



the Chalice

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Gaylen E.

Good morning to all – I hope this day finds you well, in sobriety and recovery, as well as in the grace of our Lord. As we celebrated Independence Day, those of us who have suffered from addiction had a particular gratitude, for we have come to “know a new freedom and a new happiness,” through the spiritual exercises of our 12 Step programs.

As Catholics, we have come to believe that these Steps, and the power to work them, are a gift from Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, who through the Holy Spirit is “doing for us what we cannot do for ourselves”. And as Catholics, we are blessed to have the Sacramental Presence of Christ, and the direction and fellowship of His Church to strengthen our resolve in the face of our weaknesses.

Praise God, and thank Him for our independence from addiction, which comes from our dependence on Him.

We are not alone!

Brothers and sisters:

You are no longer strangers and sojourners,
but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones
and members of the household of God,
built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets,
with Christ Jesus himself as the capstone.
Through him the whole structure is held together
and grows into a temple sacred in the Lord;
in him you also are being built together
into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Eph 2:19-22

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President's Column, by Gaylen E. (Continued)

In our active addictions, many of us, through our own actions and decisions, ruined our relationships and ended up very much alone and in darkness. We are seekers who have knocked on the wrong doors, and found no answers, and no one home.

It is through working our 12 Step programs that we have come to realize this truth. The 4th and 5th steps allowed us to see this truth. The 6th and 7th steps allowed us to be willing and ready to ask God to remove these defects of character and shortcomings.

But it is through the 8th and 9th steps, armed with the truth about ourselves and our past actions, that we become willing to make amends, and repair these damaged relationships. As in the Ephesians reading, Christ is the capstone of this new archway to freedom and fellowship. Through him, the whole structure is held together. As my sponsor would say, "We are in the efforts business; the results are up to God".

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"Abandon yourselves to God", Christ our Lord and Savior. "Admit our faults to Him and our fellows. Clear away the wreckage of our past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny."

We are no longer strangers and sojourners. We have the saints, Our Blessed Mother and Venerable Matt Talbot among many others. We have Christ Himself, and His Church. We have the 12 Steps and the Fellowship of the Spirit. We are being built together into a dwelling place of God and the Spirit.

Calix Annual Retreat – Right Around the Corner!

And speaking of fellowship, let's talk about the upcoming Calix Retreat. If you have not yet attended a Calix retreat, you might wonder, "Why should I go? What would it have to offer me?" There are many wonderful benefits and experiences, such as magnificent speakers, a dynamic program, and a chance to visit many sites significant to our Catholic faith. I would suggest another benefit. I have found consistently a beauty and strength in the coming together of *Catholics* in recovery.

As most of us know, the 12 Step programs are not a place welcoming overt talk about our Catholic faith. In most discussions of God, religion is often presented as being *opposed* to spirituality. In our personal experiences, we know this not to be true. I know AA does not 'get' being Catholic. And I also know the Church itself does not always 'get' being an alcoholic or addict, or the suffering caused by these addictions.

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President's Column, by Gaylen E. (Continued)

So that is why fellowship in Calix is so important. We are the crossroads of addiction and our Catholic faith. Most of us find refuge in our local Calix meetings. We share our faith with each other. We have compassion, understanding and support for each other in a unique way. And we draw strength from our Fellowship. The retreat offers us a chance to celebrate our faith and recovery in community with Calix members across the country. So, please, come!

If cost is an issue, please do raise your hand, as we may have scholarships available for your attendance.

Amends to My True Self, by Fr. Doug McKay, Calix Chaplain

For my Saturday vigil homily, I reflected on the Liturgy of the Word, Thirteenth Sunday, Year C. The second reading, Galatians 5: 14-15, impacted me the most: *“For the whole Law is fulfilled in one word: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”*

Often in my life I had to unlearn some spiritual lessons in order to make them true to me. The above quote is one of them: to love my neighbor *as myself*. Oh, how I forget that part of loving myself!

