



RESURRECTION UNIVERSITY CATHOLIC PARISH

Land Stewardship Committee

Janus Two Heads

January, the first month of the New Year, is aptly named after Janus, one of the principal Roman gods. Janus was the porter of heaven and the guardian of gates and doors. An oddity of Janus was that in time of war he left the gates or doors open for safe passage. In times of peace, the doors were closed. Since Janus stood in the doorway he was depicted in icons and statuary as having two heads—one that looked inside and one that looked outside.



January is the close of the old and opening to the new in many respects. As we stand before the New Year, we also stand midway in the liturgical and social year for the parish. The Garden also pauses and is somnolent awaiting Spring. Lawn mowing is done more from habit than necessity. Leaves drop from deciduous trees and carpet the hammock with delightful colors that soon fade to brown. Migratory birds are poised for their return north.

January is noted for many routines of renewal. We collect our income and expenses to report taxes. We tally our gains in stocks and report intangible tax. Some people race to occupy their homes and pass through the “portals” before January 1st to gain the coveted tax exemption. In football, winners and losers are determined and honored, and the races are renewed for the next year. We also make serious and silly New Year’s Resolutions, most of which center on our self-assessed excesses or deficiencies. All of this suggests renewal, or making things new again. Would that saying renewal” made it happen. But it doesn’t. It is a journey.

Christians see themselves on a faith journey that begins spiritually with Baptism and ends with death. Along that journey we take comfort that the Christian door is attended by Christ the Savior. Unlike Janus, the door of Christ is always open, in peace and war. He stands there and bids greetings in the coming and going of our life journey. We are called to a renewal that is greater than the secular reality. We are called to look to our past, assess our present and seek a better future. In this way, our January is an arbitrary but meaningful date set as a reminder. Just as Christ came to make all things new again we can in his doorway, make things new again.

Message From the Editor

*"Do not conform yourself to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind.
so that you may judge what is God's will,. what is good, pleasing and perfect."*

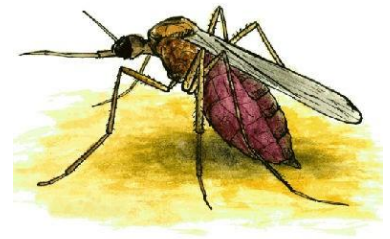
Rom. 12:2

GREEN LEAF

About the Critters 'n Things...

"Mosquitoes abound in some places on the coast, and to the dwellers. . .the impression has, no doubt, been received that the air was made of these insects."

Silvia Sunshine, 1880



Well, things are not quite as bad in Montana as in Florida and other southern states. But there is a universal truth that mosquitoes are not terribly popular with people of the world. Besides the fear of insect borne disease there is that infernal "humming" noise, especially at night. The sound is not all that unpleasant as the little creature stays in communication with the rest of its clan and announces that it has detected a prime source of carbon dioxide (you) which means blood (yours). In fact, the song of the skeeter means it is flying. When the singing stops, stand by for the bite. Hummm. "Ouch!" Slap! Thunk!

So what just died? Females (of many mosquito species) have a need to suck blood so they can reproduce. Blood (supplied by an unwilling coyote, a cow, or a three-year-old playing in the backyard) supplies protein for their eggs.

Mosquitoes (plural) and mosquito (singular) is the correct spelling for this insect. Mosquitos (Plural) and mosquito (singular) are common misspellings for the words. The derivation for the word is Spanish from "Mosca-ito or little fly. Howard Ensign Evans, another entomologist, made an interesting statement when he observed: "Floridians are too absorbed in the luxuries of their condominiums, too awed by the creations of Disney Enterprises, and too frightened by social changes in their cities to be much concerned with lowly 'bugs'".

Evans does not take umbrage with swatting mosquitoes. He says, "Swatting a mosquito is allowable, considering that mosquitoes are so well able to flood the earth with their kind. But swat it respectfully because the mosquito is a product of millions of years of evolution, and a marvelous creature. It is, equipped with its own hypodermic and as ready to sample the blood of a pauper as of a millionaire." Does the mosquito care if he dies respectfully? Mosquitoes have a role to play in nature. Some flowers are suspected of being pollinated by them, many small fish depend upon them as a food source, purple martins and other birds see them as very tasty morsels. They are tiny, but in great numbers they can add up to a substantial meal. In effect, they feed upon us and other critters feed upon them. The simple circle of life.

John Lee Williams, writing in 1837 on Mosquitoes": in Florida said ". . .the low mangrove swamps, on the southern end of the peninsula, and the low and wet ground in every part of the Territory, are more or less infested by them; and in some places, the hammocks and pine woods swarm with them. The whole Territory affords no object so unpleasant to strangers, as this little troublesome insect."

Still want to move to Florida?

DID YOU KNOW?

One of the reasons Muscovy ducks were brought to the United States several hundred years ago was to help control mosquito and bug populations. At two days old, Muscovy ducklings begin eating mosquito larvae right out of the water and continue to eat thousands of mosquitoes, flies and other insects throughout their lives.