
A.W.E.SOME News

The Newsletter of The Children's Ministries for The Diocese of Bethlehem

Cruisin' Successfully: The End is a New Beginning

Our *Cruisin' to Equity* campaign last year was an overwhelming success. More than half our parishes actively participated over several months, collecting items to support the children in their communities who were in need.

We celebrated the successful *Cruise* with simultaneous services in the north and south on Sunday, May 7th at St. Luke's, Scranton and Trinity, Bethlehem. Two young women from our Diocesan Youth provided the sermons which are included in this issue of *AWESOME News*. Betsy York's sermon is found on page 2 and Anna Beth Fish's sermon is found on page 4. Christ Church, Reading's Cruise Director, Jill Braun, shares their experience in a story you can read on page 5. If you have *Cruisin'* stories or photos, send them to Rosemary Kleintop at Diocesan House and we'll share them in future issues.

This year we're going to get out of our boats and proceed on foot with a continuation of our campaign to meet the needs of our children. Join the *Walk a Mile* campaign that looks more closely at ways we can support the health of our children. Materials are available at the Treasure Chest website. Some information and ideas are found in this issue on

"Advent to Epiphany"

November 2006

While the *Cruise* may have ended, the journey is far from over. Join us as we move forward in our work.

Walk a Mile in their Shoes

...bringing Hope, Health and Healing to all God's Children



Congregations Stand for Healthy Children

Children's Sabbath Plan 2006-2007

Co-Sponsored by:

AWE: Children's Ministries
& Diocesan Episcopal Church Women

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Look for Christian Education ideas for the "Advent to Epiphany" seasons in Faith Formation in the Home.



Cruisin' to Equity Sermon at Trinity, Bethlehem

Preacher: Betsy Yale, Cathedral of the Nativity, Bethlehem

Endurance

It means a lot. 'How many more miles,' wonders the tired, torn, churning racer. 'How many days left,' wonders the broken, beaten child sitting on the floor of his jail cell, or even just behind a desk watching his teacher, back and forth, back and forth, knowing that summer is just a few more weeks away. 'How much longer, how much longer will this last,' wonders the abused child hiding from her father. 'How much longer, Lord, how much longer,' wonders the dirty discouraged preacher, 'until a break in the clouds.' 'How much longer, Lord, how much longer,' wonders the muddled and angry mother, knowing that her baby is crying and hasn't ever had enough to eat.

Endurance. We tell ourselves one day at a time, one week, one hour! Yet, inside we still sit and wonder how much more, how much longer must we endure? We look for guidance and all we receive from God and the scriptures is, have patience, endure, wait. Four little words that bring us through all the bad times with the hope of something different, perhaps even better.

Unfortunately, this is one of the worst times for a new Christian and certainly no easy pickle for an old one either. The world comes crashing down you fall into the black abyss of pain,

and all God can say, or will say, is have patience, endure wait. In our impatience, we cry out, wait for what? We need to fix this, we need help, NOW! What will help us later? Things will be better then! Yet, still God remains solid, a rock, have patience, endure, wait.

The problems of this world have us calling out to God, what is going on? Why are you not doing something about this? And again God tells us have patience endure. But, there is no waiting involved here, no, a little voice; a faint echo comes back from the great black abyss. Why aren't you doing anything about it? For that is what you are called to do. And that is what we are called to do. We are here as God's children, to take care of all God's children to help God's children to love.

The multitude of feelings, emotions and moments that come out of this working, this caring, can itself tear us down

build us up, confusing us past belief, then giving us sweet moments of epiphany and understanding Then, we can call out into the black abyss with words of Praise, thanksgiving, rejoicing. Words like, thank you Lord! I can, we can, with your help do something about this and in the process, look who we find, you, God! Persistently, that little voice, the faint echo from beyond the abyss it always has the last say, softly it comes, 'See, God does work in the world, he does so through the people, his Children, you.'

In our praise, thanksgiving, joy, we remember Paul's words to the Corinthians, that so sadly, we forget in our suffering and pain, in the suffering and pain all around us that though we may be afflicted, perplexed, persecuted and struck down, with God on our side, we will never be crushed, driven to despair, forsaken or destroyed. God has given us this Great news. That through everything we can endure.

