrated.)

**The Canon noted that** the emphasis on mission was, of course, borrowed from the early Church where Paul wasted no opportunity to work on his mission of what, in modern terms, is called 'Church planting'. He reminded us that our Catechism (75) reads 'The mission of the Church is to bring all people into unity with God and each other in

Christ'. The cross, whose sign we make very frequently, is a constant reminder of this; the vertical (I) represents God above and us below, while the horizontal (—) represents our relationships with each other. Together, they form ☩. Our goal therefore is 'to procure the salvation of souls', and it is in this light that we should see the current infrastructural developments, the air-conditioning of the Church, the use of multi-media technology and, soon, the new Church Hall – all are for 'catching fish' and retaining them, and only incidentally for our greater personal comfort. In light of the aggression of 'the competition', it is clear that we are under threat. We are losing our own, including longstanding Anglicans, to 'the MovieTowne Church' and elsewhere. Persons feel that they 'do not get enough from an All Saint's service'; in business terms, our 'product' is not seen as good, the 'packaging' is not right.'

**At VISION DAY II**, we identified ourselves as a '**Cruising Church**' – an 'effective but declining' Church with characteristics which include:

1. Carefully constructed camouflage.
2. Location in a relatively affluent area;
3. Reliance on past achievements and a positive reputation.

The need to become 'effective and improving', as a '**Moving Church**' is described, was agreed by all. In a 'Moving Church':

1. People are actively working together to respond continuously to the changing context.
2. Support systems are in place to help the church achieve its shared purpose and goals.

3. Those involved know where they are going and how they will get there.

**Referring to the heritage**, or legacy, left by Canons Bartholomew, Howe and Joseph, about which he frequently hears, the Canon indicated that 'history will show that we sat, on several occasions, to develop our heritage'. All that has been done has been agreed, documented and the information made available in writing to all parishioners, those present and those not present (and it remains available on our website). He reminded us that, to accept responsibility for the souls of our community, we must embrace change, becoming a 'Moving Church'.

**Canon Berkley's lengthy** but important introduction was followed by a Powerpoint retrospective on the Vision 2010 process, from September 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 to the present. In the absence of the anticipated reports from the project champions, this bore little relevance to the day's activities.

**Our facilitator for the day**, Mr Oliver Flax, is a member of the 6 am congregation. He was disappointed at the small number of young persons present, since it is they who should envision the Church we wish to be twenty years from now – the ultimate purpose of the whole **VISION 2010 AND BEYOND PROCESS**. However, six members of the confirmation class made up the youth contingent – a 600% increase on previous sessions.

**MISSION STATEMENT**

Attendees were divided to groups to work on ideas, using these questions as a guide:

## TO LOVE GOD AND TO USE HIS GIFTS TO HIS GLORY

1. Why do we exist?
2. What societal need do we satisfy?
3. Who are our customers?
4. How can we retain them?
5. How can we attract more customers?
6. How will we survive and thrive?

Again, the business thinking is clear!

### VISION STATEMENT

The groups were asked to complete the sentence 'I prefer All Saints'.....'

The 'Think Tank' will, no doubt, be very busy as the members try to formulate the ideas which emerged into Vision and Mission statements for our parish – statements which will

gain the 'buy-in' of our parishioners and which will form the framework in which we will operate for the next few years.

And so, our **VISION DAY IV** came to an end. All present were grateful to the Management Committee of the Chapel of Ease for their hospitality.

## A DIFFERENT APPROACH TO FASTING

Lent is well-underway and, perhaps, our fasting plans to have dissipated or lost their planned stringency. But it's never too late for a re-think! Fasts tend to be oriented toward things like giving up food or television. But there are many other creative ways we can welcome Jesus' healing touch. Here are some suggestions you may wish to consider:

### 1. FAST FROM ANGER AND HATRED

We could give our family and friends an extra dose of love today – and even try to extend this to others who are not our friends.

### 2. FAST FROM JUDGING OTHERS

Before making any judgments, we could recall how Jesus overlooks our own faults.

### 3. FAST FROM DISCOURAGEMENT

We could hold on to Jesus' promise that He has a perfect plan for our lives.

