
THE FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY
December 26, 2010

Pastor: Fr. Brian T. Joyce
Pastoral Associates: Fr. Donie O'Connor, Sr. Joanne Gallagher, CSJ
Deacon: John Ashmore
RCIA/Small Church Community/Bereavement: Al Garrotto
Weekend Associates: Fr. Tom Burns, Fr. Michael Dibble, Fr. Brian Timoney
Principal: Mrs. Kathy Gannon-Briggs
RE Director: Sr. Maureen Viani / Associate: Joan Smits
Youth Minister: Kate Doherty / Assistant: Helen Christian

Schedule of Masses: MONDAY-FRIDAY: 8:00 am
SATURDAY: 8:00 am & 5:00 pm
SUNDAY: 7:00, 8:00, 9:15, 10:45 am; 12:15 pm
Confessions: SATURDAY: 3:30 to 4:30 pm
PARISH HOUSE TELEPHONE: 682-2486
PARISH WEBSITE: www.ctkph.org
PARISH SCHOOL TELEPHONE: 685-1109
RELIGIOUS ED: 686-1017/YOUTH MINISTRY: 676-0979

Dear friends,

Was it only a winter's tale? Has he really left us? The hospice movement believes firmly that for a time after someone's death the spirit remains lingering about in the old familiar places. I felt this when Declan died. For many mornings I waited for the footsteps down the stairs. For the sound of the coffee maker signaling the brew is ready.

At the dimming of each year I always gather together all the pieces of the year that stretched and moved me. Declan is threaded in and through all my memories.

What did he teach me?

Rising to the challenge of thinking positively: He quoted a Buddhist philosophy one morning, *'So we think so we become'*. Regally, humbly and with superhuman dignity Declan brought me back to what really matters. Declan was faced with a difficult choice when he was diagnosed with a serious cancer: to live in darkness or choose the light? We all know the road he traveled. He believed firmly that we were made to grow, never to shrink. Declan took full responsibility for his illness. He was well aware of the power of seeing himself as a victim; he knew the brutal grip of depression, anger and self pity. He was aware that good thoughts cultivate good feelings, freedom and release.

Standing where he was supposed to be standing: Declan seized the moment. He made it his own. He died at his post. Doing what he loved. He wrung out of life all that it could give and savored every drop. He was acutely aware of how fragile life was and he began to embrace it even more tightly. His embraces became warmer because he knew deep down in his gut it could be the last touch. His

smile wider and his humor more sharp and witty. Declan has taught me to stand where I am supposed to stand. For me to keep my touches warm, to love and enjoy life. To be faithful and true to those whom I love and true to what I believe in.

Being vulnerable is the hallmark of maturity: He had a dogged loyalty to just being himself. He lived from the inside out. He was a sensitive and calm human being with a passion for the possible. Like the poet he *'listened'* deeply to life. His vulnerability and openness gave way to a rare kind of compassion and care. He was very approachable and always available and willing to be disturbed for others. He was indeed *'the people's priest'*.

He taught me: how love is stronger than sickness and even death itself. For Declan there was only two tragedy's in life and dying young was not one of them. But to live and not to love and to love and never express that affection, that was the real tragedy. It has been said that the former First Lady, the late Jackie Kennedy in 1963 taught America how to grieve. Without a doubt, Declan taught me how to prepare to die with dignity and grace.

The last night he spent in the parish house is still etched in my mind. He had physically declined, not very mobile and was disoriented. However he held his pain with the usual dignity. Every little thing I did for him was acknowledged by a *'thank you'*. He was grateful to the end. Charming and humorous too! When we had to be creative regarding *'a call of nature'* and short-circuit the process. He cursed unprintable sweet words.....

My friends, I still await the sound of his feet coming down the stairs and he comes.... Now I meet him often in the very ordinary and familiar: where ever his passionate spirit gave life and energy.

(continued on page 4)

WEEK AT A GLANCE

SUNDAY	- The Feast of the Holy Family Masses at 7:00, 8:00, 9:15, 10:45 am and 12:15 pm -No RE Classes / No CLOW / No Youth Group
MONDAY	-No Bible Study for Men & Women - Resumes January 10, 2011 (Questions? Call Mary 946-9751) -No RE Older Sacrament (Grades 3-5)
TUESDAY	-Legion of Mary, Ministry Center, Following 8 am Mass -No RE Grades 1-5 / No RE Grades 7/8 -Rosary & Mother of Perpetual Help Devotion, CV Mtng Room, 7pm -Spanish Prayer Grp, CV Mtng Room, 7:30pm
WEDNESDAY	-No RE Grades 1-5 / No RE Grade 6
THURSDAY	-Centering Prayer, Resurrection Episcopal Church (399 Gregory Lane), 7:30 pm -Centering Prayer, Ministry Center, 10:00 am -No RE Grades 1-5
FRIDAY	- NEW YEAR'S EVE MASSES, DECEMBER 31st (not a holy day of obligation) -Mass at 8:00 and 5:00 pm
SATURDAY	- NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES, JANUARY 1st (not a holy day of obligation) -Mass at 8:00 am and 9:15 am -Sunday Vigil Mass at 5:00 pm
SUNDAY	- The Feast of the Epiphany of the Lord Masses at 7:00, 8:00, 9:15, 10:45 am and 12:15 pm - Second Collection for School, RE and Youth Ministry -No RE Classes / No CLOW / No Youth Group - Taize Prayer Around the Cross, Christ the King Church, 7:00 pm

CYO Crab Feed News – Make sure and plan to attend the CYO Crab Feed on Saturday, January 29th from 5:30-11:30 pm. The cost is \$50 per person or a table for 10 is \$500. If you have questions, please call Vince Cirelli (925) 305-6668 or email cirellihomes@gmail.com.

