

## ST. MARY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH PROFILE

### ST. MARY'S VISION STATEMENT

Diverse, Unafraid, Open Hearts

### ST. MARY'S MISSION STATEMENT

St. Mary's Episcopal Church, a welcoming community of faith, hope, and love shaped by the Japanese-American experience, strives to grow in our relationship with God through worship, fellowship, outreach, and service.



### HISTORY

Founded in 1907 by Mary Louise Paterson, a former missionary to Japan, St. Mary's began as a mission to minister to Japanese immigrants. The Reverend John Misao Yamazaki, himself an immigrant from Japan, was the founding vicar of the Episcopal Mission. During this period, many of the parishioners lived within the neighborhood of the church. St. Mary's served as a hub of community activities for the Japanese-American community and served to help Japanese immigrants assimilate into the American culture. Since many of the members of the

congregation were Issei, first generation from Japan, services were conducted in both Japanese and English.

During World War II, as a result of Executive Order 9066, a majority of the congregation was evacuated to internment camps. While in the camps, The Reverend John Misao Yamazaki and his son, The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki, continued their ministry, conducting services in the barracks of the camps. The World War II experience is an important part of St. Mary's history as it bonds many members of the congregation.

At the end of the War, many of those interned returned to the Los Angeles area. Since the majority of the Japanese families sold or gave away their homes before internment, many in the Japanese-American community had nowhere to live. St. Mary's became a refuge and resource center for them. St. Mary's opened up the church and the vicarage was used as a hostel for those without housing. St. Mary's also re-established a Boy Scout Troop, which remained active until 1969, and the Girls Friendly Society, which continued until 1982.



The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki, affectionately known as Father John, succeeded his father as the second vicar of St. Mary's in 1946. At that time, the congregation was made up of twelve active families. In 1956, St. Mary's achieved parish status in the Diocese of Los Angeles, and The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki was called as St. Mary's first rector. He continued in that capacity until he retired in 1985.

During Father John's tenure, St. Mary's thrived with many youth programs. St. Mary's ran their own pre-school from 1967 – 1985 and, in conjunction with the Wilshire YMCA, had youth activities such as Indian Guides, Gra-Y (a sports program), and Golden Eagles.

For twenty years, the Summer Vacation Program was a major outreach effort to the members of the church school, the neighborhood, and other organizations. Volunteers conducted an imaginative program of crafts, skills, music, storytelling, and outings which focused on religious and moral teachings. This was later made into a Diocesan and National Church program called the Summer Works Project.

The Christmas festival was a big event for all the Sunday School grades and youth groups. Every child from pre-school to high school participated in the program. The Junior YPF (Young

People's Fellowship) re-enacted the Christmas Eve Nativity scene and Senior YPF would do the "prelude" to Santa Claus. The festival also was an evening of appreciation to all the advisors and teachers.

The other major event for St. Mary's was the Annual Bazaar Carnival. The Bazaar Carnival was held on the third Saturday in May, and was known throughout the Diocese and the Japanese-American community. Local businesses donated many of the goods that were sold. This event brought church members, families, and friends together in fellowship. The money which was raised helped the Building and Capital Fund and other church organizations. The church members made chicken and beef teriyaki, chow mein, udon, sushi, homemade pastries, and strawberry shortcake. Fruit, vegetables, and flowers were also sold. There were many game booths for the youth and a "Small World" game area for the pre-school age children. During the best years of the Bazaar Carnival, St. Mary's would raise \$30,000. The Bazaar Carnival was last held in May 2008.

From 1986 to 1991, The Reverend Mitsuo Akiyoshi served as rector. He introduced to St. Mary's the first female assistant rector, The Reverend Sonja Pearson. It was during his tenure that the high altar became a free standing altar and the dossal was removed. Similar to many Episcopal churches at the time, these were controversial decisions. Upon his departure, in 1991, The Reverend Kathleen Cullinane (then assistant rector known affectionately as Mother Kate) was called to be St. Mary's first woman rector and served our parish until 2000.

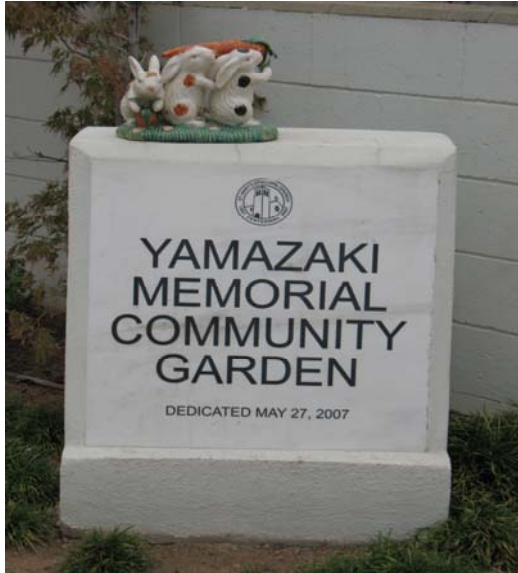
Mother Kate's meaningful and accessible sermons were extremely popular and brought in new members as well as former members. She facilitated the goal of the Endowment Committee to raise five hundred-thousand dollars. She brought the Head Start pre-school program to St. Mary's in 1995.