### 4. FAST FROM COMPLAINING

When we find ourselves about to complain, we could close our eyes and recall some of the little moments of joy Jesus has given us.

### 5. FAST FROM RESENTMENT OR BITTERNESS

We could work on forgiving those who may have hurt us.

### 6. FAST FROM SPENDING TOO MUCH MONEY

We could try to reduce our spending by 10% and give these savings to the poor.

### 7. FAST FROM EXCESSIVE USE OF CARBON

We could try to reduce our 'carbon footprint', by limiting our use of the carbon which, when converted to Carbon Dioxide, is a major cause of the climate change which threatens all of us.

*This item is adapted from an e-mail message sent to SAINTS ALIVE! by a reader, to whom we extend thanks.*

## SAINTS' PASSAGES

### JANUARY 2008

#### WEDDINGS

Suzette Martin & Kieron Fridie Jan 1<sup>st</sup>  
Madhuvanti Mahadeo &  
Mark Anthony Murphy Jan 20<sup>th</sup>

#### FUNERALS

Hugh Cecil Walke January 14<sup>th</sup>  
Betty Joyce Lau January 15<sup>th</sup>  
Jean Mc Dowell January 17<sup>th</sup>  
Stephanie Phyllis Gill January 21<sup>st</sup>  
Daphne Stapleton January 24<sup>th</sup>

## WORTH THINKING ABOUT

### ON AGE

'It is not how old you are, but how you are old.'

Jules Renard, writer (1864-1910)

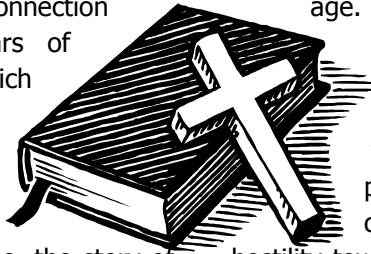
### WHAT MONEY CANNOT BUY

For money you can have everything it is said. No, that is not true. You can buy food, but not appetite; medicine, but not health; soft beds, but not sleep; knowledge but not intelligence; glitter, but not comfort; fun, but not pleasure; acquaintances, but not friendship; servants, but not faithfulness; grey hair, but not honour; quiet days, but not peace. The shell of all things you can get for money. But not the kernel. That cannot be had for money.

Arne Garborg, writer (1851-1924)

## CONTEXT AND UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE

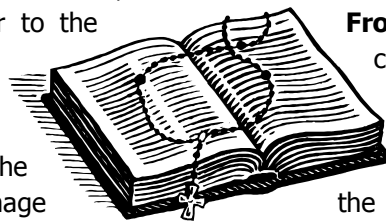
**Reflecting on our faith in this period of Lent** may perhaps lead us, among other things, to re-examine the way in which we interpret scripture in the light of our present experience of life and the context of our times. During the process, we might spare more than a passing thought for those who cannot make any connection between the context of the early years of Christianity and their present reality, which causes them indignantly to reject the Holy Scriptures. And can we blame them?



**Throughout the Gospels, Acts and Epistles** of the New Testament, for example, the story of Christ is related by different 'authors' to different 'audiences', using the language and images familiar to their culture to convey the truth and power of the Word. The specific intention was to appeal to people of differing beliefs, prejudices, problems and aspirations in their own particular cultural context

**Thus Paul, writing years before the Gospels appeared**, had a very different angle from the writers of Mark, Matthew, Luke and John. Discrepancies, inconsistencies and contradictions exist between the accounts given in each Gospel, so much so that this has led many to doubt their historical and literal validity.

**In addition, some of the attitudes and beliefs** taken for granted in those times, such as the acceptance of slavery and denigration of women, among others, have become (in general) offensive. The concepts of incarnation, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension, or indeed any reference to the miraculous or to the powers of darkness, seem to defy logic; no less contentious is the doctrine of original sin. Moreover, accounts of the often cruel threats and punishments dealt out by, or in the name of God, are seen to contradict the image of the loving, compassionate God so central to our faith.



**Thus, uninformed reading of Holy Scripture**, or even downright ignorance of it, leads to rejection of the work in its entirety and, sadly, its underlying, timeless meaning. 'God is always good, but He isn't always nice' may echo down the halls, but is this saying true of the God we worship?

