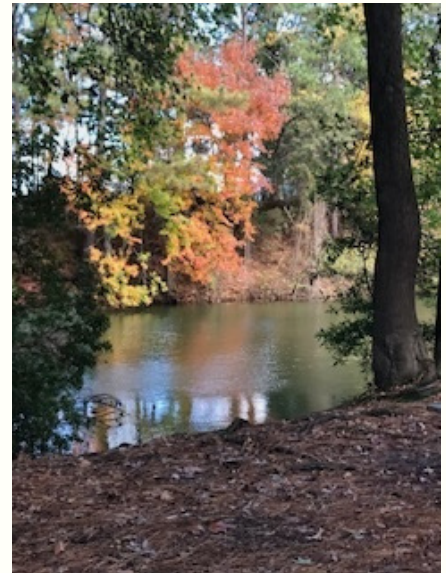


THE SAINT TIM'S TIMES



A Day in the Life: River Park North

by *Eddie Vincent*

Hello, I've been asked to share a day at the park with you. We will tour in our minds River Park North and cover my responsibilities in the park. River Park North has many fun, entertaining and educational opportunities for children and adults alike. The park consists of 324 acres with 6 ponds stocked with catfish during the spring and summer months (and anything else that is in the Tar River), six distinct walking trails, primitive campsites, a platform campsite, picnic shelters, kayaking, pedal boats and a Nature Center with 6,000 gallon fish aquarium, a touch turtle tank, snake exhibits, shell exhibit and a science STEAM lab with interactive adventures for children.

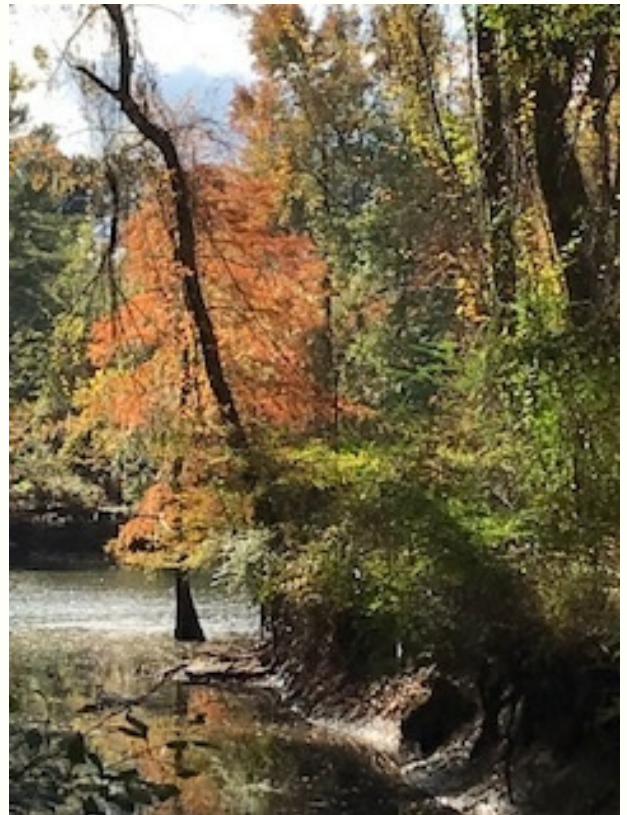
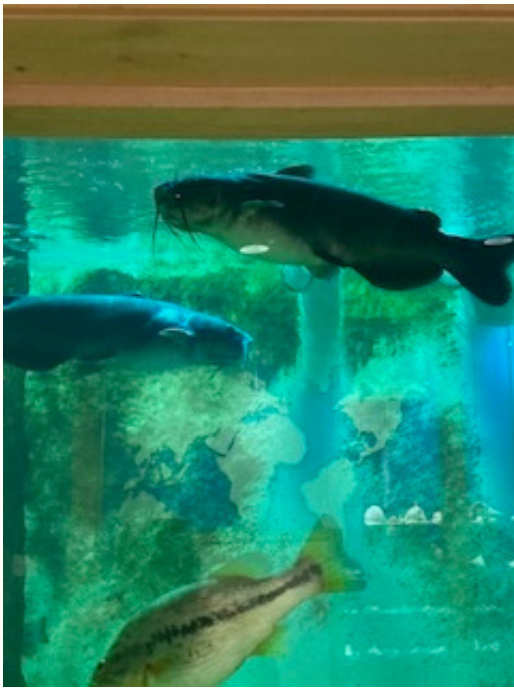
The days I work usually start around 6:00 AM. I get the Nature Center open and the turtles into their tank and fed if needed. After this, I will patrol the park and make sure the trails are open and clear of fallen limbs and debris. A big part of my shift is greeting and talking to the patrons in the nature center and out in the park during subsequent patrols that are made often during each shift. I share information about programs and opportunities the park offers during the season.