Even though there were two rectors following the official retirement of Father John at the end of 1985, his influence on the congregation remained strong until his death in 1998. Now, 25 years after the retirement of The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki, the parish is ready to move on with new leadership and welcome a new successor.

Following The Reverend Kate Cullinane's departure, The Reverend Patricia Bennett served as Interim Priest from October 2000 until July 2001. Following The Reverend Patricia Bennett's departure, The Reverend H. Alix Evans, then assistant rector, was named the Priest-in-Charge Under Special Circumstances, in November 2001. In November 2002, The Reverend H. Alix Evans became St. Mary's fourth rector.

To serve the changing culture of St. Mary's neighborhood, The Reverend Alexandra Conrads was hired to begin a ministry targeted toward the surrounding community and began services in Spanish. She left in 2004.

The Reverend Nicole Janelle became the next assistant rector and continued the outreach to the Spanish-speaking community. She and The Reverend Alix Evans wrote several grants that increased programs directed at serving our local community. These included Guitarworks, providing guitars and lessons to local youth; nutrition classes offered through Master of Public Health student intern; a summer day camp for local youth, facilitated by an intern sponsored by the Lilly Foundation; and yoga classes. The yoga classes later turned into aerobics classes per request of the local community. The Reverend Nicole Janelle left St. Mary's in late 2006.



In April 2006, the parish broke ground on the Yamazaki Memorial Community Garden. The garden provides a place for neighborhood families to plant and grow their own fruits and vegetables. It also serves as a meeting place for the local neighbors. In 2007, St. Mary's was awarded a Community Beautification Grant by the City of Los Angeles Board of Public Works in support of the Yamazaki Memorial Community Garden.

(Left, at the entrance to the garden is the memorial stone. Below is a recent picture of the garden taken in the fall of 2010.)



The Reverend Floyd "Butch" Gamarra, retired clergy, was hired as a halftime assisting priest in 2007 and continues to sustain our Spanish speaking ministry. He is also actively involved in all areas of ministry to St. Mary's.

St. Mary's celebrated its Centennial on May 27, 2007, with Holy Eucharist and a dedication of the Yamazaki Memorial Community Garden. Parishioners were able to look back and reflect on St. Mary's past and honor the pioneers who devoted their lives to the church.

Sadly, in October, 2008, the much beloved The Reverend H. Alix Evans passed away. This time was followed by a period of mourning and grief. We celebrated her life and ministry with a memorial service on the first anniversary of her death.

The Reverend Marilyn Omernick was named Priest-in-Charge in November 2008 until a new rector is called. St. Mary's is also blessed to have The Reverend Floyd "Butch" Gamarra and The Reverend Canon Richard Van Horn, priests assisting, during this time of transition.

### **THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

(3-mile radius Census data, updated for 2010, from Percept Group, Inc)

St. Mary's is located in Los Angeles, California, west of the downtown area in what is known as Koreatown. This area, which used to be home to many of the parishioners of St. Mary's before WWII, has changed over the years. The ethnic diversity in our area is very high. The largest ethnic group is Hispanic/Latino which accounts for about 61% of the total population, followed by Asian at 17%, then the Anglo (Non-Hispanic) population at about 10%, then the Black/African-American population at about 9%.

The current population in the immediate area, (3 mile radius), surrounding St. Mary's is about 693,000. The population in this area is projected to increase by 5.5% over the next 5 years. In comparison, the U.S population is projected to grow by about 4.6% over the same period. The projected growth by ethnic group, is led by the Hispanic/Latino population which is projected to grow by 7.5%, followed by the Asian population at 6.9% growth, then the Anglo population at 2.6% growth. The Black/African-American population, however, is projected to decline by about 7.2% during this period.

The age breakdown of the area around the church shows a younger generation where about 77% of the population is under the age of 50. Of this population, 34.5% are between the ages 29-49, and 29.3% are between the ages 9-28. The family structure in our area is considered "Very Non-Traditional" due to a below average presence of married persons and two-parent families. Forty percent of households in our area are considered "Single parent." The overall education level in our area is considered "Very Low" where about 53% of the population 25 and over have graduated from high school, compared to the national average of about 80%.

Regarding household faith involvement, our area shows 44% with No faith involvement, 25% with Moderate faith involvement, and 31% with Strong faith involvement. Of those with faith involvement, 64% report a preference for “Historic Christian” tradition and an overall church style preference of “Somewhat Contemporary.” The preference for the Episcopal Church in our area is about 3%, which is the same as the national average. The overall faith receptivity level in our community is considered “Very Low.”

