



Ministry Day 2011

Program II: Jackie Witter

By Marge Virnig

On Thursday, March 31 about 350 lay ecclesial ministers throughout the Archdiocese gathered at St. Vincent DePaul for Ministry Day. This year's theme was a visio divina retreat entitled "Seeing Easter" and was facilitated by Dr. Barbara Sutton.

The day started with a short morning prayer and then we moved right into the process. Barbara first read the scripture passage from John's gospel about the Raising of Lazarus. After some quiet reflection there was a cacophony of voices all naming words or phrases that stood out for us in the reading. We spoke in small groups about our reflections (note: it was fun to see how we could break 350 people into small groups of 4 or 5 with everyone staying in the same room).

The scripture was read again but this time we meditated on the Lazarus artwork from the St. John's Bible. We spent time in small group discussion about what captured our attention in the artwork. Then we shared thoughts and insights with the large group.

- What entombs or binds us?
- How difficult is it to stay dead when God keeps calling us to life?
- What role did Martha's persistence play in raising Lazarus?
- What if Lazarus would have chosen not to come out of the tomb?
- How does one live the rest of one's life after such a profound encounter with God?
- When we are in those desolate places where we can't find God, do we trust God to find us?

Bishop Lee Pichè presided at liturgy which was followed by a delicious lunch (thanks to the staff at St. Vincent DePaul). The afternoon was a shorter version of the morning, but this time we reflected on the scripture and artwork of the Dry Bones in Ezekiel. I encourage you to look at the artwork and reflect on why an old junk car was placed in the midst of the dry bones in biblical times.

The day was enriching and reflective and reminded me that there are unlimited possibilities in the transformative power of the combination of scripture, art and theology.

By Chris Sorensen

On Thursday, March 24, Dr. Jackie Witter once again captivated an audience of APM members.

Beginning her time with us Jackie revisited thoughts and insights shared with us by Julie Neraas and Russ Connors, our other speakers this year on our theme Abiding in Hope.

As baptized people, and especially as ministers in the Church, we are to be people of hope. Jackie reminded us that not to be a person of hope is to deny the truth of the Resurrection.

She led us in a naming of the challenges to hope. In light of the Paschal Mystery, while needing to name challenges, we cannot get stuck there. Crucifixion is not the end of the story. It always leads to Resurrection.

Jackie urged us to remember that hope is a theological virtue. Christians have a moral obligation to be people of hope. Hope is a way of being, not simply an attitude. It is how and where we are orienting our lives.

Asking the question "What does it look like to abide in hope?" was a provocative piece of our discussion. Jackie said that to abide in hope is: to wait for, to endure patiently, to continue in peace and to

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Interested in getting more involved in APM? Check out ["Call to Leadership"](#) on page 3!

From the Chair

Br Sr. Fran Donnelly, B.V.M.

Sister Fran Donnelly, BVM
Chair, Association of Pastoral
Ministers



"The Time of the Heron"

For some reason, I am quite interested in large birds. Like the millions around the world, I admit to being mesmerized by the webcam in the Decorah, Iowa, eagles' nest. Birds of prey are amazing and we are so blessed by having them in abundance in our part of the world. Last year, I was able to photograph a parent and a juvenile eagle taking baths in the pond here at Resurrection Cemetery, practically right outside my office window!

But large water fowl fascinate me the most. Having been blessed to observe and photograph egrets, brown pelicans, white pelicans and the myriad kind of heron on Sanibel Island, I am forever in awe of them and of their migrations. Seeing them in that habitat makes such sense, who wouldn't want to be in Florida in the winter?



However, it is the fact that so many of these species come back here and they come early! I have seen heron since mid-March. And we all know what eclectic weather we have had this "spring". These birds actually travel thousands of miles to come to Minnesota at this time of the year!

They are either masochistic or, their instinct is way more developed than ours is. I am holding on to

the latter.

The realities of the regular calendar and of the liturgical calendar this year have made it challenging to "Abide in Hope". How ironic that our theme this year would be a stretch for some of us. Spring is late, Easter is late. And many of our members and colleagues are struggling with uncertainty in regard to employment, the future of their parish, added responsibilities and the like. These are tough times.



And yet, it is Easter; He is risen, He is truly risen, Alleluia! It is the ultimate "abiding in hope" reality. There is nothing better, nothing more assuring that life does indeed go on and that the Paschal Mystery is once again before us, in all its glory.

Find whatever it takes to hold on to that incredible reality. I look to those heron, those huge, majestic birds that keep coming back to us in order to breed and to start a family, year after year. That instinct to return to the north and to begin, again, is inspiring for me.

Most people would not associate the heron with Easter. No, there are no chocolate-covered-marshmallow heron at Target, but the real ones certainly can serve as reminders of spring, of tenacity and of hope.

Look to the sky and to the shore lines. Or look for your own symbols of hope, spring and Easter.

May this Easter season give you what you need in order to hold on and to continue to minister during these difficult times.

Plan on coming to the Banquet on May 24th to celebrate spring and our communal commitment to abide in hope, together.

