



# Cove Side Chatter

Our Lady of the Cove Catholic Church - Kimberling City, Missouri

Sunday, March 25, 2012

## April – Month of the Holy Eucharist

- 1 April – Month of the Holy Eucharist
  - Marina Mosier
- 2 Youth News – Youth Group Fundraiser
  - Jerri Row
- 3 From the Desk of the CRE
  - Jim Dobbs
- 4 Church Calendar
  - Judy Palm
- 5 Birthday and Anniversary Calendar
  - Yolanda Johnson
- 6 Southern Stone County Food Pantry
  - Dottie Kellum
- 6 Community Events
  - Yolanda Johnson
- 6 Relay for Life
  - Karen Laurin
- 6 Picture – PCCW Women’s Retreat
- 7 Triduum – Celebrating the Essentials of Our Redemption
- 7 Poem – Let Not Thy Heart Be Troubled
- 8 Article - A Dog’s Purpose
  - Marina Mosier



“At the Last Supper, on the night he was betrayed, our Savior instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of his Body and Blood.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1323)

### The First Eucharist in Scripture

The main basis for this belief are the words of Jesus himself at the Last Supper: the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20 and Saint Paul’s 1 Corinthians 11:23-25 recount that in that context Jesus said of what to all appearances were bread and wine” This is my body ... this is my blood.”

The Gospel of John in Chapter 6, *The Discourse on the Bread of Life*, presents Jesus as saying: “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you ... Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him” (John 6:53-56).

Saint Paul implied an identity between the apparent bread and wine of the Eucharist and the body and blood of Christ when he wrote, “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ (Corinthians 10:16).”

*Eucharistic liturgy* and *Mass* are the terms used to describe the celebration of the Eucharist in the Western or Latin liturgical rite of the Catholic Church. The term *Mass* is derived from the Late Latin word *missa* (dismissal), a word used in the concluding formula of Mass in Latin: “*Ite, missa est*” (“Go, the dismissal is made”).

When the bread and wine are consecrated by the priest at Mass, they cease to be bread and wine, and become instead the Most Precious Body and Blood of Christ. The empirical appearances and attributes are not changed, but the underlying reality is. The consecration of the bread (known afterwards as the Host) and wine represents the separation of Jesus’ body from his blood at Calvary; thus, this separation also represents the death of Christ. However, since according to Catholic dogma Christ has risen, the Church teaches that his body and blood are no longer truly separated, even if the appearances of the bread and wine are. Where one is, the other must be. This is called the doctrine of concomitance. Therefore, although the priest says, “The body of Christ”, when administering the host, and, “The blood of Christ”, when presenting the chalice, the communicant who receives either one receives Christ, whole and entire – “Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity”.

# Youth News

## Youth Group Fundraiser

The High School youth of our Parish had a bake sale last month to raise funds for their annual trip to the National Catholic Youth Conference. The students worked all morning and early afternoon that Saturday, creating original flavors for the famous Gourmet Cupcakes and specialty homemade breads. They measured, poured, chopped and baked their way to 124 cupcakes and 40 breads. It was a sell out as usual by our faithful Parishioners. Since this is the favorite fundraiser by everyone in the Parish, we will be having another one in the summer and the fall. Don't hesitate to give us suggestions for new flavors and varieties. We're always up to a good challenge in the kitchen.



Donald Stimble, Mattie Stimble, Bonnie Row, Amy Taylor, Kyle Moeskau



We would like to say a special 'Thank You' to the adults that supervised the work day; Jim Faber, Eydie Taylor, Jeri Row and Jim Moeskau, and a big thanks to Cati Schomaker for cleaning our messy floor and assisting in the sale on Sunday.

## Saints of Lent

We can take our cues from the Saints on how to serve our Church, our neighbors and ourselves during Lent. As we know we are called to pray, fast and works of Charity or alms giving. These are the basics of Christian spiritual life the three pillars of lent. And no one knows their importance better than the saints. The Church urges to imitate these men and women who became saints by including each of these in their daily lives.