The overall community stress level is considered “critically high” due to a high percentage of households below the poverty line, adults without a high school diploma, households with a single parent and other community problems.

### ST. MARY’S PARISH



St. Mary's Centennial Celebration, Pentecost Sunday, May 27, 2007

In contrast to our immediate surrounding community, the St. Mary's Parish community looks much different. Our current congregation is about 68% Asian, (primarily Japanese-American), 12% Anglo, 9% Mixed/Multi-ethnic, 6% Hispanic/Latino, and 5% Black/African-American.

The age breakdown for St. Mary's parishioners shows an older generation where about 61% of the congregation is over the age of 50. Of our population, 45% are between the ages 66-80, and 31% are between the ages 21-50. The long family history at St. Mary's has created a multi-generational membership where about 63% of parishioners have been regular members for over 30 years, many since their birth. Some of the current members represent the fourth

generation of their family to attend St. Mary's. It has been described as a "rural church in an urban setting" where members genuinely care for one another and others in the parish community.

Due to the changing local community over the years, about 44% of St. Mary's parishioners now travel 10-30 minutes to get to church and another 44% travel in excess of 30 minutes to get to church. Very few of the 7:30 and 9:45 AM English speaking members live in the immediate surrounding community. This commuter dynamic necessitates most parish functions to be planned only on Sundays. These activities include: vestry meetings, choir practice, club meetings, and adult activities. A monthly South Bay Bible study accommodates the commuter nature of St. Mary's.

Most of the 11:45 AM Spanish language service members live in the nearby community. Some of the members came to St. Mary's after participating in on-site English-as-a-Second-Language classes or having children enrolled in Head Start. Father Butch Gamarra currently plans Spanish language weekday activities at St. Mary's, such as Bible study and teaching series on Anglicanism.

The following information is related to service attendance by parishioners from January 1, 2010 through July 31, 2010.

- Average Sunday attendance: 78 total; 12 persons attend the 7:30 AM service (approximately 30-50% of the members who attend this service are Belizean); 55 persons attend the 9:45 AM service; and 12 persons attend the 11:45 AM service.
- Christmas 2009 attendance: Christmas Eve 7:30 PM (Spanish language) – 16, 9:30 PM – 85 and Christmas Day 9:30 AM – 47.
- Ash Wednesday: 12:00 PM (Liturgy of Ashes in Spanish) – 20; 7:00 PM (Sung Holy Eucharist with Ashes) – 13.
- Maundy Thursday (Bilingual service): 7:00 PM – 6.
- Good Friday 1:00 PM (Bilingual service) – 27.
- Easter Sunday – 131 total; 9:45 AM – 116 and 11:45 AM (Spanish language) – 15.

The congregation continues to include many members of Japanese ancestry. Japanese Americans from Hawaii make up a portion of the congregation. While St. Mary's continues to have strong ties to the Japanese American community, we are ethnically diverse – Caucasians, people of Chinese, Belizean, African, Mexican, Central American and other ancestries are all integrally involved in the life of the parish.

At St. Mary's, spirituality is expressed through doing. We are a parish that serves God through work, service, and action. Whenever there is a need, the congregation comes together enjoying opportunities to work together in fellowship. The annual Christmas Boutique and Treasure Chest/Rummage Sale are examples of the ways members of the congregation come together, work very hard, and enjoy each other's company while serving God and His church.

St. Mary's has also been blessed by several Boy Scout Eagle and Girl Scout Gold Award projects. These projects have improved spaces within the parish hall, (reorganizing and painting of two upstairs rooms), the Yamazaki Memorial Community Garden, (the planter boxes, wall mural, benches and compost), and the patio adjoining the parish hall and chapel, (cedar benches).

Members of the congregation are also active in the community and Diocese, serving on the Diocesan Altar Guild; involved with ECW (Episcopal Church Women); serving on the boards of Good Samaritan Hospital, St. Barnabas Senior Center, and Hillside (an Episcopal home for abused children); and supporting the Keiro Nursing Home. Previously, members have also served on the Diocesan Council, the Standing Committee, the Commission on Ministry, and the Corporation of the Diocese. Members have also been active with JEMS, (Japanese Evangelical Missionary Society), and EAM / LA, (Episcopal Asia-American Ministry / Los Angeles). The Reverend Kathleen Cullinane and The Reverend H. Alix Evans were also actively involved with the Nikkei Interfaith Council. The Reverend Marilyn Omernick has continued St. Mary's involvement with this group.

Historically, St. Mary's members have been actively involved in the National and Diocesan church in the following ways: *Seminary Trustees*: The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki, (Church Divinity School of the Pacific – CDSP), The Reverend Dr. Shunji Nishi, (interim dean at CDSP), and Canon Dr. Steve Nishibayashi, (Bloy House and CDSP); *General Convention Delegates*: The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki; *Executive Council*: The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki and The Reverend Butch Gamarra; *Lay Readers from the initial class of lay readers in the Diocese of Los Angeles*: Jun Asakura, Frank Chuman, Isao Sakurai, Masaru Nishibayashi, and The Reverend Jim Shiode; and *Judge of the Ecclesiastical Court*: The Reverend H. Alix Evans and Canon Dr. Steven Nishibayashi.

