

Love your
neighbor as
yourself

-Jesus



I want to
accustom
all the
inhabitants
...to look on me
as their brother

-Br. Charles de
Foucauld

January, 2006

To my brothers and sisters in Christ,

How much can change in a month! In my August newsletter, I wrote about the recent tropical storm displaying the power and omnipotence of God. Who would imagine that September would find the Coast in ruins?

After boarding up my home, I rode out the storm at a local junior high that was set up as a shelter. At first, nobody knew how vicious the storm was. Soon, people came pouring into the shelter, which was near East Biloxi (the hardest-hit area of the city). Some of them were nearly naked, and told harrowing tales of swimming out of their houses, through snake- and debris-filled water, and clinging to a tree for hours on end. For the first two days at the shelter, the police confided to me that the city was in chaos, with no central authority.

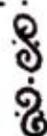
I arrived home simply curious to see if my house survived. Fortunately, I only had very minor exterior damage and no leaks. I took this as another sign that my presence in Biloxi is to be a permanent one. Indeed, being able to minister and bind wounds both in the shelter and in the months following the storm, I feel a kinship with this city and her people.

Soon after the storm, I was invited to speak at the Newman Center at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. The students there were already organizing a relief effort. Imagine my gratitude when, in early November, five of them drove a U-Haul truck full of supplies all the way to my house! They drove all through the night, distributed their goods and toured the disaster area, and then drove home—all in one weekend! My deepest thanks and prayers go out to Katie, Tara, Jane, Amanda, Sarah, Matt, and everyone at UW Madison who made their trip a possibility. Instead of a meditation, I am including a page of photos that we took during their visit.

For now, I am blessed to still have my job at the Beau Rivage casino, and am working full-time. We are planning to reopen on the one-year anniversary of Katrina.

Again, thank you for your prayers, and know that Biloxi will rise again!

Please send all
correspondence to: Matthew Manint
325 Hiller Dr.
Biloxi, MS 39531



Prayers are needed and appreciated!
(no postal fee required)



Mass with the Bishop in St. Michael's on the beach. Notice the lower level of glass is gone from the surge.



The UW students at the ruined Biloxi-Ocean Springs bridge (L to R: Jane, Amanda, Tara, Sarah, Matt, Katie)



All of us in the emptied truck they drove down (Back, L to R: Matthew, Jane, Amanda, Katie. Front: Tara, Sarah, Matt)



The gutted remains of Treasure Bay Casino, beached far from its original spot.