Unfortunately there are thousands of people, parents, and children, believing themselves to be crushed and forsaken. But that is why we are here, to celebrate the true life God has given us and to share it with others. Through showing, sharing, telling, we show the world that all people are God's people and that all children are God's children.



Christian Education Resources

The Diocese of Bethlehem is home to two Morehouse authors!

Anne E. Kitch, Canon for Christian Education at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and author of many books for children and their families, has provided a new resource in *What We Do in Advent: An Anglican Kid's Activity Book*. Published by Morehouse Publishing, it's filled with interactive puzzles, color-by-number pages, word finds, mazes and more for children ages 4–7. It's designed to help them grow to a deeper understanding of the true meaning of the Advent and Christmas seasons.

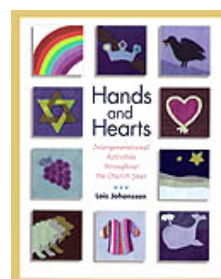
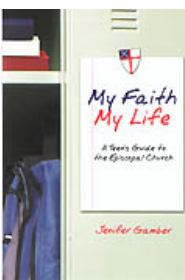
Jenifer Gamber, confirmation leader at the Cath-

Sermon in the South continued...

Every single child deserves the very best, they are after all all God's children and we wouldn't want to treat God without all of our best. Because we have found God in everyone around us, from the happy child to the lonely older widow

dral Church of the Nativity is the author of *My Faith, My Life: A Teen's Guide to the Episcopal Church*. In this book, teenagers learn all about the Christian faith they've been baptized into—and the Episcopal Church that offers them a spiritual home. With lively writing that's informative and never condescending, the book gives them basics. Closely linked to the Book of Common Prayer, *My Faith, My Life* covers everything from scriptures, church history and sacraments, to the meaning of prayer and ministry in the lives of real teens today.

Two other Morehouse Publications of note include: *Hands and Hearts: Intergenerational Activities throughout the Church Year* by Lois Johansson. Based on the seasons of the



church year, *Hands and Hearts* is filled with fun activities to help your church family grow spiritually together. With easy-to-follow instructions and templates for each project, there's something for every season.

Do You Believe? Living the Baptismal Covenant by Nancy Ann McLaughlin provides a look at some 40 Episcopal parishes around the country, identifying what an active, intentional, energized awareness of baptismal ministry looks like. The book offers practical advice for turning words into concrete actions.



By working with people and walking the road of life, journeying, enduring with them, God calls us to follow Jesus' command, To give to God the things that are God's, in prayer and in works doing the best we can, because, only if we are giving our best to all those around us and to those we reach out to can we ever possibly hope to

give our best to God. And if you ever fail, and you will, we all do, I have some reminders, laugh, remember that there have always been hard times and you have made it through before, and know that you are never forsaken or destroyed, that with God, and God is always with you, you can take what tomorrow brings, you can endure.

Cruisin' to Equity Sermon at St. Luke's, Scranton

Preacher: Anna Beth Fish, Epiphany-Clarks Summit

"What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you may say you have faith, but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, keep warm and eat your fill,' and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has not works, is dead." (James 2:14-17).

Every day nearly thirteen million children go to bed hungry, cold and in want. Oh wait, that thirteen million only counts those in our country. Thirteen million. To give you an idea of just how many that is, think of this: a man gave his wife one million dollars and told her to spend one thousand dollars a day and to come back when she was out of money. She came back three years later. Now multiply that my thirteen. That's one thousand dollars a day...for thirty-nine years. That is a lot of money. And a lot of children. The worst part is, that's in the United States alone.

Now, envision another problem: government budget cuts. Not just cuts anywhere, but in the programs that help these children. Children are just that; children. Helpless mammals that rely on others to help

them survive. What will happen to those children if no one is willing to help them? What will become of our children, our future? Who will help our children, our brothers, our sisters?

Join me in singing *Here I Am Lord* by David Schulte.

I, who made the stars of night,
I will make their darkness bright,
Who will bear my light to them?
Who shall I send?