From within the St. Mary's congregation, four members have been called to the ministry: The Reverend John H. M. Yamazaki, The Reverend Dr. Shunji Nishi, The Reverend Keith Yamamoto, and The Reverend Jim Shiode, Deacon. In recognition of their service, three canons of the Diocese of Los Angeles have been named from the St. Mary's parish: The Reverend Canon John H. M. Yamazaki, The Reverend Canon Richard Van Horn, and Canon Dr. Steven Nishibayashi.

St. Mary's houses four programs – the government sponsored Head Start program, the Los Angeles Unified School District Adult Education English as a Second Language class, Hunger Action Los Angeles, Inc. and St. James Street Ministry, an outreach ministry to day laborers in the nearby park, hosted by The Reverend John Kim of St. James. St. Mary's also supports the Azuma Dance group, (traditional Japanese dance), of which many members are parishioners at St. Mary's.

*St. Elizabeth's Guild (Altar Guild)* – The Altar Guild is responsible for the preparation and maintenance of the many vestments, vessels and linens for all the various services and church seasons. This includes the altar itself, brass and silver accessories, linens, and flowers for the baptismal, funeral, wedding, holiday, and regular Sunday services. There are 18 active members.

*St. Mary's Acolyte Guild* – Members of the Acolyte Guild assist the clergy during Sunday services. Youth, ten years of age and older, are encouraged to join. There are 17 active adult and youth members among the three services.

*Lay Eucharistic Ministers* – These members assist the priests during the service by reading the first lesson, offering the prayers of the people and assisting with serving Holy Communion. There are eight active Lay Eucharistic Ministers.

*St. Mary's Choir* – The choir praises the Lord musically by leading the congregation in hymns and chants for the choral Eucharist, singing anthems during Sunday services, and providing music for other special services and events. The choir is lead by organist Dr. Jeffrey VanderWilt and has 17 members.

*Men of St. Mary's* – The Men of St. Mary's provide the ushering duties for the 9:45 AM Sunday services, funerals, and special events. These responsibilities include greeting and introducing visitors to the church, properly transporting the offerings to the altar, and overseeing the flow of people to the altar for Eucharist. The Men of St. Mary's coordinate the ushers. There are 12 monthly ushers per year. The Men of St. Mary's also sponsor the annual George Omatsu Memorial Golf Tournament. The proceeds from this tournament support the Endowment Fund.

*Women of St. Mary's* – The Women of St. Mary's serve all aspects of church life, promoting fellowship, advancing devotional life, and supporting the work of the Diocesan and National Councils of the Episcopal Church. The organization coordinates and staffs the Sunday coffee hour and organizes the United Thank Offering fund drive. The Annual Christmas Boutique culminates a year-long process of creating unique gift items to raise monies to support the Little Tokyo Service Center, Keiro Nursing Home, Hillside, and the Mission Share Fund.

*Christian Education and Youth* – This organization strives to provide Christian education and fellowship to the children and young adults of St. Mary's. This includes the Sunday School classes, Back-to-School picnic, Halloween Party, and Christmas Pageant and Festival. There are 12 children who attend the 9:45 AM Sunday School throughout the year and on any given Sunday two to five children are in attendance in Sunday School. There are seven youth group members.



Christmas Pageant 2009

## **BUDGET, FINANCE AND RESOURCES**

In addition to our loyal congregation and our rich history, St. Mary's is blessed with many resources to support the mission and ministry of the parish.

2010 Operating Budget Summary: St. Mary's uses the ACS system for financial reports and for recording contributions. In January 2010, the Vestry approved a 2010 budget with a projected income of \$270,829.

The 2010 projected expenses of \$303,575 include \$7,900 of operating expenses that in previous years were paid from non-operating accounts, such as property taxes and maintenance expenses.

The projected 2010 budget deficit is \$32,746. Since the current Priest-in-Charge is not fluent in Spanish, this deficit also includes the \$30,500 in salary for the half-time retired assisting priest. As of July 1, 2010, the projected deficit is reduced to \$23,500 based on six-months of reported revenues and expenses.

Pledges: We currently have 127 pledging units. St. Mary's is supported financially by the active members of the congregation as well as many people who have historically been connected to St. Mary's. The average pledge unit contributes about \$1,280 per year:

- Total amount pledged: \$162,894.
- There are 52 pledging households who pledge but do not attend St. Mary's. Total pledge: \$30,790. These are persons with a history at St. Mary's. Some are unable to travel, some live elsewhere, some give an annual "donation" as a pledge.
- The number of pledging households who regularly attend St. Mary's: 75, total pledged by them: \$132,104.
- Of the 75 regularly attending households, the number of retired (65 or older): 56. Total pledge: \$85,154. The number of younger pledging households: 19. Total pledge: \$46,950.