HAPPY EASTER



LOYOLA

SPIRITUALITY CENTER

Serving Spiritual Seekers

As part of its mission to teach people how to see God active in all things, Loyola has a keen interest in supplementing programs and services offered in churches of various denominations. Besides spiritual direction, educational programs and pastoral services, retreats are an important part of our mission. Here are examples of the kinds of pastoral services experiences available through Loyola Spirituality Center for lay ministers, teachers and parish groups:

- School of Prayer
- Brief Theme Retreats
- Extended Ignatian Exercises (EIE)
- Six Week Group Retreat
- Days of Prayer/Days of Recollection
- Consulting Services

Loyola staff can also collaborate with you to develop themes and seminars based on your specific needs and requests. Some of our specialties:

- Retreats for Advent and Lent
- Centering Prayer Retreats
- Bio-spiritual Focusing
- Enneagram Workshops
- Ignatius Spirituality
- Simple Living
- Nature Spirituality
- Grief and Loss
- The Spirituality of Aging
- Caregiving as a Spiritual Practice

Loyola Spirituality Center
 e-mail: loyolasrr@comcast.net
 website: loyolaspiritualitycenter.org
 telephone number: 651-641-0008
 address: 389 N. Oxford Street., Saint Paul, MN 55104

APM Call for Leadership

By Sr. Fran Donnelly, B.V.M.

It is that time of the year in which we are seeking interested members to join the Executive Board as Committee chairs or to join a Committee.

Due to the generosity of so many, work does take place between programs. But all Board members would agree that the work is minimal and the reward is great. The board meetings are energizing and enriching and provide us all with the support and creativity that can't be found elsewhere. The board meets 5 times a year and then a planning meeting in June, so the time commitment is not all that great. And the committee work does depend on the specific committee.

For more information on the specifics, including a job description, contact a current board member. In addition to the need for more Committee members, on all Committees, the following positions are needed:

Chair-Elect
Hospitality (this is an ideal position for Co-Chairs)
Coalition Representative (along with Marge Virnig)
Ministry to Vulnerable Adults

PLEASE do consider sharing your gifts in this way. As mentioned above, contact any Board member or Al Schroeder, next year's chair for more information.

And as we have done in the past...we will come calling to invite you to participate on the Board.

The 2010-2011 APM Executive Board

Ministry to Vulnerable Adults

By Mary Ann Kelly-Wright

The MVA trainers workshop is for staff or volunteers who supervise, train, or coordinate ministries that serve vulnerable adults. If you are interested in taking the 3-hour Trainer's workshop please contact MVA chairperson, Mary Ann Kelly-Wright at 612-823-8205, ext. 231 or mkelly@stjoan.com. If you have been on the waiting list please indicate your continued interest by contacting Mary Ann. Information and FAQ's about MVA training can be found on the APM website, www.apmspm.org Thank you for your continued support of APM and Ministry to Vulnerable Adults.

***Don't miss out! Watch for your
 APM Spring Banquet invitation in
 your mailbox!***

This year: The Clinton Avenue Trio, William McDonough, associate professor from St. Catherine University, the announcement of the 2011 Mary Mulheron Award winner, great food, better company!



Executive Board .
Officers:

Chair:	Fran Donnelly, BVM	651-255-0537
Past Chair	Kathleen Conrad Eustice	612-869-2426
Chair Elect	Deacon Al Schroeder	952-402-7205
Secretary	Mary Kay Amberg	651-869-2426
Treasurer	Adaire Lassonde SSND	651-647-3126

Representatives, Committee Chairs, and Coalition Delegates:

Coalition Reps	Marge Virnig	651-644-4918
	Open	
Communication	Mia AhSani	651-698-5581
	Lisa Amos	651-905-4304
Hospitality	Barbara Roban	612-724-3643
	Kathryn Runman-Zimney	612-729-5633
Program	Chris Sorensen	952-835-7101
Spirituality	Open	
MVA	Mary Ann Kelly-Wright	612-823-8205

Mark Your Calendar Now!

Spring Banquet
Tues. May 24
6:00-9:00pm
Binz Refectory,
St. Paul

William McDonough
Associate Professor
of Theology,
St. Catherine
University

Prayers

Russ Conners, friend of APM
Dennis Pfab, husband of Julie Pfab
All those suffering the affects of natural dis-
asters, especially those in Japan and the
southern United States

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remain stable. In the words of Pope Benedict "we are saved by hope".

By the end of our afternoon, having had the opportunity to voice the challenges to hope and our places of hope, there was a spirit of hope in the room. We left with the words of Julian of Norwich in our ears:

"The worst that can happen has happened. And all will be well. And all will be well. And all manner of things will be well."



The Executive Board meets bi-monthly to implement the APM mission. APM members can play a vital role by helping to identify issues, needs, future leadership, and other concerns for the common good. Please call on any Board members listed above if you have suggestions or needs.

2010-2011 Board Meeting Dates:
June 10

MISSION

APM is

a community of caring people committed to the Church's human service ministries and the support of each other in those ministries.

THE ROLE OF OUR MEMBERS

is one of leadership in calling people forth to respond to their baptism through ministry and in modeling new ways of ministering.

WE ARE DEDICATED TO NURTURING RELATIONSHIPS

with individuals and organizations within the Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis and beyond its boundaries.



Association of Pastoral Ministers

in the Archdiocese of St. Paul * Minneapolis

The newsletter of the Association of Pastoral Ministers is published for its members as an expression of APM's mission. Input, suggestions and feedback from its members is valued and requested. Please direct these to any board member or email lamos@stpetersmendota.org.