**Biblical fundamentalism and literalism** have been identified by some biblical scholars as the two major culprits responsible for imprisoning the Word of God in a 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> century time capsule which, in their view, renders the Bible increasingly irrelevant in our day and age.

**Ignorance of the historical and cultural context** in which the books of the Bible were written is another. Without this knowledge and perspective, it is difficult, if not impossible, to comprehend attitudes such as the extreme hostility towards orthodox Jews found in the Gospel of St. John, or why, in the Gospel of St. Mark, Jesus gave leave to the 'legion demons' to enter an entire herd of swine.

**If such ignorance is a major contributor** to dwindling congregations and the growing numbers of sceptics, then who is responsible for dispelling that ignorance? Does this responsibility lie uniquely with our priests, or should we, as individuals, take a greater initiative to educate ourselves, so that we are more deeply informed?

**Deeply enough informed. that is, to address** the concerns and fears of those who reject the Holy Bible out of hand, without ever understanding its significance. Deeply enough informed to reach beyond the inconsistencies, beyond the cultural differences and beyond the literal words, to enter into a deeper personal relationship with God through Jesus, that we may share with others.

**From the depths and heights** of this more complete understanding, would we not then be able to take a fresh approach ourselves to the beauty of the scriptures as they were written, with greater appreciation for the words and images of ancient times which clothe the true message of Jesus, the Christ?

**SAINTS ALIVE!** again extends gratitude to Kate Wong, of the Chapel of Ease congregation, for this well-informed and important article which is designed to assist us as we seek understand Holy Scripture, and impart this understanding to others – as must be our mission (as discussed on elsewhere in this issue).

**TO LOVE GOD AND TO USE HIS GIFTS TO HIS GLORY**

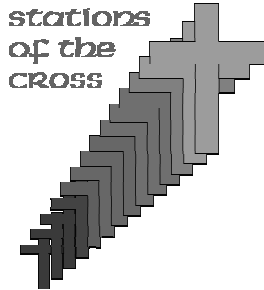
**LENT THEN AND NOW – AT AGES 8 AND 58**

**Growing up in the fifties** in St James at eight years old, and living directly facing the Anglican Rectory, with the Church on the left and the School on the right, Lent was a very quiet, sombre experience.



*Keeping a Holy Lent*

**On Ash Wednesday morning** at 8.45 am, all the children in the School walked over to the Church and we sang 'Forty Days and Forty Nights' to start the service, which was geared towards enlightening children about Lent. This was a time when the life of Christ would be unfolded to us at Sunday School, Wednesday mornings and at the 'Stations of the Cross' on Fridays.



**in the fifties, there was only one Radio Station**, with two channels – the 'A' and 'B' channels. During Lent, there was no calypso music on the radio. The music that was played was severely reserved.

**The School year ran** from January to December and during Lent so there was lots of time for Religious Instruction in this, the first term. The exams to go on to Secondary School

**ABOUT PRAYER – TEACH A CHILD TO PRAY**

**Much of our prayer is corporate**, that is to say we do it together and this is reflected in

were held in early November, and Junior and Senior Cambridge was scheduled in November to December.

**There was no saying like 'Thank God it's Friday'** because the population worked on Saturdays – some half day, some the whole day, and children had chores to do on a Saturday in preparation for Sunday, when the least amount of work was done and the focus was on Church.

**There was a lot of interest** in the days of Lent and pre-Lent – Septuagesima Sunday, St Patrick's Day and St Joseph's Day, when one was allowed to sing and dance when St Joseph, the Patron Saint of travellers, was celebrated by transportation persons. Most entertainment places (cinema being prominent) showed discretion in the movies they aired and, during Holy Week, there were always Passion films. Clothes were worn with discretion and very few Church goers got married in Lent.

**Fast-forward to Y2K8 .....**

**Lent is still here**, but with social and environmental alterations. The School year starts in September and runs until July and Schoolchildren sit SEA during Lent. They are engrossed in cramming, studying for their first big educational hurdle at a time in Church life when they lose focus on Christ, unless guidance is put into operation by parents.