Other Financial Resources: Guilds and Clubs: Other St. Mary's bank accounts include the accounts of the Altar Guild, Women of St. Mary's, Men of St. Mary's and Choir. As of July 31, 2010, the assets in these checking and savings accounts totaled \$85,600.

Capital Improvement Resources: Until 2006, St. Mary's funded capital improvement expenses with its successful and popular St. Mary's Bazaar Carnival. This event cleared an average of \$20,000 annually for capital improvements. These funds were placed into the Bazaar Checking Account and transferred to the Building and Capital Checking Account as needed.

A Mini-Bazaar was held in 2008 and the event was discontinued in 2009 for various reasons. First, the physical demands for setup exceeded the manpower resources for the parish. Second, the costs increased as vendors no longer were members of the parish and willing to donate their goods and service for the Bazaar Carnival.

Facilities: St. Mary's has a chapel, parish hall, classrooms, and parking lot, all of which are mortgage free. St. Mary's also owns a rectory. The rectory is currently being leased to the Episcopal Urban Intern Program, a program of the Jubilee Consortium, from August 15, 2010 until August 15, 2011. Seven young adults will be living in the rectory while completing an intentional year of service, community and worship. These interns will work in local community agencies, live together in a faith community and participate in worship at St. Mary's. If the new rector is interested in living in the rectory during his/her tenure, arrangements can be made to accommodate that request following the completion of the Episcopal Urban Intern Program year.

Endowment Fund: St. Mary's has a growing endowment fund with a current balance of approximately \$750,000 (as of July 31, 2010). Additional bequests of \$234,000 will be added in September 2010. The provisions of the St. Mary's Endowment Fund specify its use for 1) Capital Maintenance, 2) Capital Expansion, and 3) Mission and Outreach.

Celtic Cross Inc.: Celtic Cross is a non-profit organization founded by members of St. Mary's Episcopal Church in 1954. It exists primarily to assist St. Mary's in its endeavors. Its current assets consist of property, three lots directly adjacent to St. Mary's, and cash funds. In 1999, St.

Mary's and Celtic Cross considered a joint development project with the Little Tokyo Service Center to provide Transitional Housing for abused women. St. Mary's considered providing the land contiguous to the church property for this purpose. The congregation did not reach consensus about making this long-term commitment of resources.

### **VISION FOR ST. MARY'S AND OUR NEW PRIEST**

St. Mary's membership is in a time of transition. Members who were the core of St. Mary's in the 1960s and 1970s, when membership and activity was at its peak, are now in their 70s, 80s and 90s. We began to examine our vision for our parish through a written survey that was completed by 65 members in November 2009. It was learned through the written responses of members that our strength as a congregation is loyalty. Loyalty was defined in terms of being faithful, dedicated, and committed to St. Mary's. It also referred to our cultural heritage as well as the strong feeling of family and fellowship felt by members.

The top areas identified for the ministry of our priest through the survey were: preaching, youth work, crisis ministry (pastoral care), administration, teaching and church growth. As we search for a new rector who will lead us into the future, we are looking for an individual who, through effective preaching, can make the Gospel relevant to our daily lives. We are looking for someone who can teach and inspire us to live the Christian faith. We seek a rector who can effectively work with the youth and incorporate them fully in the life and ministry of the church. We are looking for a rector who will join our family and care for us as we will care for him or her.

St. Mary's is seeking a rector who will help us grow, move forward, and define our role in the local community, while respecting and appreciating the Japanese culture and the rich Japanese-American heritage. We seek someone with wisdom, understanding, leadership, and vision – someone with the wisdom to appreciate St. Mary's rich history, the understanding to recognize our gifts and talents, the leadership to engage others and bring us together as we do God's work, and the vision to help us define our path to the future. We are looking for a very special individual who, through preaching, teaching, and example, will help our congregation grow deeper in our relationship with God; help us discern God's calling for our parish; and instill in us the courage to follow that calling.

A parish-wide review of the survey results was held at the end of February, 2010. In April 2010, under the direction of Father Van Horn, the vestry formed three committees to provide additional parish feedback in three areas: Mission Recovery Project, People Energy Audit and Local Community Needs Audit.

One of the consistent themes noted through our survey and focus groups was that St. Mary's was built over 100 years ago to serve Japanese immigrants. It was a cultural and community center where religious services were offered. Many members still identify family and community as a priority before religion or church. The purpose of the Mission Recovery Project of the vestry

committee was to solicit support from the older members to return to St. Mary's initial mission of ministry to first generation immigrants surrounding the church.

