

# St. Bartholomew's Newsletter

May 2004

## The Rector's Remarks

*The Rev. David Pollock, Rector*

Dear people of St. Bartholomew's:

We had a very meaningful Holy Week and a glorious first two Sunday's of Easter. Attendance was very good both on Easter and the Sunday after with the Easter Egg Hunt. We have also been working very hard with our growth consultant Robert Franken. In addition to the initial meeting in March he spent a full day meeting with parishioners and the vestry on April 21<sup>st</sup>. He will return for more meetings on April 28<sup>th</sup> and we will hear his preliminary report early in June. We are fortunate to have someone to work with us at this crucial time in our parish life.

May finishes my third year as your rector. We have accomplished much together. Regular attendance has doubled, pledging has increased two and one half times, we now have two regular bible studies and regular adult education programs, the adult choir has expanded and we have a good youth choir, we have built an orphanage in Kenya and support 10 AIDS orphans with their school fees and our local outreach supports many projects and our Sunday School program continues to grow in numbers and quality and these are only the new or expanded activities. Because we have so much to offer families and individuals in our community, the vestry has placed our emphasis for this year to really start to focus the whole parish on growth.

In the great commission Jesus told us to go out into the world and spread the Gospel. We are to share with others the marvelous things that God has done for us. But in order for us to do that in today's sophisticated world we need to have an intentional plan. That is what our work with Robert Franken is all about; looking at our strengths as a parish and our weaknesses and figuring out a way to bring many others into the church. Robert Franken reminded the vestry on the 21<sup>st</sup> that you cannot sort-of-grow. You cannot say, "well we want 25 or 30 new people." God may be sending 100 or 200 people to us and we must be ready. The other thing he reminded us is that with growth comes change. We cannot grow without changing and we need to welcome that growth and change with open arms.

It is an exciting time for us at St. Bartholomew's. Please pray that we will hear God's call clearly and respond to it faithfully.

*Peace and love in Christ*  
*David*

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## St. Bartholomew's First Saturday

Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> is the next scheduled First Saturday at St. Bartholomew's. We've experienced wonderful turn-outs during these events, and look forward to the trend continuing. Coffee and donuts will be provided. Come join the fellowship.



## Mother's Day Tea

There will be a Mother's Day Tea after the 11:00 a.m. church service on May 9, 2004. All are welcome, even if you are not a mother. The event is sponsored by the Sunday School in appreciation to all the mothers who work to get their children to church on Sunday. We are blessed with a wonderful bunch of children who participate in the Sunday School. Please plan on attending.

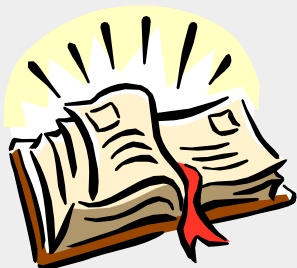


### Bible Study

This years Bible Study has been studying the Pentateuch — the first five books of the Bible.

Monday Evening Bible Study is held at 7:30 p.m. in the Parish Life Center. Wednesday Morning Bible Study is held at 10:00 a.m. in the Education Building. The Wednesday Bible Study is followed by the 11:00 a.m. Communion service.

Come join one of these dynamic groups.



### Christmas Bazaar

The Christmas Bazaar Committee is already at work. We picked the dates – December 3 and 4 – and want to get more parishioners involved. We know everyone in the parish has skills so be sure to share yours. We particularly need someone who likes to work with wood to make picture frames and signs. Our next meeting is May 1<sup>st</sup> at 9:30 a.m. Stay tuned for a schedule of additional times.

### Sunday School News

The Sunday School continues their celebration of the Life of Christ. We had a joyous Easter but had a one-week delay for our Easter Egg Hunt. It was worth the wait because the day was beautiful and enthusiasm was high.

We want to thank the members of the J2A who hid 576 eggs (48 dozen) on Saturday Evening! They were rewarded with pizza. They stuffed the eggs and hid them in less than two hours, which demonstrates the power of teamwork.

We look forward to our Mother's Day Celebration on May 9<sup>th</sup>. It will include a special gift, song and luncheon for all mothers of the church. Please come and then plan to take Mom out for dinner that evening (no cooking all day!). Our children plan to make this day very special by giving thanks to God for the love of their mothers.

### Our Growth Consultant — Robert Franken

In April, Robert Franken, our growth consultant, held private individual meetings with several parishioners, as well as met with the Vestry at its April meeting. He is continuing to gather information that pertains to St. Bartholomew's and will develop a plan for us to use in our efforts to become an even better church than we are right now. If you have something you think Mr. Franken can use in designing a plan for us, please contact the church office to get in touch with him. Stay tuned for more information about future plans for our Church.

### New and Welcoming Committee

As everyone knows, it is important that our congregation grows. We recently formed a new committee, the "Welcoming and Membership Committee" and we need members! The purpose of the committee is to develop a plan for welcoming newcomers and for following-up with newcomers. We hope to recruit both new and older members of St. Bartholomew's for this work. Please let Art Elgin or myself know if you are interested in helping with this important project.

### The Ladies Guild

Think Spring!! Think AZALEAS!!!!

