

# THE ANNAGRAM AT HOME

JULY 12, 2006

SERVING: FRENCH QUARTER, BYWATER, TREME, MARIGNY, 9<sup>TH</sup> WARD AND 7<sup>TH</sup> WARD SINCE 1846  
"Come unto me all ye that are heavy laden"



## POST KATRINA REFLECTIONS ELEVEN MONTHS LATER



### The Mobile Unit Is Here!

Two weeks ago about five of us gathered at the corner of Esplanade and Marais Streets and, just like the children that we are, our small "crowd" hoped and hollered as a leviathan of an RV rolled into our parking lot! It shone like the morning sun resplendent with the Episcopal Shield on both sides. As we climbed aboard we were so pleased and impressed with the "like new" condition that it seemed a shame to take out the furnishings. IT IS PERFECT!

The first outing for the mobile unit will be this Saturday July 15<sup>th</sup>. We will be going to St. Augustine's RC Church. This church is historic and is located in the middle of the Treme. The church has deep roots and we expect a good turn out for St. Augustine's Parish Neighborhood Health Fair.

The tentative utilization will include rotations of medical doctors on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with a rotation of students and faculty from Tulane's School of Psychiatric Medicine on Wednesdays. It is a beginning. The Medical Unit will travel to the lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward on Tuesdays along with the Episcopal Diocese's Compassion RV. We will work on Thursdays at Chapel of the Holy Spirit in the Lakeview area. Wednesdays will be split between the two venues bringing mental health care. We are also trying to line up a FEMA village presence located in the St. Roch neighborhood which is about 20 blocks away from the church in an old working class neighborhood that was flooded. On Saturday's we have worked out a plan for Fr. Jim Deshotels, SJ to utilize the RV bringing care to a Latin community uptown. Fr. Deshotels is a Nurse Practitioner and is associated with the Daughters of Charity. He will also be giving us one day a week as well. So, it begins!

Again, we want to thank all of those people and churches including the Diocese of Louisiana who have made this valuable mission possible. The mission was given some notice on WWL TV yesterday morning during the morning show! We hope that the word gets out. Since that one small three min. slot we have had calls asking for help. We have also had some calls of professionals wanting to volunteer for this mission. No one really knows what the "outcomes" of this mission will be. But as for Diana Meyers and Fr. Bill we believe that this work will be bountiful and grow in purpose and usefulness. We know that being involved in this project has already altered our perception of how God works and the continuing and ACTIVE presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives and in the lives of those that surround us. AMEN AMEN!



## **A Powerful Mission: As we meet we say goodbye!**

On April 5, 2006 St. Anna's hosted its first "Inn That Number" Mission to Musicians. We have been hosting performers and poets every Wednesday night since then. We have offered a variety of services to those that join us on Wednesday evenings. Fr. Deshotels with Daughters of Charity is present with his case of medications; James of NOMC is present to talk and to work on other health issues for musicians; Diana is present for anyone seeking a health screening;

Lauren is there to with folks about permanent home ownership; Dr. Johnson is available for those with mental health issues. Yet, it is our consensus that the healing takes place in the parish hall.

Each Wednesday evening the music plays and aroma of good food permeates the air. The people come. Musicians, photographers, historians, contractors, poets, and working folks all gather at table to eat and to listen. Dr. Johnson remarked, "The healing is in there (the parish hall) more than medicine can do. I know it heals me!" Folks gather and you can see it on their faces, tired, exhausted, some frustrated, some curious, some just plain hungry, some lonely, and some just passing time. But, by the end of the evening we watch people leave relaxed, maybe energized, connected to each other. Two Wednesdays ago it was a nice night. As I locked the doors and went outside I discovered about ten people in twos and threes chatting and "passing a good time." I smiled and knew that the healing presence of God through music, fellowship, prayer, and good food was present. I was reminded of the story of the Road to Emmaus. At the end of the journey the two disciples sat with Jesus, after listening to his unfolding of scripture, they ate and were filled with much more than food. So it is with our Wednesday evenings.

However, while the music and fellowship heal it is only temporary. Perhaps one reason is that we have not taken time to expose the real hurt of the here and now. The here and now should include sadness and mourning for what has been taken from us. There here and now to be fully integrated must begin to acknowledge in a public way our hurt. It seems that we have not taken time to really mourn or to expose our fragile selves. We have, perhaps, avoided acknowledging loss. Too busy and too hurried!

Last Wednesday Night we held a Votive Mass for musicians that have died post-Katrina; in doing so we honor their memories. In doing so we hope that we begin to live in the here and now and acknowledge that somehow the music-scape is less rich, at least for now. In living in the present reality of the absence of friends, lovers, and creators we may begin to fulfill our hope of sanity and authenticity as human beings living in this present City of New Orleans. Join us in praying for the souls of the faithful departed:

Clarence "Gatemouth" Brown victim of flood and a hard life.