Through the Mission Recovery Project focus groups it was learned that the older members of St. Mary's understand that we cannot continue to function as we have been for the past 25 years. These members want a rector who understands and appreciates St. Mary's rich history, our members' gifts and talents, and will help us to be wise and respectful stewards of our forbearers' legacy. They want a rector who will assist our congregation to grow deeper in our relationship with God and His world by his/her example, preaching and teaching. Lastly, they want a rector with leadership qualities to be able to engage the congregation, the local community, neighborhood faith groups, and other agencies in partnerships to help St. Mary's once again become the center of a wonderful and challenging community.

The People Energy Audit created focus groups to look into the "energy" that members have to pursue the hopes and dreams of St. Mary's. They interviewed individuals and small groups of members (3-6 persons) using an Appreciative Inquiry process. From the 50 members that were interviewed, it was learned that there are approximately 53 additional hours per month in volunteer time that the members are willing to give to St. Mary's.

The energy audit's first question was in regards to the founding principles and values that St. Mary's was built upon. The list in order of frequency mentioned:

1. Friendship and social
2. Support system for the Japanese immigrants
3. Japanese culture and Japanese heritage
4. Community
5. Family values
6. Religious services

The second question asked, "How do these principles apply today?"

1. They do not apply: St. Mary's does not have an influx of Japanese immigrants, the Nissei (second generation) community has moved and spread out beyond the church's reach, and St. Mary's does not exist as a cultural or community center for the Japanese Americans.
2. St. Mary's is a social place to meet.
3. The Japanese culture is present in food, Japanese dance group and music.
4. Bazaar Carnival (former annual fundraiser) brought the St. Mary's community together for a cause.
5. Commuting brings the St. Mary's community together.
6. We are still a family-based church.

When asked how St. Mary's could incorporate these values into constructive programs the answers varied, but a few themes stood out:

1. Incorporate the local community into the church.
2. Youth programs such as Sunday school and after-school programs, sports programs, youth choir and Boy/Girl Scouts.
3. Senior Activities – luncheons, line dancing.
4. Revive regional Bible study groups.
5. Find a project like the former Bazaar Carnival to bring people together.

The People Energy Audit is an ongoing project. Therefore, we desire a rector who can build the active membership to increase the “manpower” energy. We have the ideas and willingness to start new or revive old programs while trying to incorporate the local community of Hispanics, Koreans, Belizeans, and all cultures.

The Local Community Needs Audit was completed by using focus groups that were conducted at our Spanish language service and with the Garden Committee (the group that oversees the maintenance of the Yamazaki Memorial Community Garden). These groups indicated the need for community resources to address the following top seven issues:

1. Employment/jobs
2. Housing
3. Day care
4. Immigration issues/citizenship classes
5. Legal aid
6. After-school programs
7. Family counseling

There are many people seeking guidance and Christian compassion. Considering these needs, we need a rector with energy and vision to lead us in becoming a center for our vibrant local community.

We seek a rector who is Bilingual (English/Spanish) with a passion for multicultural and urban ministry. We recognize that it is time for us to move forward boldly in new directions. We seek to regain the original mission of St. Mary’s which was a spiritual, cultural and community center for new immigrants. In 1907, St. Mary’s was situated in Uptown, a Japanese community. In 2010, St. Mary’s is situated in Koreatown. The local community is Korean, Mexican and Central American. Many local residents are new immigrants and face numerous challenges in their day-to-day lives.

True to our long term expression of Christianity through action and doing within our parish, we seek to move out of our walls and into our local community. We are reminded that as Christians we are called to love God and our neighbors. As St. Francis taught, we should be preaching the Gospel always and, when necessary, use words. This is not only a Sunday activity, it is an everyday activity. We seek a rector with experience and success in community outreach and congregational growth to lead us toward our hopes and dreams of reemerging as a strong spiritual community center and church in urban Los Angeles.

## APPENDIX

### **Sermon by The Reverend Canon Richard Van Horn, Sunday March 21, 2010**

*Reprinted in the April 2010 newsletter (Proper 16C, BCP lectionary)*

From the April 2010 Newsletter Introduction: *The Profile Committee reported the results of the Parish Survey at the February 27<sup>th</sup> 2010 Vestry Retreat and during the sermon time of each service on Sunday, February 28<sup>th</sup>. Fr. Van Horn also reviewed the survey results. Since he was not here for Sunday 2/28, he offered to preach Sunday, March 21<sup>st</sup> on the ministry of St. Mary's. Here is his sermon in its entirety.*

Is there anybody here who doesn't like M&M's?

I didn't think so. Today's sermon is about M & M, but maybe not what you are thinking at the moment. I am talking about that permanent tension in the church and all other institutions: Mission and Maintenance.

For us it begins with Moses and the Hebrews in the desert. Moses is valiantly trying to lead the Hebrews out of slavery and into the Promised Land. A few months into the journey the people begin murmuring against Moses and Aaron: (Ex 16:2-3) And the whole congregation of the people of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the Land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger." (Ex 17:3-6) "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?" So Moses cried to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." And the Lord said to Moses, "Pass on before the people, taking some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand the rod with which you stuck the Nile, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water shall come out of it, that the people may drink."