Prayer, the soul can't live without it. It is our one on one communication with God. We pray to praise Him for his glory, to thank him for his mercy and love. We turn to him in time of need and we petition him for his grace to do what is pleasing to him. Whatever the reason and they are many, what it boils down to is we are talking to God. The saints were models of prayer, like Bishop Sheen who brought the message of the church to millions over the radio and television in his lifetime, and still finding time to write more than 70 books. With all this on his plate, he still took time each day to spend an hour in prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, describing it as the hour that makes my day. St. Zita worked for a family in Italy for 48 years as a housemaid, cook and governess. Her days were full of drudgery, yet when she felt dejected, she said a little silent prayer, offering her work to God and that revived her spirits while drawing her closer to God. Each one of these saints longed to spend expended periods of conversation with God, but their work prevented it. Sometime you may feel your life overwhelms you and you can find the time to pray. If you can go to Mass, say a rosary, not enough time for the rosary, pray one decade. Pray in line at the grocery store, or waiting to pick up the children after school or practice. This Lent look for the moment to open up a conversation with God.

When it comes to fasting, the church only requires us to do it only twice, Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. We are only permitted one full meal, and two snacks, not equal to the full meal. This is not a starvation diet, though your children may think it is. We often wonder why this matters to God, one meal or three, what's the difference? We also give up meat on Friday, which stems from the practice in the early Church, when meat was a luxury and was given up as a sacrifice. We do these acts of self-denial to remind us of the forty days Jesus fasted in the desert, and remind us of Christ's death on the cross on Good Friday. All the saints practiced some form of self-denial as a sign of their love for God. St Nicholas of Tolentino was an Augustinian priest, gave up meat completely as a personal sacrifice. Before his conversion, St. Moses of Ethiopia had a voracious appetite for meat and wine. The monastery he entered forbade both of these pleasures and it tormented him for years. The

struggle was essential to his spiritual development because he understood that meat and wine represented his old life, where he indulged in not only food, drink, but women and acts of violence as well. The saints understood that making small sacrifices is training for making bigger sacrifices.

Almsgiving, the traditional term for acts of Charity during Lent, means giving money, in one form or the other. God is pleased when we reach in our pocket for that extra dollar we don't normally give and don't worry about the amount! You've heard the old saying, "You can't out give God!" Remember, like the widow in the temple it is better to give of your want, not your excess. She gave her all and for her this was a huge sacrifice. Saints who gave their lives to acts of charity saw Jesus Christ in suffering humanity. St. Martin of Tours, one of the great missionary Bishops of France, as a young man, was a Roman soldier studying to be baptized. As the story goes, one cold winter day he was riding back to camp, when he saw a beggar by the side of the road, dressed in rags shivering violently. Martin reined his horse, drew his sword, cut his cloak in two and gave half to the beggar. That night Martin received a vision of Christ, wrapped in the half cloak. "Look," Christ said to the angels, "Martin is not yet baptized, yet he has clothed me in his own cloak." St. Elizabeth of Hungary was a princess, yet she assisted the needy and the sick personally. She delivered food to the homes of the poor and brought a leper into her own home. Her husband, though devout, thought it was undignified for his wife to serve the needy herself, so Elisabeth performed her acts of charity in secret until his death. She later became a Franciscan sister, founded a hospital and served the sick until her death. One of the best known saints of charity is, undoubtedly, St. Vincent de Paul. He was a French priest who could never turn away anyone in need. He established hospitals, orphanages, and shelters for the elderly. Today we have chapters of the St. Vincent de Paul Society around the world.

There is no patron saint of Lent, but there are many saints who are models of how we can deepen our spiritual life and respond charitably to the people who need our help. This Lent let us ask the saints to intercede for us that we may become closer to becoming the saint Christ calls all of us to be. The money and time we give to charity during Lent is another form of sacrifice. The help we offer to those in need helps us to grow in compassion.

Remember in the Gospel of Matthew 25:40, Christ assures us regarding any act of charity we perform "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."

