



# the Chalice

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## **PRESIDENT'S COLUMN** By Gretchen S

Blessings to all.

I hope that everyone enjoys a Springtime filled with God's love.

I regularly attend an AA womens' group that has visitors from a nearby treatment center. One of the things that I find remarkable is how quickly the sickest women regain a healthful color and appearance once alcohol is removed from their daily consumption.

In the controlled environment of a treatment center the women regain their physical health, but as we in recovery know, true treatment is that of the soul.

Sometimes during the course of the meeting an oldtimer will explain a topic for the newcomer in a way that stays with me.

A few weeks ago, our topic of the day was gratitude. As we went around the room, we heard the usual responses until we reached a certain oldtimer who is a bit of a pip. This woman can usually hold the rooms' attention

with her sense of dramatic flair. "Well", she sniffed, "I wasn't thankful for anything when I first got here. I had the right sponsor though, so for those of you who don't know about gratitude yet, this is what I was told. "

"If you have nothing to be grateful for, make a list of the things you would be really pissed off if you lost." Heads were nodding around the room, and I saw the mental calculations start for many gratitude lists.

This why we so need the fellowship of the heart. To turn one's mind from the emptiness of addiction to a place where blessings can be understood is a powerful thing. God works though us in mysterious ways. One of the ways we treat our souls is a gratitude list. Which, if you think about it, is a step towards a prayerful life.

And the funny thing is that I have a lot more to be grateful for when my perception changes. It's about perspective. Alcoholism is a disease of distorted perception. Prayer is a remedy. It's about changing our thoughts, and it's about God's love.

In Christ's Love,  
Gretchen



In this Easter Season as we await the great festival of Pentecost, so often we hear of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. The Gifts are very important, but so often we forget of the Fruits of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul writes to the Galatians (5:22-23): "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law."

I would like to focus on just two fruits: peace and joy. Our faith in Jesus Christ should bring us peace and joy. Our participation of the sacraments brings us peace and joy. We need to share our faith through peace and joy.

This does not mean that we will be always skipping down the aisle every day or that we will 'be happy' in the world's version of things, but rather we will have that inner strength the world cannot take away.

True peace is that inner strength coming from the Lord's graces that allows us to go forward amidst the world's storms and not be afraid.

True joy comes from knowing that our successes are not our own, but just a share in working with the Lord's plans. True joy comes from knowing that we are cooperating with the larger plan of salvation and our personal sufferings truly have an effect.

Live all the Fruits of the Holy Spirit, but especially at this time, live peace and joy.



**Cleveland Retreat** Registration for the 2016 Annual Retreat (formerly called Convention) appears in this edition. I am looking forward to the presentation regarding Sister Ignatia – it's my personal belief that none of us would be reading The Chalice had AA never been formed. Further, I don't think AA would have been successful without the input from Sister Ignatia. In addition, we look forward to the possibility of seeing Dr. Bob's House in Akron as part of this year's retreat. Having been there, and to his grave, I can assure you the experience will touch you deeply.

**Election** Bio information for our two nominees is in this edition. Both Bruce and Vince currently serve on the Board. The election will be held at the Retreat in Cleveland; by-laws do not permit absentee ballots. The nominee with the majority vote will be President and the runner up winner will be Vice President. The Board will accept floor nominations for seats to the Board of Directors at the Retreat. If you're interested in becoming a member of the Board of Directors contact Jim B. or myself for information regarding qualifications and duties.

**Dues** Some of you have forgotten to pay your annual dues. You can pay via the website or by using the mail in form in this issue. Ask in your meetings if dues paying members are not receiving their Chalice and let me know ASAP. We understand that life in sobriety can be financially difficult at times. If this is your reality, let Jim B.

Editor's Note, (cont. from pg. 2)

or I know ASAP. Shortly, we will begin dropping non-paying individuals from mailing lists as it's only fair to those who pay their dues. Thank you to those who have paid.

**Fr. Doug** The second installment of Father's first person experience with God's Mercy appears in this issue. Dear Calix Chaplains, feel free to send to me your experiences for publication.