Women's Reading Group – Mark your calendar. Join us in reading Gary Macy's book, "*The Hidden History of Women's Ordination, Female Clergy in the Medieval West*". We invite men to join us in this discussion. Meet in Ministry Center Chapel from 9:30-11:30am on Saturdays Jan. 8th, (Chapters 1-2), Feb. 5th, & March 5th. Any questions, please contact Pat Kramer (925)439-2481).

What if it was your mother or father needing a little extra help or a friend? Volunteers make a difference to seniors trying to remain in their own homes as long as possible. Taking only 2-3 hours a week for an occasional ride to the doctor, grocery store, as a friendly visitor, etc., you can change your life and that of a senior. Valuable friendships develop! Might this be your New Year's Resolution? Call Linda Grooblin at Caring Hands, (952-2999), for more info or to register for the Friday, Jan 21, 2010 training session at John Muir Medical Center (Walnut Creek). An orientation/interview is required by Jan. 14th.

Save the Date – The Women's Retreat will be February 25-27, 2011 at Villa Maria del Mar, Santa Cruz with Carolyn Foster. Theme: The Joy Inside-Making Room for What Really Matters. Registration will be held in January.

Taize Prayer Around the Cross – Each month five Christian Churches of Pleasant Hill sponsor a hour of devotional prayer in the spirit of Taize (the ecumenical community in Southern France). The prayer time (one hour) rotates on the first Sunday of each month through each of the four churches. Next Sunday, January 2nd the monthly Taize Prayers will be at Christ the King Church. Plan on joining us. Quiet, prayerful, gentle and refreshing.

Basketball Free Throw Contest – The Knights of Columbus are holding their Annual Free Throw Contest on Saturday, January 8 from 8 am to 11 am at the CTK gym. No fees are required. Registration starts at 8:00 am. All girls and boys ages 10 to 14 years old are invited to participate in the Free-Throw Contest. The highest scorers from each group at the local competition (K of C Council #5811) will advance to the next level competitions. Proof of age as of January 1, 2011 if needed.

Christ the King announces **H.E.L.P. (Hope, Encouragement, Love, and Prayer)**, a program designed to provide the emotional understanding and compassion for family members of those suffering from the effects of serious mental illness. The meetings will take place here **once a month on the second Monday**, the next meeting is Monday, January 10th at 7 pm in Rooms A & B of the Parish Hall. If you have questions please call Pam or Joe Appel at 925-947-0269.

Ministry to traveling Catholics - For nationwide Mass times and locations: internet www.Masstimes.org

In the lilt of a familiar tune, he is there.
In the punch line of the joke, he is there.
In the warmth of friendship, he is there.
In fun and laughter, he is there.
On the canal trail, he is there.
In perseverance and care, he is there.
In finding that lost coin, he is there.

I close with a few lines of one of Declan's favorite songs: '*Whispering Hope*'
*'Soft as the voice of an angel
Breathing a lesson unheard
Hope with a gentle persuasion
Whispers her comforting words:
Wait till the darkness is over
Wait till the tempest is done.
Hope for the sunshine tomorrow
After the shower has gone!'*

There is a new saint in heaven! Declan.
Happy New Year and the blessings of Declan all over you!

Amen



Muir Woods, California

Redwoods, sequoia sempervirens, steeple-tall,
where we walked, awed to silence, through a past
present to us in the trees, centuries old,
the soft rain's sibilance holding all the woods
in an embrace of stillness; down the rich aisles
of pillared redwoods that soared, reaching high
as old God's leaning, we found ourselves
insignificant, temporal beings, taken by the impulse
to pray; till we saw the owl, squat on a branch,
watchful, Methuselah, barred owl, old hinge-head,
swivel-face and rain-owl, bemused at us who mooched
by below, uncertain, turning to our cellphones
for assurance, our cars waiting in the carpark
urgent for the forecourts, the switchbacks, the freeways;
you could hear them, the redwoods, in the mists
gossiping about the restlessness of humankind,
who, for the moment, struggle with our illnesses,
with the loveliness of the roe-deer skittering
across our path, elegant and fearful, and the buck
quick in his balletic leap into the ferns till we know
we have dipped our fingers in a sacred font
and emerge, fortified by sacrament, blessed again in spirit
for our ongoing struggle with the flesh.

for Declan Deane / by John F. Deane