For most of my life it was always God first, my neighbor second, and myself third. Later on in life, I realized that I had the order wrong. Yes, God is always first, but more often than not, I must be second and my neighbor third. Really, how can I give God's loving care to anyone without first receiving His loving care for me? After all, He's the vine and I'm the branch, and apart from Him I can do nothing and nothing means *absolutely* nothing. Only in Him, with Him, and through Him can I truly love my neighbor, and that comes after the grace of loving and caring for number two—me!

Another lesson I needed to unlearn was from Matthew 25: 40: *“Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me.”* Taking our Lord's words to my misunderstanding mind, I almost self-destructed in my spiritual life. I just couldn't say No to anyone, because I believed that to say No to anyone was to say No to Jesus, and that, I knew, was a sin.

Often in my life I had to unlearn some spiritual lessons in order to make them true to me.

And then, one day, I was set free, by the grace of God, by reading these liberating words: *“Did you ever stop to think that you yourself may be the least of His brethren and whatever you do to you, you do to Him?”* Only then did I realize how hard I was on myself. I needed to make amends on myself by easing up on myself so I could love myself.

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Amends to My True Self, by Fr. Doug McKay (Continued)

It wasn't that I hated me; I just didn't love me. I was over identifying with my short comings, character defects, imperfections, and sinfulness. Today I know that I am not my faults, mistakes, nor am I my sins; I am a child of God made in His image and likeness, and that calls for my loving and respecting myself.

This past May, I was privileged to be part of the Rachel's Vineyard Retreat. It was a weekend to help post-abortive parents learn to love and forgive themselves from the serious sin of abortion. Part of the healing process was to go through the mercy parables and make the stories of Jesus personal for the grieving parents.

It wasn't that I hated me; I just didn't love me.

On the first night, we acted out the parable of the Blind Man, Bartimaeus. Each participant would take turns and tearfully say, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me."

Playing the part of Jesus, I would ask each one, "What do you want me to do for you?" Standing before each grieving mother, I listened to the sorrowful responses: "Master, I want to forgive myself for taking my child's life... Master, heal me from my guilt and shame... Master, let my child be with you in heaven." Tears and sobs flowed freely over the healing graces of Jesus Christ.

That merciful night, after the graceful encounters, I visited the outdoor holy places of Saint Joseph's in the Hills; Malvern, Pennsylvania. Under the full moon and starry night, I walked the paths of the hallowed grounds, passing by the graceful and illuminated shrines. Overwhelmed in His peaceful presence and believing Jesus to be at my side, I turned to Him in the sight of faith and asked, "Master, what do you want me to do for you?"

"Love my people," He said.

"Who are Your people?" I asked.

"The ones near you," He said.

"How do I love them?"

"The way I love you."

"How do You love me?"

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Amends to My True Self, by Fr. Doug McKay (Continued)

“I respect you... I put up with you... I’m patient with you... I forgive you... I’m kind, forgiving, and I love you! Got any more questions, Dougie?”

That night I experienced a spiritual breakthrough. His words of respect for me enlightened my whole being. I became aware that I had never really respected myself. It never once in my life crossed my mind that Jesus Christ really respected me. I wondered how He could respect me after all my youthful sins, especially the sinful acts from my drinking bouts? Then I realized that He doesn’t respect my guilty and evil sins; He respects me. Now I know He respects me and loves me wholeheartedly, because I am a child of God in His very image and likeness, and that is who and what I am —not my sins.

Now as I revisit Steps Eight and Nine, I call to mind the people that I failed to love and respect, especially (besides God) the one nearer to me—myself! And I pray that the healing Lord will empower me to love my neighbor *as myself*, and I especially pray and hope for the grace to make Amends to My True Self.