## SECOND CHANCES AND NEW BEGINNINGS

*Fr. Douglas McKay OFS, Chaplain, Grey's  
Ferry (Philadelphia)*

Born in Ireland, Mary Ryan came for the Sacrament of Reconciliation in her wheelchair, saying, "Oh God of second chances and new beginnings, here I am again." With her Irish eyes smiling, she continued, "Father, I don't know why the good Lord puts up with the likes of me."

"He loves you, Mary, that's why!" I said.

"He *must* love me to put up with the likes of me."

In this Calix article, I write the story about God's love putting up with Stanley J who took to heart the Lord's everlasting mercy for second chances and new beginnings.

Several years ago, separated from his wife and family, Stanley asked if he could live in our Ministry House to help him overcome drug addiction. After approval from our Board of Directors, I answered: "Ok, Stan, you can live in Our House, but you must attend the weekly Calix gatherings, come to our Mass, and meet me for spiritual direction."

"I will, Father."

"And promise me, Stan, that you won't bring the devil into our recovery home by using drugs again."

"I promise, Father; I'm sick of Satan's poison," he said. Then he rubbed his swollen belly.

Taking a Miraculous Medal, I placed it over him, saying "Welcome to Our House!"

He did well with us for several months. Like most addicts, however, when he felt better, he began using again. The red flags were flying: missing Calix meetings, skipping spiritual direction, and not wearing his medal—a dead 'giveaway'. I discovered that he was conniving, lying, and hanging on corners with other addicts.

Finally, I sat down with him saying, "Stanley, you have to go!"

"I know, Father, I'm sorry." Then a tear rolled down his face.

I got a real sense of how God felt when He expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden.

It was heart wrenching!

Some months after he left us, Stanley got clean again and resumed attending Calix meetings. Eventually he asked, "Father, can this prodigal son come home?"

Sensing his sorrow and presuming that the Board of Directors would agree, I said, "Of course!" As I hugged my friend, he sobbed and trembled. Holding him tightly, I got chills, 'God Bumps,' and felt Our Father's unconditional love.

After a long embrace, he said, "From now on, Father Doug, I'm Stanley 'Drugless.' I mean it this time. For too long I kept 'one foot in the grave and one foot on a banana peel.' No more drugs!"

Second Chances, (cont. from pg. 3)

“Show me, Stanley, don’t tell me.”

Then I placed another medal around his neck. He kissed it, blessed himself, and wore it outside his shirt for all to see. He called himself the ‘Patroller of the Medal.’

“Where’s your medal?” he would ask other recovering residents. “If you don’t have one, get one from Father, and the sooner the better.” Stanley had many God-giving talents. He played the guitar and sang Country Western songs. He composed and sang about ‘Crack’ houses. Boy, did he make us laugh! He was an automobile mechanic and licensed to drive tractor trailers. With the right tools and materials, he could even build a mansion.

One day, he was repairing the skylight in the ARC, our Addiction Resource Center. With his whole being radiating in the sunlight, he said, “I’ve seen the light!”

“You mean the Bud Lite?” I asked.

“No Father, get with the program. I mean the Christ Light!”

We even got a picture of his brilliant image that we posted on our Calix bulletin board.

Not long after the glorious scene, Stanley ‘picked up’ the street drugs again and left Our House.

We all felt bad, but I knew he felt worse.

Often I saw him on street corners copping drugs. One day I came across him resembling an Auschwitz survivor. I picked him up for a ‘Take Out’ breakfast. We parked on Oakford Street where we had both grown up. Drinking Dunkin’ Donuts coffee, he said, “I can’t believe I’m back in my misery. Drugs are killing me. I don’t understand, Father, why I do what I hate?”

I quoted to him the popular section of

Romans 7, “For I do not do the good I want, but I do the evil I do not want.... Miserable one that I am! Who will deliver me...? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.”

“Yeah.... I see the truth now.... I fell because I took my eyes off Jesus and made drugs my Lord,” he said. Then he bit into his egg, bacon, and croissant sandwich.

“Well, Stan, put your eyes back on our Lord.... It’s the bounce that counts.”