The guild is preparing for its annual Azalea sale. With the cooperation of the weather, look for the Grand Opening at the corner of Route 108 and Brink Road close to the first of May. We understand the azaleas came through the winter very well and we will have different varieties blooming throughout April, May and into June. The azaleas are grown locally and do very well in our area. Please stop by. If you want to help with the sale, call Barbara White (301) 963-7688.

## Mirembe Report

*The Rev. Margaret Pollock*

Several times in April I spoke to Fr. Sosiness Demo, about final preparations to make the Mirembe Girls' Home ready for the first girls to move in during the April trimester break. They expect to begin with four girls, and the plan is for them to move in April 15-17. A welcoming meal for the girls, the local advisory committee, and others is planned.

Not all things will be in perfect readiness yet, although the home will be useable. The sewage line wasn't complete as of 3/31, but the supplementary outdoor pit toilets will be in working order. The kitchen isn't fully equipped, but basic cooking can be done, or meals prepared outside and brought to the girls.

Fr. Demo and the advisory committee are interviewing candidates for matron. They have decided to select an experienced, older person, rather like a mother, instead of a younger person who would be like an older sister.

Fr. Demo has been working for some time to develop Kenyan sources of funding for the home. He reports that rich Kenyans don't want to be bothered about AIDS orphans. And local people have the idea (inherited from British missionary/colonial times) that the white man provides everything. There are lots of examples around Migori of community-oriented projects' being established by foreign funders - then the funders withdraw after the project is "completed", and the whole project collapses. Fr. Demo's biggest worry is how to build a solid, sustainable funding base, over time including self-finance.

I continue to encourage communications between Kenya and Laytonsville, and just in the last week we have received wonderful "My Life History" letters from two of the girls. These letters are being posted on the outreach bulletin board in the undercroft, and they will also appear in upcoming St. Bartholomew's newsletters and on the web.

On April 5, St. Bartholomew's wired \$3000 to sponsor ten girls for the upcoming school trimester. For the girls who move into Mirembe (which means "Peace" in the local language), roughly half of each girl's sponsor fee will be paid for local school fees and costs, and half will cover room and board at Mirembe, including staff (matron and watchman). For the other girls who will still be away at school, the sponsor fees will cover their needs as boarders, as has been the case up to this point.

This work of St. Bartholomew's is one we do together: all of us, and the parish as a whole through budgeted funds and bequests, sponsor all of the girls. As you will see from the Hellen's and Roseline's letters, the girls are moved to learn that so many people love them.

*Peace and love in Christ,  
Margaret+*

## Mirembe Child Sponsors

We now have many parishioners and others outside of the parish who are sponsoring a total of ten girls, of the twelve the home is designed to house. If you are one of these wonderful people, please check to be sure that your contribution is up to date. Every penny is needed.

If you would like to become one of the supporters of our Girls, please contact Margaret or the church office

## Coffee Hour

Stop in the undercroft following the 8 a.m. and 11 a.m. services for some snacks, coffee and juice. This is a good way to meet members in the church and learn about activities that might be of interest.

## Pastoral Care

Dr. Pollock is available for pastoral visits and care. Although the office hours are 12 noon to 3 p.m., Dr. Pollock's practice is to be in the office from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday through Friday, unless he is visiting or has a meeting. Please call (301) 948-8201 to talk to Dr. Pollock during those times, or leave a message and he will return it by the end of the day. In case of emergencies outside of office hours, please call Dr. Pollock at home.

**Hellen**

*Hellen Oyondi is one of our Mirembe girls, an AIDS orphan rescued by Father Sosiness and Mary Demo from the Nairobi slums. She is now enrolled in high school and supported by St. Bartholomew's sponsors. We received this letter from Hellen, handwritten on lined notebook paper, in April 2004. In it, she tells something of her story, and describes receiving St. Bartholomew's 2003 Christmas card to her.*

**Mirembe Photos**

Mary has been taking photos, especially of the Mirembe Girls' Home, and that "soon" we will receive them in the mail. This is something we can look forward to, but let's not hold our breath. Mail communications are slow and unpredictable.

**Correspond with the Girls of Mirembe**

Would you like a "pen pal" in Kenya? Write to one of the girls of Mirembe. They are so appreciative of the support we are providing to them and they are writing to us. We can make it more personal if you would write to them.

We can use more correspondents! Please let Margaret know if one of them will be you.

**My Life History***Hellen Oyondi*

My mother told me many stories about my father and the more she kept on telling me about him, the more I became angry and started to cry. She would hold me close and tell me not to worry but forget about him because he was already dead. I loved my father and wanted to have him around me. What made me angry was that my father used to give us what we needed but there was nothing. My mother was weak, sick all the times and was not able to go for work anymore. Life started to become hard until my mother died, leaving 3 of us. My two brothers and myself. I was 10½ years old, Tom was 12½ years and Jack was only six.

After the burial of my mother, we went to stay with our relative who was 75 years old. Life was never the same. My mother and father who were all teachers used to provide for us, took us to school and pay the school fees but life became dark for us after my parents died. I was angry, frustrated and sad girl wanting to know what killed them. Actually it took us about two years to come to discover that both my parents died of AIDS.