*Then I realized
that He doesn't
respect my guilty
and evil sins;
He respects me.*

Father Douglas McKay, O.F.S.
Calix Chaplain

2019 Annual Calix Society Retreat

*** * * Washington, D.C. * * ***

The Northern Virginia Calix Units are ready to welcome you to the Washington Retreat House in Washington, DC. This year's theme is:

"I Shall Take the Chalice of Salvation"

Online registration is now available at
www.calixsociety.org

When:

**Friday, August 2 at 5:00 p.m. –
Sunday August 4 at 12:00 p.m.**

Where:

**Washington Retreat House
4000 Harewood Road NE
Washington, D.C. 20017**

Cost:

\$275 by cash or check / \$285 by PayPal

The weekend officially begins with Mass at 5:00 p.m. on Friday (though guests will be welcome at noon). There will be opportunities for daily Mass and Confession, and great talks and fellowship with Calix members from around the country. This year's retreat director is Father M. Paul Richardson of the Diocese of Arlington, VA.

There will be time on Saturday afternoon for offsite touring. Some Catholic treasures that are close to the Washington Retreat Center include:

- * Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception (0.6 miles away)
- * Saint John Paul II National Shrine (0.1 miles away)
- * Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America (1.6 miles away)

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2019 Annual Calix Society Retreat (Continued)

In addition to the time on Saturday afternoon for offsite touring, you may want to add a day or two to your trip to visit some of the Catholic treasures that are very close to the Washington Retreat Center, such as:

Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

The Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception is designated by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as a pilgrimage church. It is also the preeminent Marian Shrine of the United States. With over 80 chapels and oratories that relate to the Blessed Mother and peoples from countries around the world, one can virtually make a pilgrimage to many of the great Marian shrines of the world and receive their same graces and indulgences by visiting the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.



www.nationalshrine.org

Saint John Paul II National Shrine

The Saint John Paul II National Shrine welcomes pilgrims who wish to encounter Jesus Christ through the life and teachings of St. John Paul II. Visitors undertake a spiritual journey with this great saint and leave inspired to continue the New Evangelization he taught was the vocation of every Christian. Visitors can attend daily Mass and receive the sacraments in the Redemptor Hominis Church and venerate a first-class relic of St. John Paul II in the Luminous Mysteries Chapel.



www.jp2shrine.org

Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America

The Monastery was built to serve those who could not physically travel to the Holy Land and includes replicas of many of the sites that the Franciscans oversee in the Holy Land, including Nativity Grotto in Bethlehem and the tomb of Christ in Jerusalem. There are also full-size replicas of the Catacombs and martyr’s crypts. In addition, there are Stations of the Cross, beautiful gardens and a replica of the Lourdes Grotto.



www.myfranciscan.org

Have You Registered to be a Calix Member?

As of this writing (7/2/19) we have 60 members that have not renewed their membership this year, and another 200 who have not made a donation between 2015 and 2018.

We are looking to grow the Calix Society, and your annual donation will go a long way in helping in that effort.

If you haven't updated your profile on ConstantContact, please do so as soon as possible so we can mail you your membership card!

You can contact Ken at treasurer@calixsociety.org or 215-327-3236 with any questions or concerns!

What is a Membership Card?

Membership cards were used in the Calix Society for many years and stopped being issued at some point. However, we are re-instituting the use of these membership cards. Everyone that contributes at least \$25 receives a membership card. In addition to your name, the card will contain contact information for the Calix Society AND two prayers – one for living Calix members and one for the deceased. All members are asked to pray these prayers at least once each day.

So please update your profile as mentioned above, so that you can start saying this special prayer for fellow Calix members – and so that you can have a few hundred people praying for you and your loved ones on a daily basis!

Prayer by Thomas Merton

My Lord God,

I have no idea where I am going.

I do not see the road ahead of me. I cannot know for certain where it will end.

Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think that I am following
Your Will does not mean that I am actually doing so.

But I believe that the desire to please you does in fact please you.

And I hope I have that desire in all that I am doing.

I hope that I will never do anything apart from that desire.

And I know that if I do this, You will lead me by the right road though I may know nothing about it.

