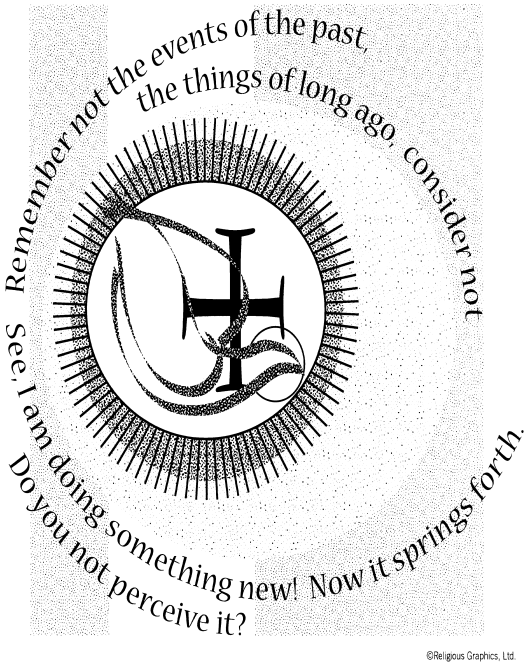

Two Kinds of Astonishment

Have any of you here ever been to Las Vegas and seen one of the magic shows put on by Siegfried and Roy, or David Copperfield? People are utterly amazed as tigers and other huge animals disappear into thin air! And the more childlike and open your spirit is, the more deeply you feel the astonishment. It's a great feeling to rub your eyes and say, "That can't be possible! I don't believe what I just saw!" Jesus evokes a similar astonishment in today's reading as the formerly disabled man picks up his mat and walks home. The crowd praises God in sheer amazement: "We have never seen anything like this!" The Scribes, however, show a jealous and bitter response:"Who does this Jesus think he is? How dare he say, 'Your sins are forgiven'"? Tragically, they are unable to allow their hearts to be lifted by the Good News. Christ healed by saying "Your sins are forgiven." So, how can we, in everyday life, show this astonishing forgiveness to the world? The Holy Father said recently, "Perhaps we have lost sight of this: In a society where the church seems legalistic and 'institutional' to many people, our most urgent challenge is to communicate the *joy* born of faith, and the experience of God's love." (Benedict XVI, Hom. at St. Patrick's Cath.) Joy is never communicated to others by anger, annoyance, or judgmental behavior. Each day, may God help us choose to look at the heart of people instead of reacting to their outward appearance or situation. A forgiving heart astonishes everyone! Let it bring Jesus into our families, at work, and in our community. *Go in peace, to love and serve our God!* (Seventh Sunday in Ord. Time – Feb. 22, 2009)

MASSES FOR THIS WEEK

Tues.	Feb. 24	9:00 am	RIP Helen Vooch	Ed & Bev Wilson
		9:00 am	RIP Larry Marshall	Maria Adamo
Wed.	Feb. 25	ASH WEDNESDAY MASSES - 9:00 a.m., 4:00 p.m., 7:00 p.m.		
		9:00 am	RIP Stella Grudeski	Ed & Muriel Malazdrewicz
		9:00 am	RIP Andre Usunier	St Vincent de Paul
Thurs.	Feb.26	9:00 am	Thanksgiving	Colina Family
Fairview Home		10:30 am	Canadian Medical Organizations	League for Life
Fri.	Feb. 27	9:00 am	Lisa Hay	Kehler Family
		12:15 pm	RIP David Serle	Joan Britton
Sat.	Feb. 28	10:00 am	Florman & Polly Merckx	Lawrence & Noreen Dubois
		7:30 pm	For All Parishioners	Fr. Dominic & Fr. Joseph
Sun.	Mar. 01	9:00 am	RIP John Clinton	Dorene & Family
		10:30 am	Terry Szmon	Your Family
		12:30 pm	RIP Louise Marginet	Ken, Karen & Steven
Souris:	Mar. 01	11:00 am	RIP Cecile Compeau	St. Augustine"s Staff
	Mar. 07	11:00 am	For All Parishioners	Fr. Dominic & Fr. Joseph