The spring is an especially fun time because we have:

- families of geese that give birth to ducklings and patrol in straight lines all over the park
- the sounds of the birds singing
- the beautiful blue herons flying over the top of the ponds hoping for a morsel of fish swimming too close to the surface
- a family of ospreys that dive down and retrieve fish to feed their newborn chicks nestled in their homes atop the electrical posts that run through the park

This my friends is a great way to start your day and not a bad part time gig for an old man, if I might say so myself.

1 See you at the Park!



Serving God by Serving Others

by Jonathon Sergeant

In 2008, as part of the vestry of my local parish, St. Mary's Episcopal Church, I agreed to chair the outreach commission for the church. In the course of being the outreach chairman, I began to study various books and articles concerning outreach which included a book by the CEO of World Vision entitled, "The Hole in the Gospel." Through this book and in other ways, I felt that God was calling me to help address the causes of poverty, illness, and the poor in the world.

Having absolutely no experience in conducting an international mission, I really didn't know where to start. Luckily, about the same time, our Diocese of East Carolina established a companion relationship with the Diocese of the Dominican Republic, and I felt this was a sign to focus our mission efforts in the Dominican Republic. After communicating with the Diocese of the Dominican Republic, we were "assigned" to work with a small parish in the town of Mosovi in the northern part of the country.

Upon our first arrival in the Village of Mosovi, the initial response of the people was extremely warm and gracious. Reflecting back on that initial visit, it is now very apparent that while they were appreciative of our presence, they did not perceive our efforts as creating any real change in their community, and they considered us to be somewhat of a novelty at the time.



...continued

We naturally assumed that building and labor were a necessary part of mission work and that our free labor would be appreciated and supported by the people. However, the exact opposite reaction quickly took place. What we didn't know at the time was that unemployment in the Dominican Republic was near seventy percent, and the lack of paid work was seriously hurting the welfare and future of the community. For us, as rich Americans in their village, to do physical labor for free was directly perceived as taking a paid job from the local work force. We also discovered that the average daily wage in the area was less than ten US dollars per day. With this information, we quickly changed our plans and began hiring local labor to work on the church building. This simple change greatly increased our goodwill in the community, resulted in a direct benefit to the community members, and helped us to not get heat stroke. The common good of all was served, but only after the perspectives of the people were given priority.

Over time our group came to realize that the purpose of our visits was really about establishing continuing and deep relationships with the community. We started spending less time working on physical changes to the community and more time listening to their feelings and concerns. In addition, we abandoned using detailed agendas for our time in the village in favor of allowing free time with the people and letting God through the spirit guide us to where in the village that we were needed the most. Over the course of several years, we began to stand in solidarity with the community in that they were no longer the objects of our mission. Only after establishing these deep relationships were we able to affect real transformative change by drilling a well on the church property and providing clean water to the entire community. When the people of Mosovi saw that we were committed to returning over and over to their community and in listening to their perspectives, they began to engage us with invitations into their homes, allowing us to celebrate their birthdays and happy events with them, and even praying and holding hands with one of them as they were dying. They knew our convictions and our love for them and for Christ through our actions more than our words.

While we did experience successes and joy in this mission project, the pandemic of 2020 essentially closed the country to visitors and has prevented us from returning to Mosovi. In summary, this project allowed us to identify that sweet spot where our joy is connected with an activity that heals the world. For me, that "sweet spot" will always be the village of Mosovi in the Dominican Republic.





Caring for Our Own

by Jamie Kirby

In 2017 a committee was formed to evaluate the Memorial Garden at St. Timothy's and consider redesign options to provide additional space and improve the appearance of the area. Among the goals were to ensure that family members could be interred in one place and that they could continue the tradition of visiting loved ones after death. As a member of that committee, I felt a responsibility to help maintain the garden after the new design was completed. The main needs were watering, fertilizing, weeding, pruning, and mulching.

Several members of the St. Timothy's family volunteered to help with the maintenance work. Tommy Tucker, who was also on the committee, created and managed the watering system in the garden and helped with the other jobs as well. My husband Ed has been a big help especially with the mulching and weeding. Linda Lane and Debbie Strickland offered to help and have been invaluable, especially with pruning and weeding.

The garden is an important visual aspect of the approach to our church office. We hope that the open design is inviting to people who want to walk inside the space. Each of us who work to maintain the garden to keep it neat and attractive are dedicated to enhancing this part of our campus. Adding potted plants for seasonal color in the fall makes it a special feature during the Lobster Fair. When the limelight hydrangeas and the red camelias bloom seasonally, the garden really shows off its beauty. Each of us who work there do it because we love our church family and we care about those who have loved ones interred in the garden.