# April 2012

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday																																																																																																		
<p><b>1</b></p> <p>8:00 &amp; 10:30 am Mass 9:30 - 11:30am KC's Breakfast 12:00 Easter Egg Hunt <b>PALM SUNDAY</b></p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Communion Service &amp; Rosary 6:00 PM Parish Council Mtg</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary</p>	<p><b>4</b></p> <p>9:15 AM Crafters &amp; Quilters 5:00pm PSR Dinner 6:30 PK - 11 7:30 PM Chrism Mass at St Agnes</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>8:00-2:00 KC Kitchen Use 9:00am Liturgy Decorate <b>Holy Thursday - 7:00pm Mass</b></p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>3:00pm Stations 4:00pm Liturgy Decorate 8:00-2:00 KC Kitchen Use <b>GOOD FRIDAY - 7:00pm Service</b></p>	<p><b>7</b></p> <p><b>8:00pm Easter Vigil</b> 9:00 am Liturgy Decorate NO 9:00am Mass NO 4:00pm Confession NO 5:00pm Mass</p>																																																																																																		
	Adoration 10 - 10	Mon thru Fri	Food Pantry																																																																																																					
<p><b>8</b></p> <p>8:00 &amp; 10:30 am Mass <b>EASTER SUNDAY</b></p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Communion Service &amp; Rosary 12:00 PM Neighbors &amp; Friends Lunch 7:00 PM K of C Mtg</p>	<p><b>10</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 10:30 AM Literary Ladies 10:30 AM Wedgewood Mass</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>7:00 AM Mass 9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 9:15 AM Crafters &amp; Quilters 5:00pm PSR Dinner 6:30 PK - 11 6:30pm Col Girls &amp; Squires</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 10:15 AM Bible Study</p>	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary</p>	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>4:00 PM Confession 5:00 PM Mass 9:00am 1st Communion Family Day</p>																																																																																																		
	Adoration 10 - 10	Mon thru Fri	Food Pantry																																																																																																					
<p><b>15</b></p> <p>10:30am First Holy Communion Mass 8:00 &amp; 10:30 am Mass <b>Divine Mercy Sunday 3:00 pm Chaplet</b></p>	<p><b>16</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Communion Service &amp; Rosary</p>	<p><b>17</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 12:00 Ministerial Alliance 9:30-2:30 Blood Drive</p>	<p><b>18</b></p> <p>7:00 AM Mass 9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 9:15 AM Crafters &amp; Quilters 5:00pm PSR Dinner 6:30 PK - 11</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 10:15 AM Bible Study 1:00 PM Liturgy Mtg</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>4:00 PM Confession 5:00 PM K C's MEMORIAL MASS &amp; DINNER</p>																																																																																																		
	Adoration 10 - 10	Mon thru Fri	Food Pantry		DCCW Spring Assembly - Cape Girardeau																																																																																																			
<p><b>22</b></p> <p>8:00 &amp; 10:30 am Mass</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Communion Service &amp; Rosary</p>	<p><b>24</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 10:30 AM Table Rock Mass 1:00 PM Finance Council 10:00am PCCW BD MTG</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 9:15 AM Crafters &amp; Quilters 5:00pm PSR Dinner 6:30 PK - 11 8:00-1:00 Relay - Kitchen</p>	<p><b>26</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary 10:15 AM Bible Study</p>	<p><b>27</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Mass &amp; Rosary</p>	<p><b>28</b></p> <p>4:00 PM Confession 5:00 pm Mass P/Up Enchilada's after Mass</p>																																																																																																		
	Adoration 10 - 10	Mon thru Fri	FR GONE til 27th	8:00 - 4:00 Relay for Life																																																																																																				
<p><b>29</b></p> <p>8:00 &amp; 10:30 am Mass P/Up Enchilada's after Mass</p>	<p><b>30</b></p> <p>9:00 AM Communion Service &amp; Rosary</p>	<table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">Mar 2012</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1" style="margin: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="7">May 2012</th> </tr> <tr> <th>S</th><th>M</th><th>T</th><th>W</th><th>T</th><th>F</th><th>S</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>1</td><td>2</td><td>3</td></tr> <tr><td>4</td><td>5</td><td>6</td><td>7</td><td>8</td><td>9</td><td>10</td></tr> <tr><td>11</td><td>12</td><td>13</td><td>14</td><td>15</td><td>16</td><td>17</td></tr> <tr><td>18</td><td>19</td><td>20</td><td>21</td><td>22</td><td>23</td><td>24</td></tr> <tr><td>25</td><td>26</td><td>27</td><td>28</td><td>29</td><td>30</td><td>31</td></tr> </tbody> </table>					Mar 2012							S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	May 2012							S	M	T	W	T	F	S					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Mar 2012																																																																																																								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																																		
				1	2	3																																																																																																		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																																																		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17																																																																																																		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24																																																																																																		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																																		
May 2012																																																																																																								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S																																																																																																		
				1	2	3																																																																																																		
4	5	6	7	8	9	10																																																																																																		
11	12	13	14	15	16	17																																																																																																		
18	19	20	21	22	23	24																																																																																																		
25	26	27	28	29	30	31																																																																																																		
	Adoration 10 - 10	Mon thru Fri																																																																																																						

