



the Chalice

CALIX NEWSLETTER

Volume 41

September - October 2014

Issue No. 5



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Gretchen S

Greetings and God Bless!

Truly we are all blessed to have Calix and a sober Catholic way of life. I used to think of sobriety as synonymous to unending dullness. The phrase "sober as a judge" brought forth a punitive flavor to an alcohol free day. How much has changed!

This time of year fills me with gratitude for the blessing of sobriety, and for all the other blessings we have from Christ. I think of those suffering(sober and not) and pray for the Peace of Christ.

Recently I was halfway through my workday when I realized that I was wearing a shoe from two different pairs. After laughing, I thanked God for the reminder to "be where my feet are" instead of my head in the clouds, or fraught with the daily business of life. When I center my day with God my shoes match.

Our groups continue to grow, and our units are spreading the good word. Pray for our continued success. Each of us is important, and as

I have been told many times "God Doesn't Make Junk." God has a purpose for each of us.

Stay tuned for information on the 2015 Calix Convention. It will be held at Mt. Saint Mary's in Emmitsburg, MD on July 17 -19. More details will follow.

I wish every happiness and a "Sober Thanksgiving". God Bless You All!



In this issue you'll find an article from Jim B, Calix Secretary, as he takes a look back over the years to provide us his view of the history of Calix during his membership and activity as an officer and Board Member.

If you have been a long-term member of Calix, please email me or call me so that we can arrange to obtain your historic account of our organization. My email is dr mike-sanders@gmail.com. My cell number is 423-484-3006.

You'll also find a 'Why Calix' article from two members of the Northern Virginia group. Bruce G. has been involved in trying to get Calix into the Washington DC suburbs for over 2 years. I first met him when he traveled up to the York Pa Group to learn more about Calix. Folks from Ellicott City came to York in the same time frame for the same reasons and our Organization has witnessed the fruits of their labors.

Details are not finalized but the Board has voted to hold the 2015 Convention at Mount Saint Mary's in Emmittsburg, MD. Mount Saint Mary's has formed several priests who are currently non-recovering Chaplains for Calix both in Ellicott City, MD and York, Pa. The former bishop of Harrisburg who granted permission to the York Group to form had been a Rector at "The Mount".

Both the Northern Virginia Group and Ellicott City Groups will be joining forces to host this convention. I am particularly pleased to note for the Organization that on a few occasions, we had seminarians in recovery travel from Emmittsburg to York to learn what Calix was all about. Perhaps we will be able to attract Seminarians and faculty at 'The Mount' to come visit with us during the Convention to spread the word to potential Chaplains! We'll see at some point what the Holy Spirit has planned.

I urge the York Group to offer their assistance to the Ellicott City and Northern Virginia groups to make this Convention a huge success!

Mount Saint Mary is a special place to Calix and hopefully you'll mark your calendars now.

Why Calix? Bruce G. and Sally B.

In the spring of 1979, my father, a high school teacher, was involved in a three car collision in the school parking lot. He suffered whiplash and had to wear a neck brace for several months. Ultimately, he had to have an operation to fuse his cervical vertebrae. The force, and angle of impact, also caused his left temple to slam violently into his driver's side window. This impact left him with a chronic headache that lasted 35 years.

The Northern Virginia Calix meeting on Saturday, June 21, 2014 was particularly powerful. A mix of regular members and first time participants prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet and shared a number of very evocative stories. One friend, Sally B., shared a story of the wonderful experience she had on June 13th in New York City at the parish of St. Anthony's in Greenwich Village. Sally had wandered into the church as they were celebrating St. Anthony's feast day. After spending time with some incredibly warm parishioners, she left for a family function with a deep sense of peace. My share was mostly a complaint about my 80-year old father's headaches, which were particularly bad on June 13th. And June 13th was my in-laws' 50th wedding anniversary celebration, which my wife and I hosted at our home. Let's just say the headache and party made for a difficult evening.

On Thursday, June 26, 2014 Sally and I had a phone conversation about how jazzed we still were from the previous Calix meeting. I

was still somewhat resentful of my father's behavior at the anniversary party, so Sally suggested we pray to St. Anthony for healing and for whatever else Dad needed. Then she led a very beautiful prayer, full of emotion, asking St. Anthony to embrace my dad and intercede for him. I followed along, and said "Amen" but could not add anything to the prayer intention myself. It was too beautiful, and I was too emotionally blocked.

The following Tuesday, July 1, 2014, at approximately 9:30 a.m., my father was in his pick-up truck on his way to a senior citizen's card game when he was rear-ended by a minivan. This collision caused a chain reaction, with four cars in total, all rear-ending each other. Fortunately, police, fire and ambulance crews all arrive on the scene almost instantaneously. My father was taken to a hospital Emergency Room, where everything checked out fine, except his headaches were exponentially worse. The next day, Dad went to see a doctor at his regular physician's office, but the pain-blocking injection this doctor administered did little to ease the severe pain. I stopped in to see him and Mom on Thursday, July 3. Shooting head pains interrupt our conversation every couple of minutes, as Dad paused to let them pass. In 35 years, I have never seen him in this much pain. On my ride home from my parents, it dawns on me that Dad's accident could have been much worse. There was no trauma, and the police, fire and ambulance crews arrived so promptly because, as I found out that evening, they went to the wrong accident! I decided to call Sally to thank her for her prayers to St. Anthony. An accident does not seem like a great intercesso-

Why Calix, (cont. from pg. 3)

ry outcome, but examined my closely, and in a spirit of gratitude, my father was very fortunate. I conveyed my gratitude to Sally, and she suggested that we pray again to St. Anthony for his continuing intercession, which we did.

