



the Chalice

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PRESIDENT'S COLUMN By Gretchen S

Hello Calix friends,

I hope you are all well and look forward to seeing those of you who will attend our retreat later this month.

It has been an honor to serve you as Board President for the past two years. During that time we have established a prudent reserve, moved the literature location, and tended our housekeeping tasks. Our East Coast footprint is growing in Maryland and Virginia. We continue to seek a better service model.

We have lost some dear friends on the Board and in the Society. I am so thankful for the chance to have known those fine people.

Through my membership in Calix, my sobriety has been greatly enriched. It's as if Calix is part of AA's "Promises" for me for I certainly know "a new peace and a new happiness" since attending.

Before Calix, I experienced discontent when it came to matters of my higher power. With all the fractious discontent we alcoholics visit

upon each other concerning God, I thought to invent my own. At first I even objected to the Lord's Prayer. I viewed it as patriarchal. I had adolescent hang-ups and resentments towards Christians, and I let the tolerance of the rooms keep me stuck. I was a defender of anything goes in AA because I didn't wish to offend anyone. Thank goodness for my sponsor and the loving people in AA who kept me coming back. Honestly, I was angry and sick and not willing to hear about Jesus. I needed to spiritually sober up in order to reach that uncomfortable level of misery that causes us to seek help. Fortunately there was a Calix group in the city where I lived and some sensitive individuals to invite me to give Calix a try.

I am not suggesting that tolerance of others is wrong. I do think God finds us when we ask to be found. I am proudly grateful that Calix was available to me. Through Calix, I was able to work through some of the unformed ideas I had regarding my personal beliefs. I continue to grow, and hopefully help others find Christ. I pray that we are all able to let the Holy Spirit guide us to those still suffering inside and outside the rooms of AA for whom Calix is their answer.

in Christ's love,
Gretchen



Thank you Madam President.

In this issue, you'll find our President's last article for The Chalice as her term is coming to a close. She will continue working for Calix as a Member of the Board following our upcoming election.

During Gretchen's tenure, the Calix Society has continued to prosper. We now have a prudent reserve, improvements are being made to our website, and new members to the Board have come on board and are active participants in the Society's business. The Society's financial status will be presented in Cleveland.

Gretchen was the first female elected by the Society as President of our Society, and history will be made again in Cleveland, regardless of the vote when Bruce G. will be the first member of Alanon to be elected to the office of President or Vice-President. In the past, another female on the Board was elevated by Board Vote to President, Deedo H.

And for those of you who have been in Calix a few years you know that Madam President and I just celebrated our second wedding anniversary. At the Retreat in Malvern over 2 years ago and immediately prior to our wedding, our rings were blessed on a first degree artifact of Matt Talbot. A week later, we were wed.

In this issue

We are publishing the third article from Fr. Doug McKay of Philadelphia on the early days of Calix. I don't know about you, but I am enjoying his contributions very much.

We have a personal testimony Why Calix? from long time member and current Board member Craig C. from Nebraska. If his personal reflection stimulates you, you are invited to submit your thoughts for publication in The Chalice by sending it to me at the email address above.

Calix in the Technology Age

Vince, Bruce, and Ken are making advancements to the website where you can find information on "A Teleconference Calix Meeting". Two such meetings have been held. If interested in joining one of these calls, see the website for information.

Meditations have been loaded onto the site in mp3 format as well.

Retreat in Cleveland

Time is running out to register and attend the annual Calix Retreat in Cleveland at a Jesuit Retreat House in Parma, Ohio. Details published in this issue as well.

See you all in Cleveland!

Why Calix?

Craig C., Lincoln, NE

Calix Society Board of Directors Member

Near the closing prayer of our July Calix International Board Meeting, the subject arose as to the difference between why we attend AA meetings and why we attend Calix meetings. Here are some of my thoughts as to why I find such a difference in my life of recovery and why I feel a strong need for both.