# April 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 John Filip	2 Carrie White	3 Kathy Batton Ron Hoover Jean Paulsen Rick & Bev Almond (41)	4 Mary Ann Coder Wayne Throckmorton	5 Walt Hicks Jeanne Olson Jim & Marge Elder (58)	6 Harriette Cady Fran Filip Algera Row Ron & Janice Vail (22)	7 Deborah Skeen Tom & Flor Johnson (11)
8 Dee Myers Larry & Pat Meece (45) Ray & Barbara Cziczko (40) Clarence & Mary Frank (40)	9 Al Orth Harriette Poduska Ronda Schiermeier	10 Katie Doody	11 Millie Dever Steve Keippel Shirley Wenzel Gary & Ronda Schiermeier (25)	12 Bridgett Allen Vel Kosbab Vern & Lorraine Gessler (65) Frank & Debra Toeneboehn (27)	13 Mary Swanson Tom Wind Al & Jeanne Olson (39)	14 Theresa Booth Helen McFerron Mike Mountain Gisela Pauley
15 Richard & Mary Huff (62) Don & Yo Johnson (45)	16 Gary Davis Jeanne Maes Melody Miller Jim & Lois Wagenknecht (13)	17 Ken Borkowski Flor Johnson Ted Nibbe	18 Rollin Cady Joan Martin Darwin Phifer Edith Taylor Chuck & JoAnne Kundrot (53)	19 Rita Kobza Luke McFerron Larry Price Mike & Susan Bakker (37)	20 John Giebler Ernie & Jean DuPree (44) Mike & Kathy Ellis (44)	21 Judy Donohue Norma Fembach Nyla George Barbara Morin Marleni Vergara Bob & Mary Doody (28)
22 Tomas Sanchez	23 Jeff & Sonia Cross (24) Darwin & Beth Phifer (18) Jim & Sarah Henderson (7)	24 Cindy Devine Mark Keller Suzie Modlin John & Carole Swift (19)	25 Beverly Macarthy Matt & Mary Heltemes (53)	26 Larry Molskness Joe & Barbara Kramer (43)	27 Joshua Cardenzana Vince Cardenzana Sydney Eby Tristan Eby Josephine Winther Betty York Russ & Donna Guymon (55) Mickey & Lorrie Kaveney (44)	28 Marilyn Herr Richard Spinning Jim Woodruff Dewey & Lucille Meeks (61) Tim & Anita Weyers (11)
29 Louise Gremontprez Fred & Janice Eimer (33)	30 Joyce Huth Carole Lindner Carol Mudd Gary Smith					

For any additions or corrections,  
please call  
Yolanda Johnson at 338-1039.

**Southern Stone County Food Pantry  
At Our Lady of the Cove  
3/22/2012**

**The Southern Stone County Food Pantry helped to feed 679 people this past March.**

The Southern Stone County Food Pantry at Our Lady of the Cove is grateful to all who donate to the food pantry, for as you can see there is a great need here. The food pantry relies entirely on donations, from individuals, other churches, and other organizations. **No one receives a salary, all are volunteers.**

Country Mart in Branson West and Panera Bread in Branson provide us with left over bread. Harter House gives us a good deal with very large quantity purchases.

**Thank you and God bless all who gave groceries, money, or whatever to the food pantry. 100% goes to help the ones in need.**

