

# *Saints Alive! + October 2007*

All Saints Episcopal Parish, San Leandro, California, 510-569-7020



## **Rector's Letter**

### **The Best Deal Around**

A while back, I heard about an Episcopal church that had made up buttons with a provocative message: "I tithe, do you?" I'm not quite ready to fire up the button maker here at All Saints, but I think it's an important statement and a question to ask one another.

I haven't always been a tither—it's only been in the last five or six years that Karla and I reached that point—so I understand many of the seemingly good reasons why we shouldn't give away 10 percent of our income to good causes, including the church. The following are my personal favorites.

- "I couldn't possibly live on what's left."
- "I couldn't pay my bills, my mortgage/rent or food."
- "They only say that because the church is greedy/wants money."

I have lived much of my life convinced, deep down, that giving away 10 percent would lead to discomfort—even real, perhaps unbearable, suffering. Maybe you have too.

So why did God set this as the standard of giving for us? Does God want us or those we love to suffer? Of course not. It's a lesson given us for our good. Erich Fromm once said, "If you want to feel really powerful, write a big check to a charity." He was absolutely right.

In my experience, I have never had a greater feeling of abundance—or a reality of it—than when I have tithed. Giving 10 percent is a big deal, especially in a society addicted to wealth, and it has deeply powerful, wholesome effects on us.

It gets us to do something very important for our spiritual growth: let go of our death-grip (and I mean that) on money, and our tendency to see money as the source of safety and security. It is a positive, unmistakable action that we can take. It is a real number that's hard to "fudge." The action smashes any golden idols we have set up for ourselves.

More and more people in this parish are tithing now. It's extraordinary to watch what happens in their lives, and their relationship to money, as they take such a step in faith. They realize that they were relying on something unreliable (money) as they become more joyful, more secure, more peaceful. Now, that's a great deal—the best deal around, in fact. Maybe that's why God suggested it!

Fr. Rob Droste  
[robdroste@sbcglobal.net](mailto:robdroste@sbcglobal.net)

## **Spiritual Direction**

### **Deepening Your Relationship with God**

Spiritual direction is an ancient tradition in the church, practiced today in both one-on-one and group settings. It provides a safe environment to talk about our deepest longings for meaning, purpose, peace and inner freedom. We accompany each other through prayer, meditation, and sharing as we look honestly at our relationship with God. As a group, we help each other notice and respond to the movement of God as experienced in prayer and in the events of ordinary life.

At All Saints, we gather regularly to foster our spiritual development and to support our relationship with God. Spiritual development is that which deepens our conscious connection to what makes us feel

alive—to ourselves, to one another and to God. As deep engagement, the process changes us. Deep joy arises in us as we are called to be open to the mystery of God, a God who can, does, and will satisfy the longing of the human heart. Together, we tend what is holy—an awesome call!

All women of the church are invited to join our circle on the first Wednesday of the month, from 7:00 to 8:30 pm in the Fireside Room.

Contact: Church Office, 510.569.7020

*A graduate of the internationally recognized Mercy Center three-year course in individual spiritual direction (and a fourth supplemental year in group spiritual direction), Karla is committed to helping people listen effectively to God's leading in their lives. Please contact her for more information on the All Saints' women's devotional group, personal one-on-one spiritual direction, or consulting for groups.*

## Africa Project

Our children in Uganda are now back to school and in uniform, thanks to the abiding love, prayers, and pledges of All Saints Church parishioners and others. Sadly, school fees and uniforms are costly; the children and we are blessed by God's eagerness in Uganda.

Anne H, Contact Church Office, 510.569.7020

## Eucharistic Ministry—Ministry of Love



The activities of Eucharistic Ministers who generously give their time serving the spiritual needs of those who, for one reason or another, are unable to attend our Eucharistic celebrations are to be highly commended. The members of our believing community ministered to are mostly housebound, and their appreciation and gratitude are in themselves most rewarding. They welcome a copy of our weekly bulletin, which keeps them informed of parish activities. For them it is also a time to talk and share; as one said, "It is so good to personally come in contact with living humanity." Truly a work that embraces both dedication and dependence.

His call and the call from those in spiritual need should not go unanswered. It could well be that one day we "may be calling."

If you would like to learn about this Ministry of Love,

Contact: John Trubina, [jtrubina@comcast.net](mailto:jtrubina@comcast.net)

## Stewardship 2007

### Gathering Resources for Ministry in 2008

Our fall home gatherings are in full swing! We've now met on September 22 and September 29. This weekend, October 6, we'll be at Conway and Dorothy Pendleton's, followed by two meetings at the church (October 13, hosted by the Churchills, and October 18, by the Pages). The last gathering will be at Amma Linda's on November 3. Which one will **you** attend?

It's important to note one thing: **no pledge cards are handed out at these meetings.** We spend most of our time hearing from one another about your sense of personal mission in life and the unique gifts you bring. Only at the end of the gathering do we talk about the mission of the church, beginning a discussion of where that mission and what you find important come together. Participants report thoroughly enjoying getting to know their parish family better!

For more information, contact: Fr. Rob, [robdroste@sbcglobal.net](mailto:robdroste@sbcglobal.net)

## Now Appearing

Domenique Lozano is in *The Triumph of Love* by Pierre Marivaux at San Jose Rep. Through October 21. <http://www.sjrep.com/>

Joe Nelson is in *Hank Williams: Lost Highway* (with music) at Center Rep in Walnut Creek. Through October 6. <http://www.centerrepertory.org/>

## e-Scrip Renewal/Enrollment

Attention Safeway shoppers—If you are currently enrolled as an e-scrip supporter at Safeway, you need to renew by November 1. If you shop at Safeway and are not in the e-scrip program, you can sign up to support this program. All Saints receives a small percentage of all your purchases at Safeway. Go to [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com) or call 1-800-801-4973.

Contact: Church Office, 510.569.7020

## Entertainment Books

We still have 2008 Entertainment Books on sale. You can help by purchasing a book for yourself and for gifts and by asking friends and neighbors to support our sale. There are also “out-of-town” editions for sale by special order. Father Rob has suggested a goal of selling 60 books this year; we have sold 25 to date! (You can order online at <http://saintsalive.net/index.htm>)

Contact: Contact Church Office, 510.569.7020

## Mark Your Calendars

### Wednesday, October 3—Women’s Spiritual Direction Group

When: 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

Where: Fireside Room

Contact: Church Office, 510.569.7020

### Saturday, October 6—Soup Stop

Feeding the homeless in the All Saints parish hall.

When: 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Contact: Church Office, 510.569.7020

### Saturday, October 6—OktoberAUCTIONfest

When: 5:30 to 9:00 p.m.

Where: Parish Hall

Contact: Church Office, 510.569.7020

Saints Alive! is published monthly via email by All Saints Episcopal Church, 911 Dowling Boulevard, San Leandro, California 94577.

Submit news items for the October 2007 issue to [allsaintsepiscopal911@earthlink.net](mailto:allsaintsepiscopal911@earthlink.net) or mail to Mary N care of the church; deadline is **October 28**.

For changes to the parish database (names, phone numbers, addresses, or e-mail addresses), please e-mail John Trubina at [jtrubina@comcast.net](mailto:jtrubina@comcast.net) or leave a message for him at the church. To get information on All Saints’ people and programs, please stop by the church or visit us on the Internet at <http://www.saintsalive.net>.