So often at AA meetings, I hear examples of how others handle their anger or the wrong way they behaved when they were drinking as compared to how they behave now. These examples cause me to reflect on my own behavior. I ask myself have I truly changed towards others or have I just quit drinking? In other words, I am reminded to examine my conscience. That, I must admit, is only one reminder to go to confession on a regular basis. This reminder I must admit comes from AA meetings I attend. When we carefully examine our conscience, and share out faults (sins) with our confessor we are working some very important steps within the 12 Steps. These reminders to take advantage of the sacrament of confession come more often from AA meetings because I attend several each week.

Calix meetings, first of all, begin with Mass and that puts my focus on the Liturgy and the Eucharist. Our meal and meeting that follows helps me remember why taking part at Mass and associating with others who believe as I help me realize once again what is truly important in this life. At Calix meetings, I hear the name Jesus or God mentioned without seeing frowns appear on some faces. I have attended AA meetings where the mention of prayer, or God, causes immediate anger. My Calix Chaplain reminds me to pray for

those people, and in my case, the sooner the better. If I were to quit attending AA meetings I am sure at some point my thoughts would begin to convince me a few drinks might be okay. I have heard too many relapse stories to believe anything else. For this reason alone I will continue AA attendance. I have also developed friendships in AA that I value. Calix has also given me solid friendships and has more than once deepened my Catholic faith. I cannot imagine remaining sober, and being happy about it, and not practicing my Catholic faith. Calix is a vital part of the practice of my faith and recovery.

For those of us who have been so blessed to have found sobriety, and our Catholic Faith, let's hope and pray to find some means to inform young people in recovery what a strong foundation Calix offers.

I have just re-read "Sister Ignatia, Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous". She treated at least 15,000 alcoholics and another 60,000 family members of alcoholics in her years of work. Her methods were very simple: work Steps 1 and 2 and then begin a new spiritual life working very closely with a sponsor and attend AA meetings. My hope is that we can find a way to reach people in recovery who are missing what we have found in Calix. Sister Ignatia knew that only with surrender to the reality of this disease and humbly asking God for help could we treat this disease. Calix has given me an advantage in how I ask God. It reminds me of how important Mass is, time in front of the Blessed Sacrament, and the humility to continually focus on the deadliness of our disease.

May God give us all the direction we need to lead Calix on the best course. I hope to see you in Cleveland.

A Deeper Look

Bruce G. N. Virginia

Calix Board Member

Mediating on the Beatitudes continues as a focal point of my recovery, particularly when “working” Step 7. The word “working” is in quotations, because Jesus is actually doing all the work here, as I humbly ask Him to remove my short-comings. Being a “little son” of Mary, I am not really able to do anything about my short-comings on my own. After years working my program, the faith-dimension of Calix is helping me adjust my thinking by saying “yes” to God instead of “no,” when he wants to make a change.

My day started a bit differently than usual on Thursday last week. Rather than attend morning Mass at my parish, I accepted a Catholic friend’s invitation to attend a Mass and breakfast seminar at a local hotel. Father Darragh Connolly from Kilmore, Ireland was the celebrant. As part of his homily, he read us this message:

“My little one, I am coming to clean every mark from your heart so that you will love freely, as I love. Do not think this is an impossible task. I am Jesus. I am God. I can cleanse your heart in no time at all if you are willing to let Me. I will restore order to your soul, I will adjust your thinking, and I will place the kind of love in your heart that is so genuine and abundant that this love reaches your eyes. All who see you will experience this love and know it is from Me.”

After breakfast, the speaker was “Anne, a lay apostle,” and the above message was part of a private revelation she received from Jesus in

2003. [Father Darragh has been Anne’s bishop-appointed spiritual director for ten years, and the messages have received the Imprimatur of the same bishop]. Anne explained that as Christians in this broken world, our neighbors living in darkness need to see the light and love of Christ in our eyes. This love only resides in us, if we invite Jesus into our hearts and allow Him to transform us from within.