The people of Israel, before even growing into a real nation, are ready to toss it all over in the interest of maintaining the relative comfort of food and shelter as slaves in Egypt. If the people had their choice at that point they would have turned around and gone back to Egypt. They were afraid of the mission that Moses was laying out before them.

The tension is again made clear in the call of Jeremiah: ...the Lord said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth. See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, the build and to plant."

The tension of this time is recalled in Consecration Prayer "C": Again and again, you called us to return. Through prophets and sages you revealed your righteous law."

In Jesus ministry we see this tension again and again. Throughout the gospels there are stories that demonstrate the tension between Mission and Maintenance. There are healings of the sick, stories of compassion and reaching out to the hurt (maintenance). There are stories of judgment (the money changers in the temple: mission). There are stories of the future kingdom

(mission). The whole tenor of tension in the gospels is perhaps best illustrated in the 1964 Italian film by *Pier Paolo Pasolini*: *The Gospel According to St. Matthew*. Hear a few sentences from Bosley Crowther's New York Times review:

"For this time the story of Jesus is told in the simple and naturalistic terms of a plain, humble man of the people conducting a spiritual salvation campaign in an environment and among a population that are rough, unadorned and real.

"The Jesus we see is no transcendent evangelist in shining white robes, performing his ministrations and miracles in awesome spectacles. He is a young man of spare appearance, garbed in dingy, homespun cloaks, moving with quiet resolution across a rugged and dusty countryside, gathering his tough-faced disciples from toilers he meets along the way and preaching his words of exhortation to crowds of simple, sullen peasants and sprawling children."

Now I am not saying that St Mary's parishioners are simple, sullen peasants, or that your children are sprawling. What I am saying is that we here at St. Mary's are very much stuck in this tension. We don't want to give up what we have and the future is uncomfortable, frightening and, in some viewpoints, rather bleak. Many of us are too tired to endure the desert wanderings: the trial and error method of finding a new direction. Some of us look at the enormous challenges that lie ahead and quail at the mere thought of it. What are we going to do about it?

I am neither bold nor foolish enough to stand here and claim to have the answer. I am well aware of how difficult and painful the future may look. The discussion of it isn't easy either. I, however, want to put a few questions to you about the nature of the tension at St. Mary's:

1. Honoring the Japanese heritage of St. Mary's becomes more difficult as we get further away from the Yamazaki era (Fr. John retired 25 years ago). How do we maintain that heritage in a community that is almost entirely Latino, Korean, Belizean, etc.?
2. The challenges of urban ministry are even more difficult for a commuter congregation in which the majority is retired. Who are the future leaders of St. Mary's? Are they our own Sansei and Yonsei and younger Belizeans? Will they need to be local neighborhood imports?
3. What do we need in the next leader/Rector? Are we looking for Pasolini's Jesus? Do we need a Sansei Japanese American?
4. How much energy is available in this existing congregation?
5. Do we want to continue as we are, just hoping that one of us is not the last one out who needs to turn off the lights?
6. Our forebears have amassed a goodly piece of property and an endowment, currently in this depressed market, of about \$600,000. How are we going to be stewards of this legacy?

7. If we are bold, what does this neighborhood really need that we could be the spark-plug for putting in place?

Having posed these questions, I am now bold enough to propose an answer:

Of course we need to honor the Japanese heritage. It would be an insult to our elders and forebears to ignore it or let it evaporate. We also need to strike out in bold and new ways.

We probably need a partner to be successful. I have no idea at the moment who or what that partner may be, but it will need to be persons or institutions with resources that can be added to ours. Perhaps we can engage the Diocese in a new vision. Perhaps there is a major social service agency with which we can partner. We need to examine the real needs of our local community. We need to marry those needs to our own capabilities and willingness.

We need a new rector of great vision and energy. He/she needs to have an appreciation for heritage and history (the Japanese specifics can be taught). He/she needs to be bold and able to help attract the resources that will help St. Mary's re-become a **vital center to a vibrant community**: that is the **core of our heritage and it would be a major sin to lose it**.

For all this I pray. Let us say together the prayer for our search and discernment....

## **Sermon by The Reverend Canon Richard Van Horn, Sunday August 22, 2010**

*Reprinted in the September 2010 newsletter (Proper 16C, BCP lectionary)*

The lesson from Isaiah 58 read a few minutes ago has an uncanny relationship to our current situation at St. Mary's. Isaiah is divided, like Gaul for those who studied Latin, in three parts. Part 1, chapters 1- 39, comes from a period before the exile, roughly 740 – 690 BC. They represent the career of Isaiah's lifetime. Part 2, chapters 40-55 comes from the last years of the exile period looking forward to a return, approximately 538 BC. Our section is in Part 3 (chapters 56-66) and comes from a period shortly after the return and the few years before and after the rebuilding of Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, about 520 – 515 BC.