Therefore will I trust You always though I may seem to be lost and in the shadow of death.

I will not fear, for you are ever with me, and you will never leave me to face my perils alone.

Amen.

Prayer Requests

Lydia F.: My 50 year-old son is an alcoholic with serious legal problems. He gets violent when he drinks and feels remorseful afterwards. He wants to stop drinking but needs spiritual help since he never goes to church but loves Jesus and Mary.

Judith R.: For my niece, Zoe, who has anorexia, bulimia and alcoholism.

Miretta C.: If it's God's will, I would like to recover from Compulsive Overeating, Love Addiction, Anorexia, Codependency and Adult Child Issues. I would like to be a good practicing Catholic. I am struggling with my addictions. Members of my family are lapsed.

Jane D.: For all the people I work with who are alcoholic, that God may bring them to full recovery and to faith in and relationship with Jesus, and to full membership in the Catholic Church.

A Piece of Calix History

From the Calix archives, a letter published in the Chalice from 1967. This is from a time when approximately 1,000 Calix members attended the annual Retreat. Yes, you read that right ... 1,000 people!

Takes Time To
Accept Help


ALONE IN A CROWDED WILDERNESS

BY JAMES W. MULLIN
President International Calix Society

MOST OF US were “alone in a crowded wilderness” before we gained our sobriety. We were with people but had very few friends. Our families usually “stuck” by us but we did not accept their friendship and warmth. When we finally decided to quit drinking we were still alone because it took time to accept help that was waiting. It took time to realize that the friends we gained in AA and Calix were true friends and not just acquaintances like we had before.

Soon we came to realize, particularly in Calix, that God was not only a true friend but a personal God. This also took time and we probably will not realize its true significance until we join Him in heaven.

THE ABOVE IS the story of many but it is certainly not all inclusive. We all know of friends who just could not “make it”, those who must remain alone in a crowded wilderness. But worse off is the man who has been granted the peace of mind and contentment that can be had with sobriety, and then lose it. They lost something along the way. What was it? Could it have been avoided? I believe it could in every case.



TO START WITH, keep active in your AA group, which should include your weekly meetings and helping those still in trouble. For the Catholic, also be an enthusiastic member of your local Calix unit. There is no better way to know and become a friend of your personal God. Pride can lead us astray. Please remember that when you are in the process of forgetting Calix and AA it is like canceling your life insurance policy because you will never need it. This is a comparison we should all keep in mind. It can be our strength in a time of weakness.

BEING ALONE in a crowded wilderness can happen to anyone, not just the alcoholic. We are all social beings and should not live alone, particularly with ourselves which is so often the case.

You have heard the saying “We must give to receive.” Let us put it into practice. If we do, we will not be alone. We will be close to our personal God. We will have contentment and peace of mind. We will have the true friends we have longed for. We will not be Alone in a crowded wilderness.

THE CHALICE

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LIVE IN PRESENT

A great deal of unhappiness comes from lamenting the past and fearing the future. Too much preoccupation with the future leads to fear of failure and to indecision. The past should be used as a passport to the present; we should learn from it and then bury it. The future should be used as an anchorage for the present; we should plan for it and then work toward it. Our major efforts should be devoted to the present 24-hour day!

Peter J. Hampton, Ph. D.
Family Circle Magazine

Editor's Note

- At Calix, we strive to be a source of inspiration and encouragement to each other, geared to our growth toward spiritual maturity.
- For the Chalice newsletter, we want to share our members' recovery and spiritual journeys, recognizing that each individual is on a different part of that journey or path!
- So, wherever you are on your recovery / spiritual journey, please consider writing an article for the Chalice
- For 2019, our theme for the Chalice is the Steps and how your Catholic faith influences your recovery program.
- Please send submissions to Chris B. (editor) at christinabongiovanni@hotmail.com.

Edition	Topic	Deadline for Submission
September/October	Step 10	September 1
November/December	Steps 11 & 12	November 1

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