Dottie

#### **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

- 4/1 Centennial History Museum Grand Opening, Downtown Branson; 334-4084
- 4/1 Veterans Concert; [www.bransonveteransevents.com](http://www.bransonveteransevents.com)
- 4/1-30 Titanic– Royal Wedding; [www.titanicbranson.com](http://www.titanicbranson.com)
- 4/5-7 Silver Dollar City Easter Celebration; 800-475-9370
- 4/12-5/6 SDC World Fest
- 4/14 A Night to Remember, Titanic
- 4/15 Branson's Birthday Spectacular – The Show of the Century; RFD-TV Theater; 332-2282; [www.branson100.org](http://www.branson100.org)
- 4/19 Opening Day of Eureka Springs Farmers Market
- 4/20-22 Sixth Annual Branson Elvis Festival; 888-215-8547; [www.legendsinconcert.com](http://www.legendsinconcert.com)
- 4/20-21 Branson Car Auction; 335-3063 [www.bransonauktion.com](http://www.bransonauktion.com)
- 4/22-28 Earth Day Celebrations; Big Cedar Lodge; 800-2225-6343
- 4/25-26 See the World in Branson Music Fest; 800-339-2216; [www.seetheworldinbranson.com/musicfest](http://www.seetheworldinbranson.com/musicfest)
- 4/26-28 Bassmaster Open; [www.bassmaster.com/open](http://www.bassmaster.com/open)
- 3/1-31 Irish month at the Titanic; 800-381-7670
- 3/7-11 NAIA Division II Men's Basketball National Championship; 335-NAIA
- 3/29-3 Viet Nam Veterans Exposition and Registration; [www.bransonveteransevents.com](http://www.bransonveteransevents.com)
- 3/31 Silver Dollar City Young Christians Day; [www.silverdollarcity.com](http://www.silverdollarcity.com)

#### **Relay for Life by Karen Laurin**

Our Lady of the Cove will again have a team for the Stone/Taney County Relay for Life Walk which will be held on June 1 & 2 at Cedar Ridge in Branson. Our team has 40 members and are still registering members. To be a member of the team you are asked to pay a registration fee of \$10.00 which enables you to get a t-shirt. Every member is asked to also collect at least \$100.

In addition to the personal fund raising the team will also have several fund raisers. The team makes and sells enchiladas. The enchiladas are wrapped two to a package and four packages are put in each bag. The bags are sold for \$10.00 each. We are taking orders for enchiladas until April 22<sup>nd</sup>. They will be distributed on the weekend of April 28-29<sup>th</sup>. If you are unable to pick them up at this time arrangements can be made when you place your order. Payment for the enchiladas is made when you pick them up.

Another fund raiser we have is a Tasting Luncheon. As you know this area has some of the best cooks and our team members are among the best. What is a Tasting Luncheon? For \$10.00 you are able to taste food dishes prepared by these great cooks. Every dish is a special recipe. There will be over 25 dishes to sample. We will also have a cookbook of the recipes for \$5.00 if you wish to purchase one. The Tasting Luncheon will be held on Saturday May 5<sup>th</sup> at Our Lady of the Cove Parish Hall. Doors will open at 11:30 and close about 1:00. Tickets will be sold after Masses and during the Sunday breakfasts. All team members will also have tickets.

We have several youth of the parish who are also members of the team. Watch the bulletin for their fund raisers.

The team thanks the parish and friends for their support and hope you will be able to support us again this year.



*PCCW Women's Retreat*

# Triduum

## Celebrating the Essentials of Our Redemption

The Paschal Triduum (trih-dyoo-um), Latin for “three days,” commemorates the essential features of our redemption: Christ’s Passion, Death and Resurrection. Christian life makes sense only when each of these moments is linked to the other two.

For that reason, the Church celebrates the three days beginning the evening of Holy Thursday as a single liturgical action. Beginning with the Mass of the Lord’s Supper and concluding on Easter Sunday, the Triduum highlights and celebrates the fullness of the Paschal Mystery that we experience in every Mass.

### Day One – “The Son of Man must suffer greatly...”



The Washing of the Feet during the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday reminds us that Jesus freely chose to serve others, even to the point of giving his whole life for us. He freely accepted his

suffering out of love for us and obedience to the Father.

### Day Two – “...and be killed...”



The death of Christ on the cross was real. In the subdued liturgical observances of Holy Saturday, the Church gives us a long time to face up to that fact. Anyone who has lost a loved one to death knows how very long it takes to accept the stark reality of death. In death, Jesus

completed his embrace of the human condition.

### Day Three – “...and on the third day be raised” Luke 9:22



Finally, the Resurrection of the Lord is celebrated as the high point of the liturgical year and the pattern for Sunday Mass throughout the year. The Renewal of our baptismal promises on Easter reminds us that in dying with Christ through baptism, so also do we share in his resurrection.

Concluding with Evening Prayer on Easter Sunday, the Paschal Triduum opens the 50-day Easter Season.

## *Let Not Thy Heart Be Troubled*

“Let not thy heart be troubled,  
I speaketh now to thee.  
O don’t you know I love you?  
I died to set you free.