Determined to get clean and sober minded, he began living with his beloved sister, ReRe, in New Jersey. By so doing he removed himself from temptation. He did well until he visited Grays Ferry. Then, at first, one of the street dealers offered him free drugs. With temptation overwhelming him, he took them. Sadly, after months on the streets, Stanley overdosed.

At the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania, he was unconscious when I visited him. Believing that he was near death, I prayed the Prayers for the Dying and blessed him with the Matt Talbot relic. Suddenly, he opened his eyes, recognized me, and then drifted back into unconsciousness.

To my surprise, he was soon released from the hospital. Again he wanted to return to Our House. “Why not live with ReRe?” I asked. “She’s family.”

“Because I want to go to daily Mass, be with the guys, and be with you, too, Father. Besides, I need to put my life back in order. I thought I was going to die this time.”

“Stanley, you are going to die, and you have received another second chance.” I rubbed his swollen stomach “By His mercy, when your last chance comes, just take His outstretched hand and go home.”

Second Chances (cont. on pg. 5)

Second Chances, (cont. from pg. 4)

Back at Our House, in his sick bed, he wore his Miraculous Medal and clung to his rosary. Our recovering residents cared for his personal needs. God bless them! Growing worse, he was placed in a nursing home.

On Thursday, January 7, 2016, ReRe called and told me that Stanley was in Chestnut Hill Hospital. With my busy schedule, I planned to visit him that Saturday. On Friday, after our morning Mass, I felt compelled to go right away.

On entering his hospital room, I knew that he wasn't meant long for this world. ReRe sat crying at her brother's side. He was nailed to his death bed, moaning, groaning, squirming. With bloodshot eyes, he gasped for breath revealing his black vaulted mouth and parched stony tongue. In my heart, I could hear Jesus crying out: "Stanley, for you, I thirst!"

"Jesus, mercy! Mary, help!" I prayed in my heart.

After hugging ReRe, I placed the Blessed Sacrament on his chest and prayed the Prayers for the Dying. When I finished the Sacred Rite, I whispered, "Take His outstretched hand, Stan, and go home."

He nodded slightly. Then I recited the short form of the Divine Mercy Chaplet, blessed him with the Matt Talbot relic, and prayed three times, "Oh Mary conceived without sin, pray for him who has recourse to you."

Kissing him on the forehead, I said, "I love you, Stanley."

When I returned to Grays Ferry, his brother Danny called me saying, "Stanley went home around the three o'clock hour." (A good Friday, January 8, 2016. Sixty-two years old.)

"Amen! Alleluia!" I responded with joy and

sorrow.

The day before the funeral, I finished reading the *Doves of Galilee*, a book about the Twelve Apostles. The author, Vincent Iezzi, OFS, symbolized the deaths of the apostles by using images of doves ascending to heaven for their new and eternal home.

The next day at Stanley's viewing, I stood in amazement when I saw inside the blue lining casket images of pure white ascending doves and these inscribed words: "*Going Home.*"

Taking it all to heart, I thought: *Is it odd, or is it God?*

Before the closing of the coffin, ReRe placed into her dear brother's right hand, the Miraculous Medal—his passport for *Going Home.*

"Eternal rest grant unto Stanley, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him."

There's a story about a monk who was hoeing his garden. A woman interrupted him, pointed her bony finger through the iron gates, and asked, "Father Monk, what do you do in there all day long?"

The holy man stood up straight, wiped his sweaty brow, and answered, "Well, good woman, we fall down, and we get up; we fall down, and we get up."

Like our beloved Stanley J, no matter how many times we fall down, fall down into sin, then we just get up, get up into the grace of the Lord's everlasting mercy for second chances and new beginnings.

Father Douglas McKay, OFS  
Chaplain, Grays Ferry Unit

## Nominated for President/Vice President

### Biography Vince L.



Vince L joined Calix in the summer of 2011. Each week he would drive from Delaware to Gray's Ferry in Philadelphia bringing with him a cadre of people in recovery who had an interest in a Catholic supplement to the Twelve Steps. He approached the bishop of the Diocese of Wilmington for approval of a Delaware unit and held the first Calix meeting in on May 25, 2012.