Here I am Lord. Is it I, Lord?
I have heard you calling in the night.
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.
I will hold your people in my heart.

In this song by Daniel L. Schulte, God speaks to Jacob, asking him to go forth and save the people. "And God spoke unto Israel in the visions of the night and said, 'Jacob, Jacob.' And he

replied, 'Here I am Lord.' Genesis 46:2.

Cruising to Equity has been a unique chance for us to answer a call from God. It has made giving back to our community easier. Instead of us having to ask ourselves, "Well, what can I do?" we have known all along what we need to do: fill the boat with everyday items like toothbrushes, gloves and night lights. Everyday items that are easy to procure. And the feeling of "Hey I did something to help a child in need" that came with each donation made our efforts worthwhile.

Cruising to Equity is done for now. The boats have been filled and children have been made happy and maybe even safer and healthier. But this celebration doesn't have to be just a closing. This is our opportunity for a new beginning. It is our turn to get out and do more good, make more differences not only in our communities, our nation, but the whole world. This is our chance.

"And God spoke unto Israel in the visions of the night and said, 'Jacob, Jacob.' And he replied, 'Here I am Lord.' Genesis 46:2. The children of our communities, our country, our world, will always need a Jacob. Won't you be a Jacob?"



Boatload of materials at Epiphany, Clarks Summit.

Cruisin' to Equity at Christ Church, Reading

by Jill Braun, Cruise Director

"Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."

--Proverbs 31:8-9

Our Cruising to Equity boat set sail with great enthusiasm this past fall. At each Port of Call, our congregation joyfully renewed our commitment and compassion to children in need.

Our lifeboat was prominently displayed in our beautiful vestibule and was filled week after week with items to provide local children with a safe, fair, healthy, moral, head start!

The Cruising to Equity campaign was a wonderful time to talk with our Sunday Church School children about the needs of other children and what it means to love our neighbors as ourselves. It also reminded us of all we have to be thankful for.

From toddlers to teens, all of our Christ Church youth got involved. At the end of each Port of Call, our youngest children collected a "Joyful Noise" offering from our congregation to purchase additional items for the lifeboat. Parishioners dropped lots of coins in our col-

lection cans and the sound was indeed joyful!

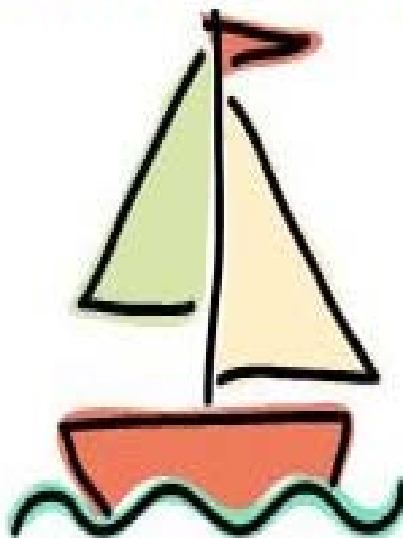
An outgrowth of our Cruising campaign was providing Easter Goodie bags to the children at Lauer's Park Elementary School, Opportunity House, and Berks Women in Crisis. The congregation donated lots of delicious candy to fill the bags for each child and our Outreach committee provided funds to purchase Easter coloring and activity books.

Another wonderful outgrowth of the campaign was establishing a close relationship with the people and agencies that received the items from the lifeboat. Berks Women in Crisis was one of these agencies that we got to know well and provide assistance to the women and children in a significant way. On June 7, a woman and her five children moved from the shelter

to their own apartment. Through the passionate and tireless efforts of Christ Churcher, Paula Flippin, we were able to provide furniture, bedding and necessary household items to this family who otherwise would have been living in a completely unfurnished apartment.

Our Cruising to Equity campaign concluded with a Beach Party for the women and children at Berks Women in Crisis Shelter. On Sunday, June 11, 16 women and children from Christ Church transformed the Shelter's backyard into a beach-themed party with lots of delicious food, games, crafts, music, and fun! Approximately 30 women and children from the shelter attended the party. It was a brilliantly beautiful afternoon, with blue skies and sun, much fellowship and endless smiles.

