

The E-Matt



A weekly glimpse of God's People, God's Work
at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, Lisbon Maine

www.stmatthewslisbon.org

207-353-8453

The Rev. W. Beau Wagner, Rector

Week of Mar. 1, 2009

St. Matt's begins Lent 2009; 40 days of prayer, repentance, and finding time for God



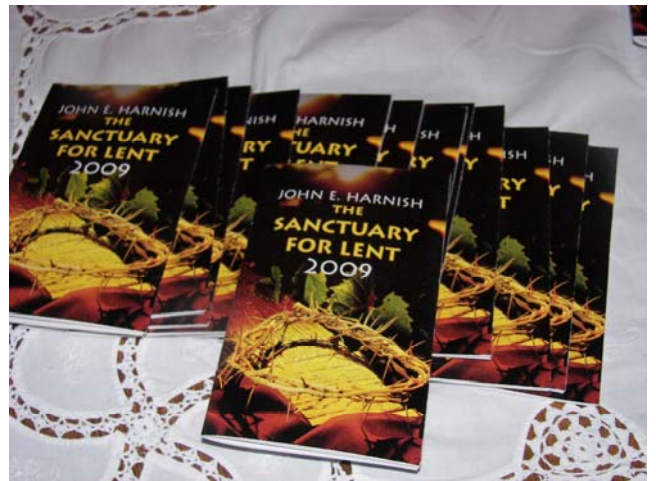
The 40 Days of Lent began with Ash Wednesday on Feb. 25. Ashes were distributed (imposed) in the form of crosses on the foreheads of those attending the three services that day.

The penitential season of Lent, which originated in the 4th Century, spans 40 weekdays. Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes the Saturday before Easter.

Lent is a time of prayer and preparation to celebrate Easter. Father Beau distributed "The Sanctuary for Lent 2009 Daily Devotional" to all St. Matthew's parishioners.

"Read along. Let us see how God will bless us in our spiritual growth if we could all get together for 40 days. We can be on the same page," said Father Beau.

Since Sundays celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, the six Sundays that occur during Lent are not counted as part of the 40 days of Lent, and are referred to as the Sundays in Lent. The number 40 is connected with many biblical events, but especially with the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness preparing for His ministry by facing the



temptations that could lead him to abandon his mission and calling. Christians today use this period of time for introspection, self examination, and repentance.

Father Beau will offer a Prayer Service and reading of the Great Litany from The Book of Common Prayer (page 148) every Friday in Lent at noon. The practice of verses read in cadence between a leader and a group of people and in procession goes back long before the time of Jesus. Litanies by the people invoked God's mercy and compassion.



Father Beau and the participants will chant the Great Litany in procession every Lenten Friday at noon. The first Litany took place on Friday, Feb. 27.



The Stations of the Cross have been hung in the hallways and Stations of the Cross prayer books are available at each station.

The altar linens were changed to purple to symbolize both the pain and suffering leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus as well as the suffering of humanity and the world under sin.

Purple is also the color of royalty, and so anticipates through the suffering and death of Jesus the coming resurrection and hope of newness that will be celebrated in the Resurrection on Easter Sunday.



St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, founded in 1906, is a vibrant growing congregation that brings together the four main threads of Anglican tradition: Anglo Catholic worship, evangelical preaching, charismatic expression and caring in action.