Barry Cowsill flood victim.

James Durant who passed before Katrina but died because of addiction.

David Jaurequi died evacuated died of a hard life.

Jim Kibodaux lost to the trials of this life.

Sheba Kimbrough evacuated died of a broken heart and pneumonia.

Kufaru Aaron Mouton died due to the stresses of this world.

Hilton Ruiz latin singer taken gravely ill in New Orleans.

Richard Theoldore aka Harry Lenz, evacuated died full of years.

Scott Thomas, lost to the stresses and trials of this life.

Lucius Weathersby church musician and organist died full of years.

Daimon Wheeler and George Johnson, both of the Pinstripe Band, both evacuated to different cities, both died the same day.

Pray for those gravely ill:

Terrell Battiste – double amputee hit by a drunk driver.

Kerwin James – resting in a coma.

When I began to collect the names of the departed I was powerfully struck by the tenderness in which people responded to my email. So many lost, so many who care about them. I began to read the lives of many of these musicians, looking them up on the internet. I was amazed and awed by what I read. I also realized that what I was reading was a history of then and the promise of now and tomorrow. The musicians that gather at St. Anna's and other venues about the city are equal contributors to the legacies that these men and women have left behind. The here and now reality is that our musicians are one community bound in rhythms, octaves, and beats. Our musicians are a spiritual community who worship the "Lord of the Dance." This church and her staff are even more dedicated to this living legacy that is grace in harmony. Come and listen to the creative spirit of God in the music!



### **St. Anna's Feast Day Year 160!**



On July 23<sup>rd</sup> St. Anna's will celebrate her "Patronal Feast Day." For those not acquainted with the phrase, St. Anna is the patron saint of our church. In days of old and according to ancient traditions our church falls under her protection and prayers. By honoring her we are honored by her prayers in heaven for us on earth. Thus she is our patron. Most all saints have a day assigned to them as a day of remembrance. That day is usually the day they died, but not always. According to the "rubrics" or rules of the church as contained in The Book of Common Prayer, "*All Sundays of the year are feasts of our Lord Jesus Christ, ... the feast of it's (the churches) patron ... may be observed on, or be transferred to, a Sunday...*" There are very few exceptions to this rule.

Such Patronal Feast Days are a celebration of the life and ministry of a congregation. They are normally a time of good food, moderate drink, music, and fun! It is a time to rejoice in our community about our community. So it will be on the 160<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of our church.

Bring a friend! We will be having some wonderful music coming from our Mission to Musicians, great food courtesy of Keith Wagner and Peg Culligan, bloody marys, and mimosa's with Casey Stuart as barkeep!

St. Anna's has not only survived the storm but we are in the process of renewal and growth. Let us celebrate our mutual lives and ministry! The festivities begin at Noon!

[Drawing top left: Anna Mercer daughter of the benefactor that build the first St. Anna's Church: Top right: A medieval painting of St. Anna mother of the Blessed Virgin Mary.]



### **The Medical Mission's Inaugural Run ! And other medical mission successes!**

After a flurry of activity in early July the Medical Unit rolled down the street on July 15<sup>th</sup>. We were invited to a neighborhood health fair held at St. Augustine's RC Church. Fr. Terry with trembling hands drove the vehicle down the narrow streets only getting stuck once and taking about 30 min. to drive eight blocks....the good Father said, "Jeez, its like driving the Queen Mary!"

When the unit arrived it was able to attract attention offering mental health, health screenings, and other medical care. During the almost eight hours that the unit was parked at St. Augustine's the Medical Unit provided almost 72 man-hours or medical aid. During that time at least 10 critical diagnosis were given with one patient being sent directly to a hospital for treatment of high blood pressure. The basic teams included St. Anna's Diana Meyers RN, Tulane School of Medicine, and Daughters of Charity.

But even before the RV arrived St. Anna's Medical Mission was achieving success. In an effort to network and bring resources to bear on our own mission Diana Meyers was contacted by "Heart to Heart" which is a large national organization offering post disaster medical care. Discussions were held about putting one of their temporary clinics at St. Anna's. However, knowing that we would soon have our own vehicle Diana Meyers arranged for the Heart to Heart unit to be located at Annunciation Church which is acting as a neighborhood center for the Broadmoore neighborhood. This has had a direct and immediate impact on health delivery systems for that part of the city that was flooded.

During the mission to musicians Fr. James Deshotels, SJ, who is a nurse practitioner, and Diana Meyers along with Dr. Jan Johnson of Tulane School of psychiatric medicine have been interviewing and assisting musicians and neighborhood folks with health issues each Wednesday evening.

In order to consistently provide a viable mobile unit St. Anna has added a new member to the staff, Mr. Aaron Jackson. Aaron, is a graduate of SUNO and also truck driving school holding a class A CDL. Aaron is an excellent addition to the staff and will increase the viability of our church in all phases of what we do. We welcome him aboard!