Although the Cruising to Equity campaign has officially concluded, our relationship with the children in our community remains. The seeds of commitment, compassion, and generosity are firmly planted and will continue to blossom as we endeavor to love our neighbors as ourselves. HHH



VBS Workshop

Start planning Vacation Bible School for summer 2007 by spending time with the experts November 14, 2006 at the Center for the Ministry of Teaching (CMT) at Virginia Theological Seminary in Alexandria, Virginia. Learn about using the rotation model, adapting or creating a curriculum of your own, or taking a whole new perspective by offering a program at night, for families, or other new venue. We will be looking at curricula and ideas for all denominations.

Panel presentations from 9 a.m. to noon, facilitated by Mary Jo Detweiler, CMT librarian, will

include time for your questions and specific needs. Panel members include:

- 1 **Tracey Herzer**, executive director of LeaderResources (a publishing and consulting firm that specializes in educational resources for churches), author of *WorkshopCycles*, a rotation Sunday School curriculum for children, and president of the National Association of Episcopal Christian Education Directors
- 2 **Day Dodson**, a graduate of the Master of Arts in Christian Education (MACE) program and director, Children's and Youth Ministries, St. Al-

ban's Episcopal Church, Washington, DC.

- 3 **Jacki Boecker**, director of Christian Education at the Episcopal Church of the Redeemer, Sarasota, FL, with 25 years experience working the children and youth and developing successful VBS programs.

For registration information, contact the CMT at cmtcirc@vts.edu or 703-461-1885. Costs: \$30 before October 1, or \$35 after October 1; includes coffee and snacks, tuition, and materials.

Safeguarding Our Children Training

The Diocese of Bethlehem is working to reduce the possibility of child abuse occurring in our congregations. All clergy, vestry, paid church personnel and volunteers who regularly work with our around children may need to update their training.

Training dates (9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.) for the 2006-2007 year have been set:

FALL

Nov. 4:

St. Gabriel's, Douglassville and St. Mark's, Moscow

Nov. 11:

Cathedral, Bethlehem

SPRING

Mar. 17:

Christ Church, Reading

Apr. 14:

St. Stephen's, Wilkes-Barre

Apr. 28:

Cathedral, Bethlehem

May 5:

St. Luke's, Scranton

Registration deadline is 5 days before each event.

Needed to register:

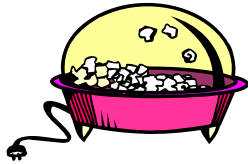
- Name, position/role at church/organization, and church/organization name.
- \$20 check (full training &

lunch)

- \$15 check (full training & your own lunch)
- Payable to the Diocese of Bethlehem. Send to Diocese of Bethlehem, Attn: Rosemary Kleintop, 333Wyandote St., Bethlehem, PA 18015
- Questions? Call or email Rosemary at 800-358-5655, ext. 224 or rlkleintop@diobeth.org

A Lesson for All: Plan for Safety

Once upon a time, in a place called Christ Church in Reading, there was a wonderful summer Sunday school class. One day all the happy children were sitting on the carpet in the room watching a Veggie-Tales movie. One of the teachers thought it would be nice to offer the children a snack of popcorn. As the children watched the movie she busied herself with the task of popping the corn. The next thing the children and the second Sunday school teacher knew there was a loud ringing sound. One teacher looked at the other and said, "What in the world are we supposed to do?" The popcorn making teacher made a face and said, "I guess we should leave the building." So the two teachers lined up the children and sent them quickly out the door. As the children were go-



ing down the brick stairway (the idea of the corn popper in case there was a fire), the teachers had not a clue where to go. Luckily there was a security guard at the bottom of the stairs directing traffic. He got all the children and the other people to the door that would bring them safely outside. As the children neared the door to safety we all found out it had been a false fire alarm.

The teachers paraded the children back up to the room to finish their movie. As they sat on the carpet once again, with the knowledge their teachers had no clue what to do during a fire alarm, one teacher heard a fire truck. Walking ever so quietly to the window, she looked out to see not one, but **TWO** fire trucks coming down



the road. As she turned to check on the children, to her surprise five little noses stood pressed to the window in awe of the fire trucks.