Because the accident was the minivan driver's fault, that driver's insurance company authorized my father to see a neurologist for his headaches. The original neurologist's appointment was set for July 28th, but was moved up to July 14, 2014 because of the pain's intensity. My father has seen specialists, including many neurologists, in 35 years of dealing with this chronic condition. We were not optimistic about this upcoming appointment, but there were lots of prayers from throughout the family. Plus, Sally continued to pray to St. Anthony on her own accord. On July 14th, within 15 minutes of seeing his latest neurologist, Dad was pain free. An accurate diagnosis, combined with a properly-placed pain blocking shot, eliminated Dad's headache. The new doctor also prescribed some pain management medication to replace what my father had been taking; the prior medications had known adverse effects on kidney function. Most of the information I received on July 14th was via text message and I continued to get reports from Mom, so I called my Dad on July 18th to see how he was doing. He told me he felt so great that he had given up the cane he had been using.

Was this entire sequence of events just a

coincidence? Was it some form of Karma? No, it was Divine Mercy acting through natural means to bring a seemingly miraculous good out of nearly dire tragedy.

So why Calix?

“Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them.”

-Mt 18:19-20

(Ed. Note. Bruce G and Sally B are involved in building the Northern Virginia Group [Washington DC] which been a spin-off of sorts from the Ellicott City [Baltimore] groups. In the months ahead more details will follow about the next Convention hosted by No. VA and Ellicott City, MD groups).

A Look Back by Jim B

As many of you already know Calix started in Minneapolis in 1947.....only 12 years after the beginning of Alcoholics Anonymous. As a friend and I were sharing this week, this had to occur through the Holy Spirit, an infusion of zeal into the hearts of Dr. Bob, Bill W. and Bill Montroy that it was necessary for them to carry their messages of recovery and faith. These realizations came to me through AA and later Calix.

I joined AA in 1980, and as near as I can remember I joined Calix in 1989, curtesy of an AA member who attended our church in Mahtomedi. I was an avid AA member, but I was cautious regarding Calix during the first few months. In retrospect I know my caution emanated from my usual reservation of jumping into something, and my relative newness to the Catholic Church and its practices (I was baptized and confirmed on Easter in 1984). However, it wasn't long before I became President of the Mahtomedi Unit. From there I was asked by my same AA friend if I would serve on the Calix International Board, taking his place as a Director. After being voted in by the Calix Board I began my service in 1991.

In my early Board days I did not spend too much time at the Calix office, which was located in a Western suburb of Minneapolis, some 25 miles from my home. At that time the office was manned by an ex-newspaper man, Bill Fox, a long-time Calix servant and former International President, Rita Salmon, a Board

Director, John Casserly, who was retired and some part time contribution from Board Member, Dave Hackl. The furnishings in the office comprised 2 desks, a couple of filing cabinets, a typewriter and various and sundry items, along with stacks of papers everywhere. Membership records were maintained on notecards in file boxes that Rita continually updated. Bill, being the writer he was, answered all correspondence with typewritten letters and served as editor of the Chalice. Bill, who put in 40 plus hours a week, was supposed to be a paid employee, but I soon learned that he would not accept payment because he thought that Calix couldn't afford it. Everything that went through that office required their painstaking labor, but all served without complaint. I was amazed!

Dave Hackl was the newest visionary on the Board. He was an Al-Anon member who was a quality engineer at Honeywell at that time. He brought the revolution of the PC to the Calix office, and soon after I arrived he had membership records, reminder notices and other standard forms on the computer. This did not stop Rita from doing notecards or Bill from typing letters, but it was a start. Dave's background instilled in him the intensity and fervor of an archivist, and he regarded every record and item in the files as worthy of saving. He later was the prime force in getting the first Calix web site established. Later Dave served as International President, and took over editorship of the Chalice after Bill died. Dave, figuring that Calix couldn't afford to buy a desktop publishing program, put together the newsletter in Microsoft Word, a practice I continued during my tenure as editor. Dave

A Look Back, (cont. from pg. 5)

and his wife Gerry were instrumental in moving the office to their parish, Holy Redeemer, when the rent in Minneapolis soared. Unfortunately, Dave developed kidney cancer that quickly metastasized, leading to his death about 10 years ago. Dave was truly one of the heroes of Calix.

My involvement accelerated upon Dave's passing. I had served as International President, but now took over as Secretary and editor of the newsletter. Gerry Hackl, who really was only connected to Calix through Dave, became Treasurer. Of course, through those years the Board changed dramatically; we lost Rita Salmon and John Casserly by their deaths, our Chaplain, Fr. Mark Mindrich, suffered a debilitating stroke and others moved on. New Directors, however, came forward as we emphasized service from all areas of the country.