The underlined words in the message spoke to me, particularly the word “genuine.” It’s amazing to me that our Gospels this week have been about the hypocrisy of the Pharisees and the need to “cleanse first the inside of the cup.” Our Lord’s criticisms of the Pharisee’s were followed by praise of St. Bartholomew on his Feast Day: “...a true son of Israel. There is no duplicity in him.” All of these Gospel passages point to the Beatitude of Purity. What I learned recently in studying the Beatitudes is that hypocrisy, and not impurity, is considered the opposite of purity. That’s why Jesus chastises the Pharisees for being hypocrites, and praises Nathaniel (Bartholomew) for being genuine.

“Blessed are clean of heart, for they shall see God.” My hope is that if I willingly let Jesus cleanse my heart, then I will end up being more genuinely my best self with other people. And in return, my hope is also that I will see more of other people’s better natures.

A Tough Bunny

Father Douglas Mc Kay, OFS

Chaplain, Grays Ferry Unit

On a cold winter night after a last alcoholic drink and a spiritual experience, William J. Montroy, the foremost founder of the Calix Society, realized that he needed to stay sober, and even more so, he wanted to become holy. "I must quit living like a devil," he said, "and work on becoming a saint." And how he worked on his sanctity!

Bill lived in an apartment with his wife Janet across from Saint Stephen's Church in Minneapolis where he became a parish worker. He was a member of the Legion of Mary, the only man in the apostolate, and he was a friend of Father Rudy Nolan, the pastor, who ministered to alcoholics and drug addicts.

One night, around eleven o'clock, Father Nolan telephoned Montroy and told him he needed his immediate help with 'a tough bunny'. As he left the apartment to assist the pastor, Janet called out after him, saying, "Oh another one...." Bill was already helping alcoholics but this tough encounter was about to reveal the Spirituality of the Calix Society.

Meeting the tough bunny, an alcoholic priest, for the first time, Bill Montroy knew the challenge. Father Pat was short, rounded, and strong with a bad disposition. This shrewd Irishman knew all the tricks to hide his drinking, but so did his relentless pursuer who showed up wherever this drunken priest drank.

One night on skid row, Pat grabbed Bill to harm him but for some reason changed his mind. The angry alcoholic was going crazy seeing this Hound of Heaven everywhere.

Bill even followed him into a Turkish bath. Face-to-face with him, he yelled, "Pat, the devil got you!"

These harsh words penetrated the fallen priest and sobered him up for a few days, but unfortunately followed another binge. Bill was able to get Pat to a private house that cared for alcoholics by feed-

ing them paraldehyde. Helping the clergyman into bed, the frustrated Good Samaritan took his rosary and threw it at him, saying, "Pat, grab it, because Mary is your best chance now. I am through."

After three days, the recovering priest telephoned his caring friend, saying, "Bill will you come get me.... will you take me over to Holy Rosary Church? I want to go to confession." Happy and relieved Bill welcomed the invitation.

After Pat confessed his sins, the two recovering alcoholics visited the Blessed Sacrament at Saint Stephen's Church. Bill followed the hopeful priest up the aisle to the sanctuary rail. Opening the gate, Pat knelt down at the altar before the tabernacle, stretched out his arms, and whispered his prayers. Bill wondered could this be it? The weak priest remained sober for a week and then again relapsed.

Discouraged, Bill prayed for guidance. He speculated about what was missing in helping this active alcoholic? Inspired he realized that he was trying to save the priest all by himself. Now he prayed that God would take over the Tough Bunny Mission.

By the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and the enthusiasm of William J Montroy, the Calix Society begins to emerge. Along with Father Nolan's support, Bill recruits four of his A.A. friends—Steve Levi, Sol Humbarger, Chuck Jennings, and Bob Doherty—to help him with the almost hopeless priest.