Come! Give to me thy burdens,  
Bear ye not them alone.  
I will help thee bear thy cross  
Just as I did My own.

Let not thy heart be troubled  
And be ye not afraid,  
I’ll give to those perfect peace  
Whose eyes on Me are staid.

I am thy loving Father,  
I want to be thy Friend.  
My love is everlasting  
And thus it knows no end.

Let not thy heart be troubled,  
I say again to thee.  
Come to Me weary children  
And walk the road with Me.

With wisdom wise I’ll lead thee  
And with My light I’ll guide,  
And if you’ll trust Me always  
In thee I shall abide.”



Mary E. Herrington  
The Anchor of My Soul  
From the Salesian Collection

## A Dog's Purpose

A dog's love is unconditional! They love you no matter what. They are there for you when you're happy; and they're there for you when you are sad. It doesn't get any better than that!

What about people? Is our love unconditional? Or do we categorize people instead of accepting everyone as our brothers and sisters? He's too rich; he's too poor; he doesn't wear the right clothes; he doesn't drive a nice enough car; he's Catholic ..... and so on and so on. What's happened to "*Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*" Matthew 22:39

"Love thy neighbor". We love our families and friends and treat them with kindness. We try not to hurt their feelings and not say harsh things to them. When we do hurt them, and we realize that we have, we apologize. We treat them with respect and try to make them happy. Shouldn't we treat all people like that? When did respect become a thing of the past? Wouldn't this be a better world if we treated everyone we met as if they were our friends, or even members of our families?

Because of the structure of society today, most of us live hundreds of miles from our families and our friends become our extended families. And, our church family becomes an extension of our own little world. Clubs and organizations also bring us friends. So we build these relationships and are kind to one another, but what about those people who are outside our circle of friends? How do we make others feel when they are around us?

This reminds me about a new kid coming to school. How is he treated by his classsmates? If he's snazzy and wears the right clothes, he's accepted by the "cool" kids. What about the shy kid who comes from a poor family and doesn't wear the right clothes, and just doesn't fit in? He's made to feel bad about himself, and no one befriends him. That's about the saddest thing and today we have problems with suicide in our youth because they have been ridiculed just because they "didn't fit in". What a sad state of affairs. Unconditional love is needed here. That's what babies have – unconditional love. They have not been taught yet to hate, but the world teaches us to hate until it becomes a part of the fabric of our lives. Sadly, it follows us through our whole lifetime when it should have been filled with love instead.

The following story was sent to the office and after reading it, it really hit the nail on the head that we do not have unconditional love for one another. And, if we who are joined together in faith cannot live with unconditional love for one another, imagine how hard it is for those who have no faith? We have to look within ourselves and tell ourselves that today, maybe we need to be kinder to those around us – everyone around us, especially in church because this is where LOVE resides. We can all make a difference! We can start right here and now and bring a touch of joy to every person we encounter.

*Being a veterinarian, I had been called to examine a ten-year-old Irish Wolfhound named Belker. The dog's owners, Ron, his wife Lisa, and their little boy Shane, were all very attached to Belker, and they were hoping for a miracle.*

*I examined Belker and found he was dying of cancer. I told the family we couldn't do anything for Belker, and offered to perform the euthanasia procedure for the old dog in their home.*

*As we made arrangements, Ron and Lisa told me they thought it would be good for six-year-old Shane to observe the procedure. They felt as though Shane might learn something from the experience.*

*The next day, I felt the familiar catch in my throat as Belker's family surrounded him. Shane seemed so calm, petting the old dog for the last time that I wondered if he understood what was going on? Within a few minutes, Belker slipped peacefully away.*

*The little boy seemed to accept Belker's transition without any difficulty or confusion. We sat together for a while after Belker's death, wondering aloud about the sad fact that animal lives are shorter than human lives. Shane, who had been listening quietly, piped up, "I know why."*

*Startled, we all turned to him. What came out of his mouth next stunned me. I'd never heard a more comforting explanation. It has changed the way I live.*

*He said, "People are born so that they can learn how to live a good life – **like loving everybody all the time and being nice, right?**"*

*The six-year-old continued, "Well, dogs already know how to do that when they're born, so they don't have to stay as long."*

What is a dog's purpose? To love unconditionally. What is our purpose?