Let me now paint a picture of the time. The Jews have struggled back from the exile. They are released but trying to reestablish their homeland. It has been taken over by others, primarily Edomites and the un-landed poor. The Temple had been laid waste and left in ruins, as had every important town, for the past 60 years. They are attempting to return to a land of little promise, but they are being called to something greater. That brings us to the lesson for today: a prescription for success in the rebuilding of their temple and the communities.

"If you remove the yoke (a symbol of slavery or exile) from among you, the pointing of the finger (a gesture of contempt), the speaking of evil (slandering your neighbor), if you offer food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted (all the things we have talked about in the Vestry retreat dealing with real needs in our neighborhood), then your light shall arise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday."

(If all this is undertaken with the boldness that will be required to recover what was lost, then the promise of the Lord is in the two verses that follow.) "The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; You shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in."

This is indeed a beautiful word picture designed to help the Israelites gain the confidence to move ahead with a bold vision of new life. The question then is: What can it do for US in OUR present life? When I preached in March on Mission and Maintenance, I laid out a challenge to the congregation and the Vestry:

"Of course we need to honor the Japanese heritage. It would be an insult to our elders and forebears to ignore it or let it evaporate. We also need to strike out in bold and new ways. We probably need a partner to be successful. I have no idea at the moment who or what that partner may be, but it will need to be persons or institutions with resources that can be added to ours. Perhaps we can engage the Diocese in a new vision. Perhaps there is a major social service agency with which we can partner. We need to examine the real needs of our local community. We need to marry those needs to our own capabilities and willingness.

“We need a new rector of great vision and energy. He/she needs to have an appreciation for heritage and history (the Japanese specifics can be taught). He/she needs to be bold and able to help attract the resources that will enable St. Mary’s re-become a **vital center to a vibrant community**: that is the **core of our heritage and it would be a major sin to lose it.**”

In April I met with the Vestry and detailed the challenge and we put together three committees: one to assess willingness on the part of the current congregation to readopt our original mission as an outreach to new immigrants, first generation Japanese at that time but very different now, another to examine what level of energy is available for new ventures within the sansei (3<sup>rd</sup> generation) and older yonsei (4<sup>th</sup> generation), many of whom are only peripherally connected to St. Mary’s and a third which examined through focus groups and interviews the real needs of the community that surrounds St. Mary’s. These committees did a great job and we met for a Vestry retreat on the 31st of July. The committees reported out and it was determined to update the Parish Profile with new information and new insights into St. Mary’s and our potential future.

Personally I came away from the 31st, and from subsequent readings of successive versions as the profile got edited, greatly encouraged by the leadership’s commitment to new dimensions of ministry.

Now here we are on the 22nd of August, ready to examine the profile as it has emerged. The final version is being readied to go to the Vestry in September and on to the Diocese. **WE ARE MAKING SERIOUS AND SIGNIFICANT HEADWAY IN THE SEARCH PROCESS.**

Let me go over a few key elements with you and then after Eucharist we will have a discussion time at coffee hour.

**First:** This will be the only time in 103 years that we have selected a Rector who was not already on the premises or preselected for us. That is whole new challenge and one that I think the Vestry is ready to meet.

**Second:** As stated in the profile, “At St. Mary’s, spirituality is expressed through doing. We are a parish that serves God through work, service, and action. Whenever there is a need, the congregation comes together. The congregation enjoys opportunities to work together in fellowship. The annual Bazaar / Carnival, known throughout the Diocese and Japanese-American community, is an example of the way members of the congregation come together, work very hard, and enjoy each other’s company while serving God and His church.” We are a parish that has long seen community is the prime factor for our membership.

**Third:** As stated in the profile, “St. Mary’s is seeking a rector who will help us grow, move forward, and define our role in the local community, while respecting and appreciating the Japanese culture and the rich Japanese-American heritage. We seek someone with wisdom, understanding, leadership, and vision – someone with the wisdom to appreciate St. Mary’s rich history, the understanding to recognize our gifts and talents, the leadership to engage others and bring us together as we do God’s work, and the vision to help us define our path to the future. We are looking for a very special individual who, through preaching, teaching, and example, will help our congregation grow deeper in our relationship with God; help us discern

God's calling for our parish; and instill in us the courage to follow that calling. We seek a rector with experience and success in community outreach and congregational growth to lead us toward our hopes and dreams of reemerging as a strong spiritual community center and church in urban Los Angeles."

**Fourth:** We are not alone in trying to figure out what is possible in an urban parish. We have two potential partners in community ministry: St. Stephen's, Hollywood, and Trinity, Melrose. Both are as engaged as we are in planning future ministries. Both are struggling with the complete change of their neighborhoods over the last couple of decades. They are ready to engage with us.

So for us let's rejoice in the promise that comes at the end of the lesson today from Isaiah: "...then you shall take delight in the Lord and I will make you ride upon the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of your ancestor Jacob, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

My friends the future belongs to us in an active fellowship with the Lord and our fellow Christians in outreach.