



St. Michael & All Angels, Kauaʻi Monthly Newsletter March 2020

Upcoming Events

- Adult Formation: Lent Reflections, Sunday, March 8, Goodale Conference Room 8:30-9:30 a.m.
- Adult Formation: The Gospel Passion Narrative, Sunday, March 15 and 22, Goodale Conference Room, 8:30-9:30 a.m.
- Lenten Adult Formation, Wednesday, March 11, 18, and 25, 6:00 p.m. worship, followed by potluck and program/discussion in the Parish Hall.

Remembering Jan

Andrew McMullen, Rector

On the morning of February 22, approximately 350 people gathered in our sanctuary to celebrate the life and ministry of The Rev. Jan Rudinoff. Since that time, several members have approached me and have suggested that it would be appropriate for me to somehow publish my homily to the parish. It has been further suggested that our newsletter is a good opportunity to do so. I am happy and honored to again share my homily, but since I did not have any sort of script, I will do my best to recall it!

I confess that I find it daunting to preach at burial services. It's not the central message that's the problem; it is always the same. I preach Easter. Rather, I find it quite challenging to give words to a life and its meaning. Our lives are beyond words. Every word is a label, and if anyone lived a life beyond labels, it was Jan Rudinoff. And this homily is uniquely daunting. (continued on page 2)

Offering Via Text Giving

Bill Skelton, Treasurer

St. Michael's will offer text-based offerings as an experiment during Lent. Many people access the world through their smart phones and this is an attempt to connect with them. If you would like to use this service, simply text "Give" to 844-527-6508. The first time you use it you will be asked to register with Tithe.ly, the company that offers this service. As part of registration, you will enter your name and address, along with the credit card you wish to use. After the first time you

use the service, you can simply text an amount and purpose to the same phone number (844-527-6508). For "purpose", you can use offering, pledge, music festival, or ReSource Center. For example, to send \$100 to pledge, you would text "100 pledge".

Don't forget to save our giving number in your phone! You can always text EDIT to update your information, set up a recurring gift, and check the status of a gift.

Remembering Jan (continued)

First off, I have to follow Sarah's beautiful eulogy. In addition, Jan was a priest; always feels a little odd preaching during the funeral of a priest. It gets more daunting – Jan was not only a priest but he is a former Rector of St. Michael and All Angels. It gets worse. Jan was the first Rector of the parish, and with the help of many, he built this church and this sanctuary in which we gather today. Hard to imagine it getting any worse!

There is a custom in the Episcopal Church that former Rectors keep their distance from the parish after they depart, giving the faith community space and time to live into its new future. Jan followed this custom, and I am grateful for this gift, because it is easy to feel his shadows and influence in the life of this place. Even still, Jan reached out to me and we had coffee on occasion. I found him to always be affirming and supportive. When on island, Jan attended the 7:30 a.m. Sunday morning service. He always sat in the same spot, near the back. Jan would always greet me with a smile and usually a compliment or two. Some were uniquely Jan. I will give you an example – it does not happen very often, maybe a handful of times since I was ordained, when I arrive on Sunday morning without a sermon. It's not that I did not work at it. It is simply that for whatever reason the scriptures fail to speak to me; I have no sermon in which to offer. When this happens, I do not pretend otherwise, forcing a sermon down the throats of the faithful; rather I simply confess it. One such morning took place a couple of years ago. I stood up to preach and simply said, "This morning, I've got nothing. I am sorry. I tried, but all I have is nothing." I sat down. After the service, Jan approached me with his customary smile, shook my hand vigorously and loudly said, "That is the best sermon I have ever heard."

It is no secret that Jan was a unique breed of cat. A complicated man. A seeker. And

throughout his life, his theology, his view of God and faith, evolved. He saw things differently than the orthodox church, and he believed differently too. Shortly after I arrived in this parish, I noticed that Jan would not say the entire Nicene Creed, the statement of orthodox belief, during our worship. It was as if certain sections just faded away and Jan would be quiet and let his gaze wander around the sanctuary. We were having coffee one day and I called him on it. I said, "Jan, as a priest you can't just pick and choose what parts of the creed you like, it's the statement of our faith." Again the smile, almost a laugh, and he responded, "I can do whatever I want now." A pause, and then he said, "But you can't!"

One thing remained for Jan. The main thing remained, an unwavering faith that God is love, and we are to be that love for each other, no matter what. He preached it. He urged us to live it. Love is our being and our purpose, and there is no boundary or limit to the healing and redemptive power of that love for everyone and everything. And this is what we celebrate today. Love is. Love lives. We are God's love story. It is our story. And this love gives way to the resurrection, the faith that the love we are never dies, God's journey, Jan's journey, our journey, continue. Life for Jan has simply changed, not ended.

I am fond of a quote by an Indian mystic named Tagore who said, "Death is not the putting out of the light. It is only putting out the lamp because the dawn has arrived." The dawn has come for Jan. Easter morning has arrived. He now rests in the arms of the one who created him. He has become one with the love that ever was and is and ever will be. Jan has come home. Welcome home, Jan, welcome home. Amen.



Poverty and the Elderly

Pat Hillegonds, Director of Loaves and Fishes

A recent study, the Elder Index study, conducted by researchers at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, looked at basic and necessary costs for older Americans living in each state. These costs include rental housing, health care, food, and other essential costs. Among other things, the study found that 7.6% of older couples in Hawaii live in poverty — the highest percentage in the nation. It also found that more than half of the elderly living by themselves in the state of Hawaii lack the financial resources to pay for basic needs. Hawaii residents over 65 years of age in good health in Hawaii need a minimum yearly income of \$32,048 for singles and \$44,700 for couples, according to the study.

Approximately two-thirds of the population served by Loaves and Fishes is over 60. Income eligibility is \$26,600 for one person, \$36,000 for two. Based on the figures in the study, we can surmise that the elders we serve do not have the financial wherewithal to meet their basic needs. Fortunately, the food we provide on a weekly basis makes a huge difference. Additionally, Stephanie Ellis brings several bags of clothing each week from the Wilcox Hospital thrift store, which also helps to meet some of the clothing costs.

Loaves and Fishes is also part of a monthly Senior Food Box program. The Senior Food Box program is a service provided by the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) and administered by the Hawaii Foodbank Kauai Branch. Each month, financially eligible seniors receive a large box of food consisting of cereal, cans of fruit and vegetables, grains such as rice and quinoa, cans of fish and tuna, and a large block of cheese. We currently have 67 people enrolled

in the program — the largest number of any other food pantry on the island, and a wait list of several more people.

I am often asked if I think that the people we serve at Loaves and Fishes are truly needy. The answer is definitely yes. I'm also asked if I think that what we do makes much difference in people's lives. Again, my answer is a resounding YES. Given the high cost of living in Hawaii, and given the level of poverty, particularly among the elderly, we are blessed to be able to provide food and clothing, which truly helps to alleviate some of the financial burdens carried by those we serve.



Life in the Parish!



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