

April 2007

Eagle's Wings

Executive Director of University Mission and Ministry

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Weddings and Baptisms at Alumni Chapel
Call Fr. John Maher
286-8415

Mass Intentions
are accepted for each
Weekday and Sunday
Mass for \$10 per Mass.
Call 286-8400 or stop by
the office.

Campus Ministry Web Page
www.niagara.edu/ministry

Newsletter On-line
from the above website,
click on NEWSLETTER

Mass Schedule
See Page 4

REPORTING LIVE FROM THE GALLAGHER STUDENT CENTER ON THE DAY BEFORE EASTER BREAK

I'm on location today, writing this campus ministry article in the student center, far away from my office. (Actually, it's only about 50 yards from my office but it feels like miles). I'm actually under cover, and not really too interested in writing this article. I'm conducting an experiment to see how many people will stop and talk to me as I sit here appearing to be busy. Three people have already stopped by, and that was before I even cranked up the computer. So far, so good.

Ten minutes have now gone by and several have stopped to chat. This is much more fun than my office and as you can see, even productive. So what am I learning?

I'm learning that being at the center of activity lifts my spirits and makes me smile.
I'm learning that interruptions aren't annoying really, but life giving and energizing.
I'm learning that I am blessed to know so many people here at NU and that I haven't seen many of them for a long time.
I'm learning that I need to sit out here more often.
I'm learning that student athletes eat much more and much more often than other students.
I'm learning that, unlike the Christmas Break, we all seem to be a bit more relaxed going into the Easter Break. (Maybe it's because no one is worrying about shopping.)
I'm learning that the joy and peace that we wish each other at Easter Time is really evident here, especially in the way the students relate to others. (I haven't heard any bad language either).

But this being a Vincentian and Catholic University, I ask myself as I sit here, is it really possible to see the Face of God in other people? That's what Vincent taught us, to look into the eyes of our brothers and sisters and see the face of God. Well, I'm happy to report the following:

- I see the face of God in the Sodexo worker who with great care is cleaning up after some students who really enjoyed their lunch!
- I see the face of God in a young mother, a student here, as she playfully shares her little child with her friends.
- I see the face of God in the basketball and baseball player who sit together to share a snack, perhaps before or after practice, perhaps before or after they share the fellowship that athletics teaches.
- I see the face of God in the student who stops by to ask me for some help and tears fill her eyes as she searches for some answers to her current dilemma.
- I see the face of God in the VP for student life who takes time to wander through and say hello to students and staff as if she has nothing to do (which we know is so very far from the truth).
- I see the face of God in my colleagues in campus ministry, smiling and chatting with students as they mingle and offering prayers for painful situations that have been shared with them.
- I see the face of God in the administrators who have stopped in for their afternoon coffee or tea, and while I know they carry the burden of responsibility for this University, their smiles and friendly greetings reveal that they see their work as a ministry and not just a job, and that they love it!
- I see the face of God in the Vincentian Priest, one of the great veterans at NU, who has taught so many of us by his life how to look into the eyes of another and see the face of God.



Blessed Easter Season to all of you and all those whom you love!
Sister Nora Gatto, DC
Executive Director of University Mission and Ministry

Chaplain's Corner, April, 2007

Fr. John T. Maher, C.M.

"Amazing Grace": How great the life!

I have a confession to make. That's right, a public confession to all of you. During this past Lent, I went to the movies. Yes, that's right, I indulged in one of my favorite pastimes when I could have sacrificed the pleasure I get from seeing a movie. Why, you ask? It was both the movie's name and subject that drew me: **Amazing Grace**.

This film, ostensibly about the composition of one of Christianity's greatest hymns, really tells us of the grace God gives ordinary individuals to do extraordinary good deeds. William Wilberforce, an 18th century English statesman, spent much of his life trying to abolish British slave trade from Africa. The film chronicles the insidious political opposition Wilberforce faced: MP's using parliamentary maneuvers to keep bills from reaching the floor; adjourning; citing economic loss 'to our constituents' to continue slave trade; and loudly expressing the sad, prevailing view of the day that 'these Africans are not humans'. Wilberforce was scorned, isolated, and derided for his conviction.

But he remained firm and steadfast in his beliefs. His inspiration? It was the Rev. John Newton, pastor of the parish church of his youth. Wilberforce recalled the inspiring sermons Newton delivered at his church; he returned there to visit with his pastor, to seek guidance and find strength in his quest to abolish slave trade from Britain. And he chose the right person, because Newton in his youth made a fortune as a slave trader. Newton described his conversion in a sermon Wilberforce never forgot: "*Only God's amazing grace could take a rude, profane, slave-trading sailor and transform him into a child of God.*" The hymn he wrote- Amazing Grace- is the result of his journey from darkness to light, from sin to grace, from selfishness to a life of humble service.



Wilberforce never gave up, and in his lifetime, Britain outlawed slave trade. Just before his death in 1833, he was able to ban slave trading in all British colonies. His life, like his mentor John Newton, was truly one of 'amazing grace'—the grace to believe, to persevere, and to trust God can, as St. Paul reminds us 'write straight with crooked lines'. That's the message of Easter: nothing can ever separate us from the amazing grace of God's love for us. Nothing is too powerful or fearful for God to help us. In Jesus' victory over the cross, the instrument of death becomes the tree of life.

We may be tempted to think a movie like **Amazing Grace** is inspiring, but well beyond our reach. I can't be a Newton or Wilberforce and do the things they did, can I? Many of our students thought that at the first day on their BASIC trip; other felt it in their first "Learn & Serve" assignment. And then something 'amazing' happened: God's grace took over, opening minds and hearts to see the simple truth: "I can't, but God can!"