Returning to active weekly participation in the Church in West Chester, PA in 1988 he began a new journey into his Catholic roots. He found devotion to perpetual adoration a mainstay in his life and recently finished a twelve year commitment of one hour a week. In 1992 he joined as a volunteer the Missionaries of Charity and discerned in the next few years that the priesthood was not his vocation – rather his vocation was to the married life. He is active in pre-cana for the diocese with his wife Becky.

He remains active in recovery programs, primarily AA while growing the apostolate of Calix for those interested in finding the cup that sanctifies. Currently, he is working a few Spanish speaking AA members who are attempting to start a Spanish Calix unit in the Diocese. A long time member of AA contacted him in April 2016 to start a second Calix unit in Northern DE.

He looks forward to serving the Society as role as either President or Vice-President. He will focus on updating the website and national outreach to new units.



## Bruce G., Northern Virginia

Bruce is a “cradle Catholic” who abandoned the practice of the Faith when he entered the Army as a teenager in 1979. He returned to the Faith in order to marry his wife, Mary Anne in 1995, and received the Sacrament of Confirmation as an adult at the age of 33. Bruce marks his full return to the Catholic Church with a confession he made in December 1999, his first after a more than 20-year hiatus.

Bruce's faith journey continued with his entry into the recovery rooms in August 2011. He joined Calix in April 2012, after seeing a reference to the society in Father Emmerich Vogt's 12-Step Review. He attended his first Calix meeting in York, PA that same year. Bruce and his sponsor participated in the inaugural meeting of the Ellicott City, Maryland Calix unit on February 16, 2013 at the Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church rectory. Father John Rapisarda presided as chaplain, and began the meeting by praying the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, a practice that continued with each subsequent meeting.

After a year participating in regular meetings with Ellicott City, Bruce and two other men founded a new “Northern Virginia (NoVA)” unit at Loudoun Club 12 in Leesburg, VA on January 11, 2014. Loudoun Club 12 is a private, non-profit organization devoted to the recovery of alcoholics and drug addicts and their families that hosts meetings and social events for AA, NA, Al-Anon, Alateen, ACA and other 12-Step groups. The Calix NoVA unit continues to meet at Club 12, and it opens its meetings with The Chaplet. It also continues to attract new members and has spawned a second meeting within the Diocese of Arlington at the Unity Club in Falls Church, VA. In October 2014, Father Michael R. Duesterhaus, from the Arlington Diocese became the Calix Society Chaplain.

Last year, the Ellicott City and NoVA units

Bruce (cont. on pg. 7)

Bruce, (cont. from pg. 6)

co-hosted the 59th Annual Calix Convention and Retreat at Mount St. Mary's University in Emmitsburg, MD. Originally involved in program planning, Bruce assumed responsibility for chairing the convention after the untimely and unexpected death of his close friend James F. O'Keefe. Bruce also succeeded Jim as a member of the Calix Board of Directors.

At the request of the Board, Bruce currently serves as Calix' Vice President, completing Marlene K's two-year term. He is actively working with other Board members on revamping the Calix Society website. He is also a periodic contributor to The Chalice.

**The Calix Society**

Registration Information  
59th Annual Calix Retreat  
Cleveland, Ohio

**Friday,  
September 16 to  
Sunday,  
September 18,  
2016**

The Retreat is being held at the Jesuit Retreat House in Parma, Ohio which is approx. 20 minutes south of Cleveland  
<http://www.jrh-cleveland.org/>

- ❖ Registration fee is \$200 for the full 3-day event
- ❖ Please note all rooms are **single** person occupancy
- ❖ Preliminary agenda includes a trip to Dr. Bob's house in Akron, a banquet dinner, and talk on Sr. Ignatia. More details *coming soon!*

There are two ways to register:

1. Fill out a printed copy of this form and send it to The Calix Society, P.O. Box 9085, St. Paul, MN 55109 along with a check or money order made payable to **The Calix Society**
2. Download the form at [www.calixsociety.org](http://www.calixsociety.org) under the "resources" tab. Fill out the form and email it as an attachment to [Calix\\_Convention@yahoo.com](mailto:Calix_Convention@yahoo.com). Then go to the "store" tab and use PayPal to send your payment.