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK: Francsica Arishande, Ann Babiak, Marguerite Bicknell, Noreen Bicknell, Jeanne Boutilier, Alice Brown, Margaret Buckmire, Irene Copet, Jules Declercq, Ann Delgaty, Juliette Desroches, Diane Dougall, Jared Dryden, Justin Enns, Rosaline Fedorkie, Mervin Fleury, Nora Fleury, Mary Gaab, Megan Gardham, Marcelle Granger-Gentes, Kay Gray, Brett Lawrence, Tess McLaren, Kathleen MacDougall, Paul Malabar, Alisa Moran, Joan Napper, Tony Petrucci, Hazel Philipott, Minnie Plaseski, Emily Potvin, Monica Seitz, Coralie Serle, Gary Sproule, Jean Tarnowski, Doreen Thompson, Marion Vorspel, Rosa Weiss, Debbie Williams and all our shut-ins**.**

Men's Ecumenical Potluck Supper: Plan now to come to the Brandon Men's Ecumenical Fellowship Potluck Supper now set for Friday, Feb. 27 at 6:30 p.m. At St. Augustine's, Guest speaker, Tom Keep speaking on Greening of our own Environment.

7th Sunday of Ordinary Time
Catechism of the Catholic Church
1450-1460: Acts of the penitent and the forgiveness of sins (sacrament of reconciliation

Mon. **St. Polycarp**
(Sirach 1.1-10)
(Mark 9.14-29)

Tues. (Sirach 2.1-11)
(Mark 9.30-37)

Wed. **Ash Wednesday**
(Joel 2.12-18)
(2 Corinthians 5.20-6.2)
(Matthew 6.1-6, 16-18)

Thurs. (Deuteronomy 30.15-20)
(Luke 9.22-25)

Fri. (Isaiah 58.1-9)
(Matthew 9.14-15)

Sat. (Isaiah 58.9-14)
(Luke 5.27-32)

Sun. **1st Sunday of Lent**
(Genesis 9.8-15)
(1 Peter 3.18-22)
(Mark 1.12-15)

VOCATION VIEW: In today's Gospel, people have difficulty believing that Jesus can forgive sins. Is God asking you to forgive the sins of His people as His ordained priest? Are you called to bring Good News to the poor? Say "yes" to God's call.

THE WEEK AHEAD.....

Mon.	23	Confirmation	7:00 pm
	23	Charismatic Prayer Group	7:00 pm
Tues.	24	St. Vincent de Paul	9:30 am
	24	Legion of Mary	4:30 pm
	24	Finance Meeting	5:00 pm
	24	Revisit the Journey	7:00 pm
	24	Parish Council Meeting	7:00 pm
Wed.	25	Quest for Christ	4:30 pm
	25	RCIA	7:00 pm
	25	Knights of Columbus Executive Mtg.	7:30 pm
Thurs.	26	Serra Meeting	11:30 am
	26	Bereavement Group	1:30 pm
	26	Quest for Christ	6:30 pm
	26	Theology of the Body	7:00 pm
	26	Choir Practice	7:30 pm
Fri.	27	Mass followed by Adoration	12:15 pm
	27	Confession	4:00-4:45 pm
	27	Holy Hour	4:00 pm
	27	Benediction	5:00 pm
Sat.	28	Young Adult Gathering	5:00 pm

FINANCES: ***RECEIPTS:***

Collection for the Weekend for Sunday Feb. 15, 2009

Offertory Collection (Brandon)$7835.00

School Fund Collection $ 20.00

Restoration Collection Feb. 15, 2009 - $1769.33

Stewardship Reflection of the Week

Forgiveness is a gift from God. Freed from the paralysis of sin, the man in today's Gospel was able to stand and give witness to the power of God. How do you let sin cripple you? Are you a good steward of the gift of God's forgiveness? Are you receiving forgiveness with gratitude, cherishing it, and cultivating it in your heart, sharing it with others, and finally returning it to the Lord with increase through acts of lovingly forgiving others?