The Easter experience of Jesus proves yes, we can. But we have to acknowledge our need for God's grace, and like the two men above, allow ourselves to be led with humble open hearts. And if we do this, we will be truly amazed at the grace God gives us.

After the Big Easter Egg Rolls Away: What will our bodies be like after we die?

by Jerod J. Sikorskyj

Do you like your body? I must admit, sometimes I do not enjoy mine very much. Through it, I experience physical pain, grow tired, feel sorrow, stumble on the ground, and my God, such neediness—food, drink, affection, warmth. Of course, there are the raindrops on my skin, the tender kiss, running through tall grass ankle-high, and the old Gorge wind brushing the face. Yet, it's right around Easter that I start wondering again, "What kind of body will I have after I die?"

The common cultural response is "no body", at least not anything noticeably human. Instead, we might be balls of energy, ghost-like apparitions spiriting around houses, or rebirth into the furry four-leggedness of a dog, the craggy bark of a tree, or the svelte future movie starlet clung in tight-fitting red. And yet, for Christians, there is an amazingly counter-cultural response. We will have a body like Jesus's resurrected body unified with our souls. Well, what kind of body is that?

St. Thomas Aquinas and other Christian theologians have used the accounts of the Gospels and Paul's first letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 15:42b-44) to identify four qualities of the glorified body. The first one, *impassibility*, means we won't suffer physical evils—no sorrow, death, sickness, etc. Secondly, our new bodies will have *subtlety*, or the power to move through material objects or places unrestricted. Third, we'll have better *agility* than Jet Li or Jackie Chan, with bodies moving easily, elegantly, and quickly at the soul's command. Finally, we'll have the gift of *clarity*. That is, our bodies will shine with a kind of radiance, relative to the merits of our souls. You'll be able to see right through a person's body to their true identity.

Until then, as spiritual writer Anthony DeMello once wrote, "dialogue with your body" and one other thing too. If like me, you find it hard to wrap your head around the mystery of a glorified body, remember, "People mistakenly assume that their thinking is done by their head; it is actually done by the heart which first dictates the conclusion, then commands the head to provide the reasoning that will defend it..." (Anthony DeMello, S.J.)

Join us as we discuss this and similar topics at:

Catholic Bible Study

Tuesday evenings at 5:05 - 6:00 p.m.

In the back Chapel of Alumni Chapel

What is The St. Vincent de Paul Society All About?

Service is far more than "doing good" and feeling good about it. The St. Vincent de Paul Society offers a wonderful opportunity time and time again to meet the face of Christ. This year, the NU chapter of the St. Vincent de Paul Society decided to make a concerted effort to connect with our Vincentian Parish, Our Lady of Lebanon which is located on the East side of Niagara Falls. It has been a year of building relationships with the very young and the young at heart.

The NU Chapter of the St. Vincent de Paul Society would like to cordially invite your presence and assistance at the "Grandparent Promenade" on Sunday, April 22nd at 11:30 a.m. We will be hosting the grandparent figures at Our Lady of Lebanon with great food, some dance, and great conversation. Won't you join us? For more information attend the St. Vincent de Paul meeting on Monday, April 16th at 7:30 p.m. "Under the Taps." You may also email the NU chapter at Niagarasvdps@gmail.com. Join us! You definitely will be enriched!



**MASS SCHEDULE
Alumni Chapel**

for Weekdays and Holy Days

Weekday Mass

**Mondays, Wednesdays
and Fridays**
12:15 p.m.

Tuesdays and Thursdays
12:35 p.m.

Weekday Masses are held between

**Aug. 28 - Dec. 15 and
Jan. 17 - May 11**

No Weekday Mass will be held on:
April 5 - 9

Holy Day Masses

Ascension
Thursday, May 17
12:05 p.m.

Assumption of Mary
Wednesday, Aug. 15
12:05 p.m.

**SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE
Alumni Chapel**

April 15 – May 6
11 a.m., 4:30 p.m. and
10 p.m.

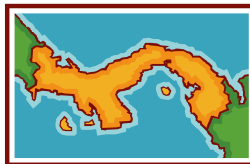
May 13
11 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

Summer Mass Time
May 20 - Aug 19
10 a.m.

B.A.S.I.C.

Are you looking for a bit of adventure with purpose for your life? Campus Ministry is offering a couple of opportunities to help ground you in the Vincentian Mission and provide you with a week or so of worthwhile challenges.

Back by popular demand, Campus Ministry is offering a trip for **“Katrina Revitalization.”** If there is enough campus interest and funding the goal would be to take a bus of 30 people (students and employees) to the Gulfport – Biloxi region of Mississippi. We would leave campus on August 13th and return to NU on August 22nd. If there is less interest and funding is tight, plan B would allow me to travel with six students by plane and rent a vehicle. The cost of the trip is approximately \$250. In either case NU B.A.S.I.C. would be hosted by Catholic Charities.



The second trip is our international B.A.S.I.C. trip to the Vincentian Missions in **Panama** which is offered every other year in January. This year it will take place from January 4 -14, 2008. This wonderful opportunity is open to primarily juniors and seniors. The approximate cost is \$750.

If you would like to learn more about these two B.A.S.I.C. experiences, you are invited to attend an informational meeting. Applications will be available at those meetings as well as in the Campus Ministry Office. If you have any further questions feel free to contact Campus Minister Monica Saltarelli at 286-8409 or email her at ms@niagara.edu. The informational meetings are at the following times:

Monday, April 16th – Study Lounge
4:00 p.m. – Katrina trip
4:30 p.m. – Panama trip

Wednesday, April 18th – Study Lounge
5:05 p.m. – Katrina trip
5:35 p.m.- Panama trip

Friday, April 20th- Under the Taps
12:15 p.m. – Katrina trip
12:45 p.m. – Panama trip