**Registration Form**

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State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

I am interested in visiting Dr. Bob's house      Yes    No  
I require handicapped access                              Yes    No  
I have special dietary requests                              Yes    No

If yes, please circle, if appropriate, or explain below:  
gluten-free                      vegetarian                      vegan

Further questions? Please contact:  
Mary S. at (216) 287-7291 or email [Calix\\_Convention@yahoo.com](mailto:Calix_Convention@yahoo.com)

NEW! Matt Talbot Prayer/Relic Card. Color cards contain prayer for Matt's canonization, prayer asking for Matt's intercession and a piece of relic cloth that was touched to a 1st Class relic making it a 3rd class.	\$1.00 ea
NEW! Audio Version of Recovery meditations on the Stations of the Cross by Msgr. Harrington and narrated by Gerard King**	\$6.00 Ppd
Calix and the Twelve Steps by Fr. Arnold Luger ** SPANISH EDITION **	\$9.00 Ppd
Calix, What and Why ** SPANISH EDITION **	\$1.00 ea
Matt Talbot sculpture See flyer under "resources". Send an email to <a href="mailto:help@philly-calix.com">help@philly-calix.com</a> before ordering to arrange for local pickup in Philadelphia and save the shipping cost.	\$75.00 Ppd
Matt Talbot sculptures for the UK. Due to shipping costs we need to add \$10 US to the cost.	\$85.00 Ppd
Calix Banner - with pole and rope to hang it	\$50.00 Ppd
Calix Banner - without pole and rope	\$40.00 Ppd
Sister Ignatia DVD. Documentary on the life of Sr. Ignatia and her role in early AA	\$19.00 Ppd
Recovery Meditation On The Stations of The Cross by Msgr. Harrington. Great resource for your meetings during Lent!	\$5.00 Ppd
Heaven's Homecoming by Fr. Douglas McKay (Grays Ferry Spiritual Guide) Note that the Kindle version is now available at amazon.com. Use the link from the Calix homepage to get to Amazon and then look at "Kindle Books"	\$13.00 Ppd
Calix and the Twelve Steps by Fr. Arnold Luger ** NOTE ** There is also a Kindle version of this book available at Amazon.com. Go to the Calix homepage and click on the Amazon banner to purchase for \$5.99!	\$10.00 Ppd
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By The Grace of God by Fr. Francis Canavan	\$11.00 Ppd
The Soul of Sponsorship (From letters between Bill W. and Fr. Dowling) by Robert Fitzgerald, S.J.	\$14.00 Ppd
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A 12-Step Approach to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius (52 Meditations, & their relation to the 12 steps) by James Harbaugh, S.J.	\$20.00 Ppd
Let the Oppressed Go Free by Cardinal Justin Rigali	\$6.00 Ppd
12-Step Review (Set) edited by Fr. Emmerich Vogt	\$15.00 Ppd
The 12 Steps and Catholic Spirituality by Fr. Leo Dolan	\$1.00 ea.
Introduction to Calix Packet	\$1.75 ea.
A Word for the Problem Drinker	\$0.40 ea
Calix, What and Why	\$0.30 ea
How it Works-Spiritually	\$0.30 ea
Information for Chaplains	\$0.30 ea
Matt Talbot Medals	\$0.80 ea
Information for New Units	\$0.30 ea
Calix Induction Ceremony	\$0.30 ea
Calix Pin (Members Only!)	\$5.00 ea

**Calix Society**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**International Headquarters**

**P.O. Box 9085**

**(800) 398-0524**

**St. Paul, MN 55109**

**secretary@calixsociety.org**

**Membership Application**

**THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CALIX**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Telephone/ e-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Unit:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dues/ \$25.00/ yr:    Please enclose a check to the Calix Society**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

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**THE CALIX SOCIETY**  
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## **Please check your label-**

**The expiration date will always be at the end of the year.**

**Consider joining the Gratitude Club.**