Vigil Lamp

The light burns in memory of

Allan Cousin

Brandon Area League For Life Information Alert

Japanese and American researchers have induced pluripotent stem cells from somatic skin cells, which should permanently render unnecessary the destruction of embryos to access the same pluripotent stem cells!!!

http://www.nswrtl.org.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=101&Itemid=29

Mauritian Potluck: Members of the Mauritian community are hosting a potluck lunch following the 12:30 p.m. Mass on Sunday, March 1. Everyone is cordially invited to attend this event which will be held in the parish square.

Pipe Organ Lessions: *Anyone interested in learning pipe organ techniques is invited to a session with Michael Malazdrewicz on Saturday, Feb. 28 at 11 a.m. in the church.*

From Dominic's Desk:

St. Vincent de Paul: Every once in awhile someone will tell me that we as a parish do not do very much for the poor and disadvantaged. This bothers me. I can accept when people say that we do not do enough or that we could do more. The fact of the matter is that St. Augustine's does a lot for those who are in need, both in our local community as well as abroad. Our parish has a very dedicated organization which was formed by Father Pat Morand when he was the assistant priest here at St. Augustine's in the early 1960's. The Society of St. Vincent de Paul accept financial donations through the white wooden boxes with the crosses on top which are placed at each doorway, once every month. With these financial donations plus donations of food items, clothing, household items, furniture and more, the Society gives aid to many people here in Brandon and area. I was a recipient of their generosity when I returned to Brandon in 1979 after living in Germany for four years. I did not have very much, and I had no money, so the Society of St. Vincent de Paul gave me a used bed, a sofa, a wringer wash machine and the crucifix which I now have on my office wall. I was not the only recipient. Last year the SVDP society spent $10,328.65 on such items as: groceries, lodging, transportation, household items, transient assistance and aid to immigrants. They gave out 779 food hampers and picked up and distributed furniture, clothing and other items to immigrants. Parishioners who are members of the SVDP society pack and distribute food hampers every Wednesday. Who could ever forget the mountains of household items, like bedding, pots and pans, dishes, lamps, towels, furniture and you name it, that the SVDP society collected and assembled in the parish square for the immigrants on a give-away Saturday last year? The SVDP society also does another important Catholic service; they offer masses for those in need as well as the deceased! Those of you who contribute to the SVDP society participate in their corporal works of mercy. I am thankful to Father Pat Morand, who allowed himself to be led by the Holy Spirit in establishing the SVDP society here at St. Augustine's and for all those faithful and dedicated members who serve "behind the scenes" week after week, month after month, year after year. Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew 25: 40 "Truly I tell you, just as you did this to one of the least of my brothers and sisters, you did it to me." So, if someone happens to say to you that St. Augustine's does not do much for the poor and disadvantaged, be ready with the above!

Youth Ministry:

Tween for Jesus (t4J) Nights are held for youth Grades 5 to 8 on Fridays, 6:30 – 8 PM. Come and meet new friends, have fun and a great time!

For youth Grades 9-12: ***Youth for Jesus Nights*** *are for you! Held Saturdays, 6-7:30 P.M. ..Y4J Nights features great sessions, relevant issues, friends, faith, fun, fellowship and food...Check it out!*

Feb 27, Fri, 6:30 – 8 PM – t4J Night

Feb 28, Sat, 5-8 PM – Young Adult Gathering (please bring potluck to share)

Ash Wednesday: We Catholics officially begin the forty days of the Church season referred to as Lent on Ash Wednesday, which falls on Feb. 25 this year. Ash Wednesday is a day of abstinence from meat, fasting, penance and prayer. This law of abstinence binds those who are 14 years and older**.** The law of fasting binds those from 18 to 59 years of age. We willingly deprive ourselves of food in order to express solidarity with those who have insufficient food and those who are starving. In so doing, in a small way, we save money which can then be applied to the needs of the less fortunate. We also abstain from meat and other foods such as sweets, fast and do other forms of penance to discipline our bodies, minds and spirits. Fasting opens our hearts to God and our neighbour; fasting is also a service of purification.