Later we were all to find out the reason for all this fun and excitement was because the corn popping teacher had managed to set off the fire alarm with the popcorn. As she continued to tell every one, "I didn't burn it!" the two teachers found that they themselves had learned a very important lesson that day: they were in need of a fire safety plan.

October is fire safety month. Learn from our mistake and help keep your children safe by planning and posting an emergency exit route.

Respectfully submitted
by the teacher
who did NOT set
off the alarm!

While Debra's Away...

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

I will be on Sabbatical from August 1 - October 31 and vacation November 1 - December 1, 2006.

If you have any questions regarding Children's Ministries, Child Advocacy or the scheduling of Safeguarding God's Children please direct them to Rosemary Kleintop at rkleintop@diobeth.org.

If you have any questions regarding Safe Church practices and our Diocesan Policies for the Protection of Children and Youth

from Abuse please direct them to Archdeacon Stringfellow at archdeacon@diobeth.org.

If you have any question regarding Evangelism please direct them to Barbara Lewis at barblewis@diobeth.org or Father Gerns at Father_Andy@trinityeaston.org.

AWE: Children's Ministries Website, www.bethlehemtreasurechest.org, has been updated to include the following resources:

- Fall Child Advocacy Program &

Children's Sabbath: Walk a Mile in their Shoes

- Fall & Spring Safeguarding God's Children's Scheduled Offerings
- Spring Retreat for Christian Educator's Sunday School Teachers, Youth Workers & Adult Formation Leaders
- Bishop's Day for Kids 2007

The Rev. Debra Kissinger
Missioner for Children & Child Advocate

What is the *Walk a Mile in their Shoes* Campaign?

Walk a Mile in their Shoes, is an advocacy and prayer vigil project co-sponsored by AWE: Children's Ministries and the Diocesan Episcopal Church Women (ECW) that invites congregations throughout the Diocese of Bethlehem to join in a *Sabbath Season of Prayer and Action for Children*.

It begins with the observance of the National *Children's Sabbath* (sponsored by the *Children's Defense Fund*, Washington, D.C.) and the Diocesan ECW's collection of *Undies for Children at Risk* at our Diocesan Convention.

In the months that follow Diocesan Convention, congregations throughout the Diocese are invited to unite in witness for children through prayer, education, worship and action using this *Walk a Mile in their Shoes* guide for suggestions.

Following this simple *Walk a Mile in their Shoes* guide will challenge you take off your slippers and really try on children's shoes for size. You will likely find that the services afforded them don't fit their soles or feed their souls.

The *Walk a Mile in their Shoes* Pledge Card contains SUGGESTIONS for service and action on

behalf of children. If you are already collecting children's health items or taking action on behalf of children throughout the year, you are most likely already on the *Walk a Mile in their Shoes* journey. If you are new to the journey, remember, you don't have to do everything on the Pledge Card to join the Walk! Just sign up and take the first steps to learn about the needs of children in your community and throughout our country.

So blaze a trail, cut a new path and keep a Log of your journey. Dust off your sneakers and take a walk with a child. Plan on attending the *Walk a Mile in their Shoes* Walk-a-Thon on April 21, 2007 to mark the end of our Journey. *Walk a Mile in their Shoes* promises to be an amazing and eye-opening trek. Get ready to touch soles and souls!!

Why Walk a Mile in their Shoes?

Nine million children living in the United States don't have health insurance. Without insurance, children are at risk of illness and disabilities that are preventable or treatable. Children with health insurance are healthier and get better overall care.

Uninsured children are more likely to lack a usual source of health care, go without needed

care, and end up worse off than children with health coverage in many measures of health.

The needs of children should be a priority for all of us as individuals, groups and communities of faith. Our Baptismal Covenant calls us to put our faith into action by standing for Healthy Children.

AWE: Children's Ministries and the Episcopal Church Women of the Diocese of Bethlehem invite you to join in praying for a future filled with Hope, Health and Healing for all of God's children and to take action by Walking a Mile in Their Shoes and joining this year's Children's Sabbath Campaign.

