



# Around Our Diocese

Issue #88

*The Diocese of Northern Indiana*

February, 2008

*A Passion for the Gospel of Jesus Christ  
A Willingness to do Whatever it Takes*

*A Heart for the Lost  
A Commitment to One Another*

## A Letter from the Bishop

I seem to spend half of my life packing, unpacking, de-packing. A bishop's life is one of constant travel, primarily within the diocese, of course; but also, on occasion, well beyond. The very nature of the episcopate is itinerant, on the move, not tied to a single place. And so, by definition, I drive and fly – from the Illinois border to the Ohio border, from the Michigan line to Kokomo, from Marion to Munster, from Rensselaer to Angola, across the United States and (albeit quite rarely) over the ocean. What should I pack? How much stuff should I bring? What do I need? What can I leave behind? What's essential, and what's merely an encumbrance? Do I really need that extra shirt? Or a "back up" container of shaving cream? How about that third pair of shoes? What about all of those books? Am I really going to have time to read some, any, or all of them? (One airline check-in person, hefting my suitcase onto the conveyor belt, said, "So, Father, did you pack your rock collection?") When you travel, you have to decide what you've just *got* to have, and what you don't.

It turns out that I often "de-pack". That's not a real word, but it does describe an oft-repeated exercise. I fill my suitcase, close it, pick it up, feel its enormous weight, open the suitcase, take out that third pair of shoes, close it again, think about those books, re-open the suitcase, remove two or three volumes (leaving several behind, of course), re-close the case, pick it up again, put it down, open it once more, extract a shirt and an extra sweater, close it one last time, and carry it down to the car, all the while wondering if there's anything else I should have pulled from the case. In other words, a journey is more pleasant when you travel light. The less burdened you are, the freer you are to move.

Lent reminds us that we need to "de-pack" our bags for a spiritual journey. On Ash Wednesday, immediately before the Litany of Penitence, the priest says: "I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a

holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word." The church asks us, in other words, to open up the suitcase of our lives, take a careful look at what we find inside, and begin the hard work of removing and refilling. What weighs us down? What's unnecessary, perhaps even harmful? What, on the other hand, is essential for the journey that we take into the heart of Jesus himself? We must learn the skill of traveling light. When Jesus sent his disciples out on their first preaching mission, he urged them "to take nothing for their journey except a staff; no bread, no bag, no money in their belts; but to wear sandals and not to put on two tunics" (Mark 6:8-9). No heavy suitcase for the disciples nor, by implication, for us!

In the Litany of Penitence that follows the invitation on Ash Wednesday, we recall before God the enormous burden we carry. The Litany details the list with grim specificity: things done and left undone; our failure to love, forgive, and seek reconciliation; our self-absorption, self-indulgence, and self-pity; our obsession with acquiring more and more possessions and our negligence of what's supremely important; sins of the flesh and sins of the spirit; whatever separates us from God and separates us from other people. The burden is so heavy that we cannot free ourselves from its weight by our own power. Only Jesus can set us free: And so the Litany concludes, "Accomplish in us the work of your salvation, that we may show forth your glory in the world. By the cross and passion of your Son our Lord, bring us with all your saints to the joy of his resurrection."

The Lenten journey, after all, is a journey with Jesus to the cross and the empty tomb. We must never forget "the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith": a year-round calling, to be sure. But Lent invites us, if we've grown lax or forgotten to de-

pack, to get serious again about our journey with Jesus. Lent invites us to look at the burden of sin which we carry; to take it out of the suitcase of our lives and place it at the foot of the cross; and then to resume the journey, renewed and refreshed by prayer and reflection, by word and sacrament.

Yours in Christ,  
**+Ed**

### **Camp New Happenings Sunday**

Sunday, February 10<sup>th</sup> has been designated at Camp New Happenings Sunday in the diocese. This is a camp for the children of prisoners that will be held from August 10<sup>th</sup> through the 17<sup>th</sup>. The camp will offer a balanced program of music, arts and crafts, water activities, and worship for about thirty children. A collection will be taken on this Sunday for the work of the camp. Please give generously. Your gift, large or small, will help offer these children something incalculable: an encounter with the love of Jesus Christ. For more information, a section of the diocesan website dedicated to the camp will be debuting prior to the 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **Hymns & Prayers: A Lenten Quiet Day**

The Mary & Martha Chapter of Daughters of the King will host a Lenten Quiet Day on March 8<sup>th</sup> at the Cathedral from 10:00 AM to 1:30 PM. Please RSVP by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Please join us as we quiet ourselves to reflect and pray on old and new hymns. Box lunches are available for \$7.00 or you may bring your own. A registration form can be found on the diocesan website below the Main Menu.

### **Congratulations**

Congratulations to the Rev. Canon Paul J. Bradshaw, a priest of our diocese who works in London. Canon Bradshaw was given the Berakah Award for 2008 at the annual meeting of the North American Academy of Liturgy (NAAL) held recently in Savannah, Georgia. This prestigious award is to honor the distinguished achievement and contributions to liturgical scholarship of members of NAAL.

### **Bishop/Diocesan Calendar for February 2008**

#### February 1, 2008

7:00 PM (EST) Bishop Little addresses the C.S. Lewis Society at Taylor University in Upland, IN

#### February 2, 2008

Bishop Little attends the Consecration of the Rev. Jeffrey Lee as Bishop of Chicago

#### February 3, 2008

Visitation to St. Augustine's, Gary

#### February 5, 2008

12:00 PM (EST) Deans' Meeting

#### February 6, 2008

Visitation to Holy Family, Angola

#### February 8-9, 2008

Congregational Development Weekend with Canon Silla at the Lindenwood Retreat Center

#### February 10, 2008

Camp New Happenings Sunday

Visitation to St. John the Evangelist, Elkhart

#### February 11, 2008

Bishop Little attends the Howe Board Meeting

#### February 12, 2008

12:00 PM (EST) Ethics Team Meeting

#### February 13, 2008

11:00 AM (EST) Regional Clergy Gathering for the Fort Wayne Deanery

#### February 14-15, 2008

Bishop Little attends the Seabury-Western Seminary Board of Trustees Meeting

#### February 16, 2008

10:00 AM (EST) Diocesan Council

#### February 17, 2008

Visitation to St. George's, Berne

#### February 19, 2008

12:00 PM (EST) Diocesan Committee on Congregational Excellence

#### February 22, 2008

12:05 PM (EST) Holy Eucharist at the Cathedral

#### February 23, 2008

11:00 AM (EST) Social Outreach Committee

#### February 24, 2008

Visitation to Trinity, Logansport

#### February 26, 2008

12:00 PM (EST) Standing Committee

#### February 27, 2008

11:00 AM (EST) Regional Clergy Gathering for the South Bend & Elkhart Deaneries

*Around Our Diocese is published monthly. Send stories and/or articles by the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month to: Jon Adamson, 117 N. Lafayette Blvd., South Bend, IN 46601 or fax 574-287-7914 or e-mail to: [info@ednin.org](mailto:info@ednin.org) The editor reserves the right to edit all articles.*