**For the young and the old**, there is an explosion of media in Lent. We are bombarded by radio, TV, DVD,

CD and so



LENT IS A TIME FOR QUIET REFLECTION AND CONTEMPLATION

many other distractions that Lent has lost a lot of its 'religiousness'. With the advent of no work on Saturdays, people go to the beach or overseas for Holy Week and/or the Easter weekend. There is no longer such a thing as appropriate clothes for Lent.

**As the population became** more prosperous, intellectual and educated, there are social, cultural and educational events which overflow into Lent, according to the dates of the forty days. There are Seminars, Anniversaries, Family Days, Sports' Meetings, Sharing Sessions, AGMs. Our weekend is always packed with activities which, if we chose to honour all, would make deep inroads into our spiritual life.

**Finally at fifty-eight**, most persons are on a diet. A fifty-eight year old keeps check on blood pressure, blood sugar, colon and cholesterol. A lot of appropriate food is eaten all through the year, so there is no need to drastically bid 'farewell to the flesh' since sensible living should be year round..... the same for spiritual living.

**SAINTS ALIVE!** thanks Parker Nicholas for showing Lent 'then and now.'

'LENT EVENT' Perhaps this would help to remind us what Lent could or should be? IT IS now in progress in Australia.



## TO LOVE GOD AND TO USE HIS GIFTS TO HIS GLORY

much of what you will say when you attend our services. Yet there is another side to our prayer life, our own individual prayers, as we try to share in Christ's prayer to his Father, that His will be done, His kingdom come.

**The advice here was originally written** for a children's book. However, whether you are a child, young person or adult, prayer is easier than you imagine! Millions of people pray every day. You don't have to know any prayers if you want to pray - in fact, words can often get in the way. Picture Jesus, and then say what is in your heart, what you feel. And remember! God hears every prayer - but not all prayers are answered in the way we might expect or desire: we don't always pray for His will to be done!

**'Arrow' Prayers can be offered to God anywhere**, at any time. But thankfully we don't live all our lives in moments of extreme crisis. What about day-to-day praying? We need to come closer to God, to experience His love for us and to try to make sense of where we are in the world. Prayer is the way we do this.



### HOW TO START?

Use your hand. Your fingers can be used to bring to mind different things to pray for.

**1. Thumb** – the strongest digit on your hand. Give thanks for all the strong things in your life, like home and family, relationships that support and sustain you.

**2. Index Finger** – the pointing finger. Pray for all those people and things in your life who guide and help you. Friends, teachers, doctors, nurses, emergency services and so on.

**3. Middle Finger** – the tallest finger. Pray for all the important people who have power in the world, like world leaders and their governments and our own leaders.

**4. Ring Finger** – the weakest finger on your hand. It can not do much by itself. Remember the poor, the weak, the helpless, the hungry, the sick, the ill and the bereaved.

**5. Little Finger** – the smallest and the last finger on your hand. Pray for yourself.

### WHEN SHOULD I PRAY?

*SAINTS ALIVE!* comes to you from the Anglican Parish of All Saints', Port of Spain & Chapel of Ease, Maraval, Trinidad. Reach us at 868-627-7004 and visit our website – [www.allsaintschurchtt.org](http://www.allsaintschurchtt.org)

Traditionally, prayer times are morning and evening, but you can choose the time best for you. It helps to be somewhere quiet, where you can have some time for yourself.

### DO I HAVE TO KNEEL?

Kneeling is the traditional posture for penitence and standing for praise, but you can pray anywhere - walking, standing, sitting, whatever feels comfortable.

### WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW?

Be creative - use music, a stone, a feather, a flower, or a candle to help you focus - if you are very young, or elderly, be careful with candles! Prayer activity is a discipline - it can be difficult at times, just like keeping fit, being on a diet, or keeping weeds down in the garden! Little and often is best, but don't give up! No prayer, however inadequate you may feel it to be, is ever wasted or of no value. Build up a collection of favourite prayers and sayings - anything that speaks to you. You can find them in greeting cards, cuttings in the press or bookmarks and prayer cards. **Here's another way of using your hand!**

*SAINTS ALIVE!* acknowledges the Church of England,



*www.cofe.anglican.org as the source of this information.*