Working together, we can make a difference where the needs, hopes and dreams of children are involved.

The Rev. Debra J. Kissinger,
Missioner to Children & Child Advocate & AWE: Children's Ministries

Mrs. Jane Nurse
President, Diocesan Episcopal Church Women



Walk a Mile Kick-off

Season: Diocesan Convention thru Advent (Fall 2006)

Collect *Undies for Children at Risk* and send them with your Parish Delegates or ECW Delegates to Diocesan Convention. Undies will be placed in the boat in the Cathedral and distributed to children in Appalachia and at New Bethany, our Diocesan ministry to homeless children.

Sign up at the AWE: Children's Ministries table to join the **Walk a Mile in their Shoes** campaign.

Back home review the **Walk a Mile in their Shoes** pledge card and decide what efforts you will make in your home parish to bring Hope, Health and Healing

to all of God's children. Parishes may work with or make collections to a shelter or program for Children at Risk of their choice in their community.

Celebrate the *Children's Sabbath* in your parish the way you always have - only this time use it to kick off the **Walk a Mile in their Shoes** Campaign too!

Resources listed below can be found in the Children's Sabbath Manual.

- 1 Sunday School Curriculum resource (pp. 90-111)*
- 2 Promote your efforts in your

local paper and newsletter (pp. 34-38)*

- 3 Bulletin Inserts (pp. 39-44)*
- 4 Daily Devotional Guide (pp. 81-85)*
- 2 Children's Worship Bulletin (pp. 86-89)*
- 3 *Episcopal Liturgy for Children's Sabbath* (pp. 60-64)*

* All page numbers refer to the Children's Sabbath Manual available through the Children's Defense Fund at www.childrensdefense.org or Sally Jo Snyder at (202) 662-3579



Walk a Mile in their Shoes: Prayer Suggestions

The Book of Common Prayer (BCP) contains many excellent prayers for children and healing. Additional suggestions can be found in the Children's Sabbath Manual pp. 65 and following.

For a Sick Person (BCP p. 458)

For Recovery from Sickness (BCP p. 458)

For a Sick Child (BCP p. 458)

Before an Operation (BCP p. 459)

For Strength and Confidence (BCP p. 459)

For the Sanctification of Illness (BCP p. 460)

For Health of Body and Soul (BCP p. 460)

For Doctors and Nurses (BCP p. 460)

Thanksgiving for the Beginning of Recovery (BCP p. 460)

For the Poor and Neglected (BCP p. 826)

For those who Influence Public Opinion (BCP p. 827)

For Families (BCP p. 828)

For the Care of Children (BCP p. 829)

For Young Persons (BCP p. 829)

For the Gift of a Child (BCP p. 841)

For the Restoration of Health (BCP p. 841)

Collect for Saint Luke (the physician) (BCP p. 244)

Walk a Mile in their Shoes

Pledge Card



We, _____, pledge to pray for children who live nearby and throughout the world.

We also pledge to use our time, talent, and treasure to bring Hope, Health and Healing to all God's Children by Walking a Mile in their Shoes in the following ways:
(check all that apply)

- 1 Share far & wide the web-based child health related resources provided by **AWE: Children's Ministries** at the end of this book
- 2 Assemble Health Supply Kits to donate to an organization serving low income families and children
- 3 Serve healthy snacks at Coffee Hour
- 4 Make healthy snacks for hungry children for a local agency
- 5 Sponsor a Child Care Seat safety check station
- 6 Organize an enrollment for Medicaid and the **State CHIP**
- 7 Volunteer at a community health clinic once a month
- 8 Sponsor an Immunization Clinic
- 9 Learn about "Call to Action for Katrina's Children"
- 10 Invite a Speaker on Children's Health or Mental Health Care to speak or preach at your church
- 11 Honor people who work with and for children during on our your church services
- 12 Include prayers for children, healing and those who work in health professions in your services
- 13 Invite guest speakers to preach
- 14 Fill a Boatload - Continue the **Cruising to Equity** campaign
- 15 Start a Child Advocacy Book Group
- 16 Write letters to elected officials
- 17 Organize members to walk in the **Walk a Mile in their Shoes** Diocesan Walk-a-Thon on April 21, 2007

Teach the Children

Just a week before Christmas, I had a visitor.

