

Mommy, No Light in the Kitchen

Mastic Point residents are a resilient bunch. When the electricity goes off, the water goes off and the telephones go off as well. During the summer months, power outages are a daily occurrence and for many of our elderly parishioners and residents a night's sleep without a fan is nothing short of a nightmare. To their credit though, BEC is in the miracle working business here in North Andros. The skill of the plant operators and mechanics is of the highest order. The old machines here at our plant are long overdue for replacement. The cost of repair and maintenance, I am sure, greatly exceeds the payback options on setting up new machines here. I am lead to understand that islands like Abaco have a 24 MW plant, while in North Andros our peak load is only 1.8 MW. In Central Andros it is even less at about 1 MW. So for the whole of North and Central Andros we demand at most 3 MW. Our carbon footprint is minute. There are two projects currently under construction here in North Andros and when they are completed and require an electrical hookup, our plant just won't be big enough to support their additional loading.

So what can we do? In Curacao, Mann Diesel (the suppliers of the slow speed engines for the Abaco plant) in conjunction with a wind turbine manufacturer is pioneering a hybrid wind-diesel system for that West Indian country. In the energy world, the research of wind-diesel systems is extensive and the technology is proven. Wind energy generation is clean and non-polluting but it is uncertain and variable. To smooth out the supply side of the supply/demand equation, electrical suppliers usually install diesel generators. A diesel has a device called a governor which is a dynamic component on the engine that regulates fuel flow and causes the engine to spin faster or slower as required. If you were to take a drive past the Forfar Field Research Station in Stafford Creek you would see a wind turbine installed on a tower spinning merrily in the breeze just about every day. According to staff at Forfar, a university from the USA came and set up the turbine and a solar panel array in order to carry out research right here in Andros.

According to energy sites on the internet you can get a 1.5 MW GE wind turbine installed for about \$3 million. The latest push in wind energy development is offshore wind turbine installations and to be honest the Bahamas, with its chain of low lying islands, in my opinion, is ideally situated in the Atlantic Ocean to adopt this technology.

The Oil Companies of course are in the business of selling oil and for our geography the current arrangement that BEC uses with its small satellite power stations is the best. The problem is that the price of diesel has more than doubled making it more and more expensive to operate these plants. Wind technology doesn't eliminate the usage of fossil fuel it simply helps to prolong the lifespan of the engines in the power plant. The wear and tear on the engine is reduced. The engines wouldn't have to be run at 100% power to maintain the load. It's a win win situation for the environment, the consumer, BEC and the oil supplier.

As a student of Energy and the Environment (my career choice before entering the priesthood), if it were up to me, I would use one of our smaller communities as a test case for the success of a wind-diesel plant. They can start with North Andros, we're only pulling 1.8 MW.

Welcome from Fr. Shazz A. Turnquest

Dear Friends,



Fr. Turnquest was ordained to the sacred priesthood November 2004 and has served as Priest-in-Charge of St. Margaret's and St. Mary Magdalene (North Andros) since June 2007.

Thank you for your continued support of our newsletter. This month we ask you to keep our Diocese in prayer, as we begin our Synod gathering on October 19, 2009. We continue to pray for our new Bishop, Laish Boyd, who will be presiding and the members of the clergy and laity, who will participate.

As October is youth month, and we also take time to pause and pray for the youth of our nation. We pray that they will receive proper guidance and instruction, which will lead to them becoming productive citizens of our Nation. This month our Parish will hold the 1st Annual Mildred Munnings Young Women of Excellence Awards Ceremony which will honor the achievements of the members of our Girls' Brigade Company. We are excited about the work of this youth ministry within our Church (and indeed wider Community) and we also take this opportunity to pray for its leaders and members.

All Hail the Mighty Spud

Since relocating to Andros and taking up 'back-yard' gardening several months ago, I have become very interested in our Government's plans for the Agricultural sector. I read, with interest, an article by Chester Robards in the Nassau Tribune, where he shares vital statistics about agriculture (and animal husbandry) in the Bahamas. It read: *"The Department of Agriculture's senior marketing manager yesterday said he has identified 30 crops that can be sustainably developed by the Bahamas, while pegging this country's food bill at \$580 million. Leslie Minns told the Bahamas Agro Tourism Symposium that the Bahamas began to lose its agricultural producers back in 1978, and argued that 'beefing up' the farming industry was the only way to prevent the loss of substantial foreign exchange reserves on imported food. Mr Minns said the Bahamas, per annum, imports 16 million pounds of swine at a cost of \$20 million; four million pounds of mutton at \$6.7 million; and 1.3 million pounds of beef costing \$1.7 million. Yet Bahamian farmers produce 0.36 million pounds of pork at a value of \$0.8 million; 0.07 million pounds of mutton valued at \$0.1 million; and .01 million pounds of beef valued at \$0.06 million. Mr Minns argued that the Bahamas, if it increased the land available for farming, could produce 30 crops for local consumption and possible export. He identified onion, Irish potatoes, lettuce, tomato, carrot, cabbage, sweet pepper, hot pepper, pigeon peas and cooking thyme as the top 10 crops out of the 30 suggested for farming."*

While reading his article, my mind drifted on the great Irish depression- when the potato crop failed and more than half a million people starved to death. Over a million immigrated to Canada and the USA to escape, carrying all manner of diseases with them due to malnutrition. The mighty potato is one of the few foods that contain all of the necessary vitamins and minerals required to sustain human health. It's no wonder that starvation overcame the people of Ireland when the potato crop failed, as they couldn't get the same nutrients from other crops, like cabbage, alone. Potato is one of our staple foods. We use it in mashed potato, potato salad, French fries, scalloped potato, hash browns and the list goes on and on. The only challenge with growing potatoes here in the Bahamas is that it is very labour intensive and can only be grown really in the winter months. But if we were to plan ahead and take on the challenge of becoming self sufficient in production of at least one produce (like the potato), we may save ourselves from a fate similar to the Irish.

Words of Wisdom

I came across a little book that is so powerful. Short books are, in my opinion, more effective, as they get the message across quickly and to the point. The title of the book is **'The Management Methods of Jesus: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Business'** by Bob Briner. For the next few newsletters one of the articles will be designated to pearls from this very helpful resource.

'Chapter 1: Have a Plan'

'It is amazing how few companies have a master plan by which they chart their course and measure their progress. Even fewer individuals have constructed a plan for their lives with short-term, intermediate, and long-range goals. This is a fundamental mistake. Jesus had a plan and adhered to it unflinchingly. This is a major reason for his success. He knew where he was going, and he went there. Nothing deterred him. Knowing that the culmination of his plan had to be accomplished in Jerusalem, and even knowing that the ultimate sacrifice would be required of him there, he set his face like a flint for Jerusalem, say the Scriptures (Isa 50:7). Jesus was resolute. Whatever the consequences, he would go to Jerusalem and carry out his plan. A fundamental management principle then, both for individuals and organizations, is to have a plan to which you are deeply committed, and then to set out with determination to accomplish it. Without a plan, you have nowhere to go, nothing toward which to direct your energies. Without a plan, you can only react to circumstances. A plan puts you in charge of your energies and activities. You become proactive, not reactive.'