Sharing his inspiration with the upcoming co-founders of the Calix Society, Bill lays out the remedy for Pat's alcoholism: "And with Father Pat we will offer up the Mass and our Holy Communion that Christ in his mercy will now give Pat the necessary grace to end

his battle once and for all. What greater power than this? Christ is going to find it hard to refuse. I asked Father Nolan if we could have a really early weekday Mass about 5:00 AM. I wanted to make it tough for all of us to get up early. We had to do penance because this was a toughie. Father agreed

A Tough Bunny, (cont. from pg. 5)

and I told Pat drunk or sober he was going to be there....”

Then one morning in 1947—at the break of a new day—Father Nolan, along with the sacrificial ones, celebrated the First Calix Mass at Saint Stephen’s Church in Minneapolis for Pat’s victory over alcoholism. By continuing their sacrifices and healing Masses for several weeks, the Calix founders enabled the transformation of the once-upon-a-time ‘tough bunny’. Father Pat would go on to become one of the most ardent and brilliant supporters for Alcoholic Anonymous. Also the resurrected priest would be idolized by the Pioneer House, an alcoholic center in Minneapolis.

Seeing the others (sometimes including Earl Rooney) serving these beginning Calix Masses with many holy mistakes, Bill’s heart overflows with joy. He shares his prayer and thoughts: “Dear God, this is the answer! This is the only sure and permanent way to sobriety and to true peace and happiness. I began to remember my first meeting with Earl and how my hopes were strengthened by my knowing that Mass and Communion would be my victory.”

Knowing that Mass and Communion and Confession would be victorious over addiction, Bill says “What more do we need? This is the strength, we are looking for. We cannot fail if we continue this.”

Sacred ideas flowing from the Holy Spirit spurted out of Bill Montroy like sparks through stubble: “Mother Mary would be the patroness. There will be a statue, flowers, and candles to honor her intercession. There would be prayer meetings, readings, and discussions of the faith.” Bill’s zeal catches fire in the others, especially in the pastor.

Night after night, hour after hour, the founders met at the Montroy house to draw up the Calix plan. Steve Levi wrote and rewrote the group’s ideas for the Constitution that was presented to Father Nolan for his suggestions and final corrections. After the pastor’s approval, Father Pat himself

took the document to Archbishop John Gregory Murray for his authorization.

In just a few days with deletions, corrections, and added ideas, the Archbishop endorses the society. “He really must have put a lot of time on it,” Montroy says, “as all the writing on it was in his own handwriting. Oh how beautiful his loving, humble heart shows through in the words he wrote. We owe a great deal to our beloved Archbishop Murray, who had given us Pat to work on!”

Knowing the Tough Bunny Mission, one would be reminded about the healing of the paralytic in the second chapter of Mark’s Gospel. In this passage Jesus heals the paralytic not on the faith of the one who is crippled but on the faith of the four men who carried him to the Lord:

When Jesus returned to Capernaum after some days, it became known that he was home.... They came bringing to him a paralytic carried by four men.... When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, ‘Child, your sins are forgiven.... rise, pick up your mat, and go home. He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone.’

Indeed, it was the faith of William J. Montroy and the four men who carried the paralyzed priest to the pastor for the Victory of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Seeing their faith, the Lord Jesus not only bestowed the healing blessings upon Father Pat’s triumphant recovery, but even more so, He graciously granted the foundational graces for the Calix Society that continues to this day the victories over alcoholism.

Like William J. Montroy we must quit living like devils and work on becoming saints ourselves. Through our Calix faith we are able to remain sober and sanctified by sacrificing for others, especially for a tough bunny.

Stay sober and alert. Your opponent the devil is prowling like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, solid in your faith.” 1 Peter 5: 8-9

Registration Information

**59th Annual Calix Retreat, Sept 16-18
Cleveland, Ohio**

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 under the "resources" tab. Fill out the form and email it as an attachment to Calix_Convention@yahoo.com. Then go to the "store" tab and use PayPal to send your payment.

Registration Form

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____
 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

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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.