During all of the aforementioned time we saw a declining of active Calix units, going from 5 units to 2 in the Twin Cities and from around 40 units to 18 around the country. Membership dropped from an inflated 1000 members (inflated because Dave didn't have the heart to cut off priests that did not renew) to around 600 "real" members in 2004. Since 2004 there has been new vigor in Calix that the numbers do not necessarily capture. Most of the growth has occurred in the East. Our revamped web site and the outreach of several Board Directors has been the impetus for the halting of the decline in units and the growth in units in the East, in my opinion.

Obviously, we have a long way to go in

spreading the message of Calix, a situation that our Church shares in retaining Catholics, as you all know. However, I don't believe that we will run out of addicts and drunks anytime soon, so I say to all of you that all of us share the responsibility to evangelize these folks to bring them to the better life that the 12 steps and Calix offer.

(Editor's Note: As many of us know Jim B. has been the glue which has held Calix together for many years. In the months ahead, we will seek other Calix Old Timers to share their experience in our Fellowship here in The Chalice)

CALIX LITERATURE

No Turning Back by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC	\$17.00 Ppd.
Calix and the Twelve Steps by Fr. Arnold Luger, 63 pages	\$9.00 Ppd.
The Light of Faith by Fr. Francis Canavan, SJ	\$9.00 Ppd.
By the Grace of God by Fr. Francis Canavan, SJ	\$11.00 Ppd.
Parables and Ponderings by A. Fenker, SPCC, D.Min	\$9.00 Ppd.
Recovery Meditation on the Stations of the Cross (Back in Print!) by Msgr. Harrington	\$5.00 Ppd.
Sister Ignatia Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous by Mary Darrah	\$17.00 Ppd.
A 12 Step Approach to the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius <i>52 meditations, & their relation to the 12 Steps.</i> by James Harbaugh, SJ	\$18.00 Ppd.
One Day at a Time in Al-Anon	\$18.00 Ppd.
Heaven's Homecoming by Fr. Douglas McKay (Grays Ferry Chaplain)	\$12.00 Ppd.
12 Step Review (set) By Fr. Emmerich Vogt	\$15.00 Ppd.
Let the Oppressed Go Free by Cardinal Justin Rigali	\$6.00 Ppd.
The 12 Steps and Catholic Spirituality by Fr. Leo Dolan	\$1.00 ea.
Matt Talbot Prayer Card - B & W	.20 ea.
Matt Talbot Medal	.70 ea.
Intro to Calix Packet	\$1.50 ea.
Calix Induction Ceremony	.30 ea.
Calix Pin (for members only)	\$5.00 ea.

Board of Directors Information

- 2015 Dues. The Society does not have the technical capacity to have rolling membership years throughout the year. Our membership year runs from January 1 thru December 31. Thus, dues for 2015 will soon be due and can be paid using PayPal through the website or by mailing your check to:

Calix Society
P.O. Box 9085
St. Paul, MN 55109

New members who joined Calix after September 1, 2014 will not owe dues until 1/1/16.

Did you know that Calix Society has a Gratitude Fund where some generous members submit donations above their yearly dues? So far in 2014, we've received \$1,800 in Gratitude Fund donations. You may wish to consider making a one-time donation or have a monthly donation set up via the website.

- Treasury Report. As of 10/1/14, your society has, for the first time, a prudent reserve of 3 months operating expenses. For the period ending 9/30/14 we have had \$13,646 in income (due, literature, Gratitude Fund, etc) and expenses of \$10,847. The Board anticipates having to make upgrades to the website in the not to distant future.

- Two new groups in Ireland. Following their visit with Calix at the Convention in

Philadelphia, our guests from Ireland to present the Case of Matt Talbot's canonization returned to their homeland. The need for Calix is obvious to any visitor who attends our meetings and events. We thank Fr Lawless and Michael M. for taking the initiative to begin forming two new groups.

- New US groups forming. There are a handful of new US groups forming. Have you looked at the directory of groups lately on the website? It's a valuable resource if you're the traveling type.

- Website. Did you know the Board of Directors has been loading our rich archives onto the website? There is an audio file from the Society's pilgrimage and audience with the Pope and other documents, such as the letters from Alcoholics Anonymous co-founder Bill Wilson, for all due paying members to view. We are constantly loading archives – you should visit often. Did you know there is a bulletin board function on the website? It's a great place to publish prayer requests.

- Prayers requested. One of Calix's old-timers, Joe McGherin, Jr., (Philadelphia Joe) is in need of prayers as he recovers from a stroke. Joe is 84 and many know Joe from Conventions. As you may recall, he had met Bill Wilson back in the day.

Vol. 41, Issue 5, Sept - Oct, 2014

THE CALIX SOCIETY

P.O. Box 9085

St. Paul, MN 55109-9969

First Class Mail
US Postage
PAID
Mail Expeditors

Please check your label-

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

Consider joining the Gratitude Club.