This is how it happened...I just finished the household chores for the night and was preparing to go to bed, when I heard a noise in the front of the house. I opened the door to the front room and to my surprise, Santa himself stepped out from behind the Christmas tree. He placed his finger over his mouth so I would not cry out. "What are you doing?" I started to ask. The words choked up in my throat, and I saw he had tears in his eyes. His usual jolly manner was gone. Gone was the eager, boisterous soul we all know.

He then answered me with a simple statement. "TEACH THE CHILDREN!"

I was puzzled; what did he mean? He anticipated my question, and with one quick movement brought forth a miniature toy bag from behind the tree. As I stood bewildered, Santa said, "Teach the children! Teach them the old meaning of Christmas. The meaning that now-a-days Christmas has forgotten."

Santa then reached in his bag and pulled out a FIR TREE and placed it before the mantle. "Teach the children that the pure green color of the stately fir tree remains green all year round, depicting the everlasting hope of mankind, all the needles point heavenward, making it a symbol of man's thoughts turning toward heaven."



He again reached into his bag and pulled out a brilliant STAR. "Teach the children that the star was the heavenly sign of promises long ago. God promised a Savior for the world, and the star was the sign of fulfillment of His promise."



He then reached into his bag and pulled out a CANDLE. "Teach the children that the candle symbolizes that Christ is the light of the world, and when we see this great light we are reminded of He who displaces the darkness."



Once again he reached into his bag and removed a WREATH and placed it on the tree. "Teach the children that the wreath symbolizes the real nature of love. Real love never ceases. Love is one continuous round of affection."

He then pulled from his bag an ornament of himself. "Teach the children that I, Santa Claus symbolize the generosity and good will we feel during the month of December."



He then brought out a HOLLY LEAF. "Teach the children that the holly plant represents immortality. It represents the crown of thorns worn by our Savior. The red holly represents the blood shed by Him."



Next he pulled from his bag a GIFT and said, "Teach the children that God so loved the world that HE gave HIS begotten SON..." "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift.

Teach the children that the wise men bowed before the

Holy BABE and presented HIM with gold, frankincense and myrrh. We should always give gifts in the same spirit of the wise men."

Santa then reached in his bag and pulled out a CANDY CANE and hung it on the tree. "Teach the children that the candy cane represents the shepherds' crook. The crook on the staff helps to bring back strayed sheep to the flock. The candy cane is the symbol that we are our brother's keeper."



He reached in again and pulled out an ANGEL. "Teach the children that it was the angels that heralded in the glorious news of the Savior's birth. The angels sang 'Glory to God in the highest, on earth peace and good will toward men.'"

Suddenly I heard a soft twinkling sound, and from his bag he pulled out a BELL. "Teach the children that as the lost sheep are found by the sound of the bell, it should ring mankind to the fold. The bell symbolizes guidance and return.

Santa looked back and was pleased. He looked back at me and I saw that the twinkle was back in his eyes. He said, "Remember, teach the children the true meaning of Christmas and do not put me in the center, for I am but a humble servant of the One that is, and I bow down to worship HIM, our LORD, our GOD."

"To know lasting happiness, we must get to know JESUS.

A.W.E.SOME NEWS
The Diocese of Bethlehem
333 Wyandotte Street
Bethlehem, PA 18015

return requested

TIME DATED MATERIAL—DO NOT DELAY

More Christian Education Resources

Help! I'm a Sunday School Teacher!: 50 Ways to Make Sunday School Come Alive by Ray Johnston. Youth Specialties. ISBN 0-310-20919-6

Teaching Today's Teachers to Teach by Donald Griggs. A comprehensive guidebook of practical ideas, advice and wisdom on the art and practice of teaching. Abingdon Press. ISBN 0-687-04954-7

Children's Activities for the Christian Year by Delia Halverson. Provides practical information and activities for the cycle of the Christian church

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