We went to a very poor school in the slums and sometimes could [only] stay at home due to the fees [which had not been paid]. Our old lady never had money to help pay for what was needed at school. I felt angry and sad and left the home to go and live on the streets. I had completed class, when I left my old mothers home. I was tired of staying at her dirty house doing nothing.

My friend Chiko had asked me to go with her to a small café and ask for leftovers. We used to go to this restaurant and beg for food that was left over so that we could eat. I never knew that life for me was going to change. I was too hungry and needed something to eat and as I walked close to the café, I saw a woman coming out, she smiled at me and asked me Jambo, "Hi." [This was our Mary Demo] I looked at her and asked her for one shilling to buy a sweet. She asked me if I was hungry and needed something to eat, and I said "Yes" she took me to the restaurant and bought me some chips [fried potatoes]. My friend Chiko ran away, she thought that the woman was going to do me harm.

The woman who bought me food asked me many questions and as I told her of my bitter stories, she started to wipe tears from her eyes. She later invited me to her house and told me about the possibility of taking me to school. She asked me to sleep at her house but I refused and promised to return the other day. She told me to tell the gatekeeper when I return the next day that I wanted to see Mama Mary Demo. When I came back, I met her husband who was a pastor and all were happy to meet me. They told me about going to school, taking me to stay with a friend during school holidays and I was very happy.

I joined form one (Class 9) in the year 2002 and I have been in school since then. I was happy to get a Christmas card [from St. Bartholomew's Church] with many peoples names in it and I showed it to all my friends and teachers at school. Of course I had been told that someone pays my school fees, and the only person I had heard of and seen in the picture was Rev. Margaret Pollock and her husband. Now I know that many people love me and are paying

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for my fees. I will live to remember them.

Finally I want to thank all the friends who have been paying for my fees. I love Mama Demo because if it was not for her, I could be dead or in the streets dirty and hungry begging for food.

I was told that you will one day come to Kenya, I will be happy to see you in Migori.

Tell all. Thank you a – mi....ll..io..n.

Hellen Oyondi

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Roseline Otiya

To me, being in High School is a miracle, because it was very hard since my grandparents had no money to take me to school after my mother had died.

My father married another woman and she did not want my sister and I to live with them. My father never stayed long with her. He died after three years. She also died after nine months. Both my father, mother and step mother are dead. It was until I was a first year in high school that I was told they died of AIDS. I never enjoyed life with my parents because they were always sick.

A friend of my mother told us about Rev. Demo and his wife. He took me to their house and introduced me to them and finally I was taken to school. I find it hard to write nor tell people the hard life my sister and I lived. I cry and cry and can not be able to do anything. So most of the time I like avoiding my parent's story when I am asked about them.

I am happy and thank God that now I have friends from St. Bartholomew who are paying for my school fees. What helps and encourages me most is that I have other girls and boys whose parent's have died too. I am not a lone. I get encouragement from my pastor, teachers and friends. School is good because it makes me look to the future with hope, knowing that one day I will get employed somewhere and get well with life. Thank you for paying my fees. Thank you for a new home. I will not forget what you did for me and will all the time's pray that God will bless those who are taking care of me. I will write again when I get time.

Thank you  
R. Otiya

**Mary's Garden**

The Demos have planted a vegetable garden at the home, and Mary was getting ready to plant flowers. Mary is a wonderful gardener, as I saw from their home on the grounds of Mathari Mental Hospital in Mathari slum in Nairobi. There she tended a lush vegetable and fruit garden, and flowers as well. Right now is the spring planting season in Kenya, when the soaking rains are right for new crops.

**Roseline**

*Roseline Otiya is one of our Mirembe girls, an AIDS orphan rescued by Father So-sinness and Mary Demo from the Nairobi slums. See writes about her new friends at school and no longer feels all alone.*



## Scheduled Activities

### Upcoming Events

- May 1 St. Bartholomew's "1<sup>st</sup> Saturday Morning" — 9:00 a.m.  
May 9 Mother's Day Tea after the 11:00 church service  
June 20 Father's Day Picnic & Sunday School Graduation

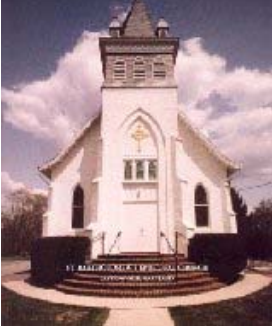
### Sunday Schedule

- 8:00 a.m. The Holy Communion  
9:15 a.m. Adult Inquirers Class  
10:10 a.m. Junior Choir Rehearsal  
11:00 a.m. The Holy Communion - first, third and fifth Sundays  
Morning Prayer - second and fourth Sundays

Sunday School Activities are held during the 11:00 service  
2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays J2A meets in the PLC (during Sunday School)  
Sunday Fellowship Coffee Hour follows both Sunday services

### Regular Weekly Schedule

- Mondays 7:30 p.m. Monday Evening Bible Study in PLC  
Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. Wednesday Morning Bible Study .  
Wednesdays 11:00 a.m. Holy Communion (with Healing Service)



St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church  
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