

# Care Matters

The Newsletter of the Social Care Commission of the Archdiocese of St Andrews and Edinburgh

## Positively Lent

*Lent, a historic part of the Christian calendar, is a season of "letting go" (fasting) and seeking God in humble submission. It is a time for repentance, confession, prayer, abstinence, and sharing our resources with others. It is not a time to simply give up something for the sake of abstinence (e.g., giving up coffee), but to give up something for the sake of replacing it with time with God. Lent is not merely about abstinence but also about replacing that which you are giving up with something positive. The purpose of Lent is not self-improvement but seeking a deeper relationship with God and loving our neighbors.*

John Mark Hicks



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## Lay Leadership of Funeral Rites

**Our Lady & St Andrew, Galashiels**

**Saturday 24 April 2010**

from 10.00 am - 3.00 pm.

The morning will be spent on how to work with bereaved families as they plan a funeral, and the afternoon spent on preparing lay people to lead the Rites of Reception of the Body and the Committal of the Body.

**Please contact us to reserve a place.**

If your parish/cluster/deanery would also like some input on this topic please contact the office.

## To Love & Serve the Lord

**Ways of Recruiting and Supporting Volunteers.**

Cardinal O'Brien has called on all of us to work together in supporting our parish communities.

**A course of 4 evening workshops in Cathedral House, York Place, Edinburgh on Wednesday 10, 17, 24 and 31 March from 7.15 to 9.15 pm**

The workshops are rooted in prayer, Scripture and the reality of parish life. They provide parishioners with the tools to encourage more people to be of service in their parish.

**All welcome but prior booking is essential as places are limited.**

Cost £20.00 per parish.

For further information tel: 0131 623 8903.

## Big Sleepout 2010



Will you give up your bed for the night to make a difference in the lives of others? We'd love to see you at the Big Sleepout 2010.

**Friday 26 March, 10pm - 7am (Sat)  
City Chambers, Royal Mile, Edinburgh**

You can do the sleepout on your own, or with your friends/family/colleagues. If you can't take part, please consider donating to "sleep in" your own bed that night and do your bit to help homeless people by making a donation to Bethany.

Please download an information sheet and sponsor form from the Bethany website.

All participants must register to take part in the Big Sleepout.

**To register**

Email: [sleepout@bethanychristiantrust.com](mailto:sleepout@bethanychristiantrust.com) (with your name, address and date of birth) or phone: 0131 625 5320.

## WELCOMING IN LENT

During his life Jesus welcomed everyone with whom he came in contact – men and women, Jew and gentile, sinner and saint.

Choosing a despised tax collector as one of his special disciples, being a close friend with the prostitute Mary Magdalene, curing the son of a Roman Centurion (one of the despised Roman occupying force), shows us clearly that Jesus welcomed everyone.

Lent is a good time to ask how we – both individually, and as a parish – welcome others. Lent is also a time when we traditionally repent of past failings and make an effort to be transformed by God's love. The following examination of conscience may help:

- Am I a welcoming person?
- Is there room in my life for others, or am I too busy?
- Do I extend the welcoming gesture, the warm smile?
- Do I hear with my heart as well as with my head?
- Do I go out of my way even when it is not convenient to do so?
- Do I try to use inclusive language whenever possible?
- Do I make an effort to encounter Jesus Christ in the people with whom I work and worship?

Sherry Bitsche in *The Ministry of Hospitality*  
The Liturgical Press 1989



As a parish we could aim to

- Encourage all members of the congregation to have a positive attitude towards each other, especially across generations and cultures
- Be aware of the needs of all parishioners and others in contact with the church community, and seeking to fill these needs where it is appropriate
- Provide inspiring and creative children's programmes
- Actively involve adults and children of all ages, both in the Mass and other liturgies on a regular basis

- Take care of our clergy and other church leaders and their families, by protecting their need for family time too and being sensitive to their individual needs
- Have a building that is safe and accessible to everyone (ramps, toilets, access, protective railings, etc)
- Think of the families on the fringes of our church and of our local community. What difference might it make to them if our church became more family-friendly?

**How would we welcome Jesus, a homeless itinerant preacher with a mixture of fairly rough followers, to our Sunday Mass?**



**The Welcomers Course** is a two session course run by the Social Care office to help parishes become even more welcoming. It was recently presented in Glenrothes, with 28 people attending the course mostly from St Paul's and St Mary's, Glenrothes, but also from 5 other parishes in Fife.

People found the course helpful and thought provoking. Sample comments were:

*It was very useful and raised a lot of issues which I hadn't considered or looked at from the point of view of a newcomer/visitor.*

*Very beneficial, constructive, well presented.*

*The Parish Assessment sheets were extremely good at making you think about what is really good or really poor in our parish.*

*If only more parishioners had taken advantage of this great opportunity to try and make our parish more welcoming!*

If you would like the course to be presented in your parish or deanery, please contact Social Care at [socialcare@staned.org.uk](mailto:socialcare@staned.org.uk) or phone 0131 623 8915 on Mondays or Wednesdays.

**Social Care Commission, Gillis Centre,  
100 Strathearn Road, EDINBURGH EH9 1BB  
Tel: 0131 623 8915 Mon & Wed 9.30am – 5.30pm  
Or: 0131 623 8903 Mon to Frid 9.00am - 4.00pm  
E-mail address: [socialcare@staned.org.uk](mailto:socialcare@staned.org.uk)**