



the Chalice

CALIX NEWSLETTER

Volume 41

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Issue No. 4



IN MEMORIAM

Don G.

Donald C. Gostomski "Mr. Don", age 80, died August 11, 2014 at home.

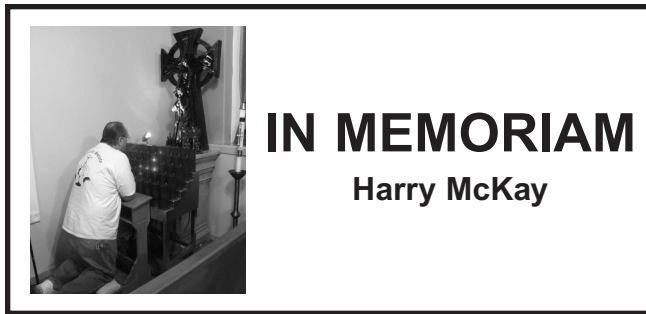
Don was born to Edward and Helen (Nowak) Gostomski in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He graduated from UW-Madison in Civil Engineering and worked for DOT Highway & Traffic for 32 years. On October 17, 1959 he married Virginia "Ginger" Davis. They have four children: Ann (Vern) Barnes, Laura (John) Haas, Jim (Kathy) and Jack (Erika) Gostomski and 11 grandchildren: Joshua, Kathleen and Christopher Barnes, Sierra and Adam Haas, William and Kathryn Gostomski, Samuel, Matthew, Stephen and Elizabeth Gostomski. He is survived by a brother, Richard (Carol) and sister, Mary Mastalish. He was an avid fisherman, hunter, traveler, dancer and volunteered for numerous organizations as a result of his sobriety of 44 years thanks to AA.

In addition, Don Gostomski was a member and leader of the Calix Society in Madison Wisconsin at his death on August 11th at home and at the age of 80. He was also an

International Board of Directors member for the Society for many years. Don had written to the convention for Calix in Philadelphia on August 2nd expressing his regrets at not being able to make a function he had faithfully attended for many years. Don had 44 years of sobriety when he died, and while the unit records are not precise, he was a member of Calix in the late 1970's when I first attended. Don was the driving force behind the unit's survival in the past couple of decades with the assistance of his wife Ginger. The picture says more about Don than I can, he was happy, optimistic, and unassuming, a faithful member of the Roman Catholic Church, the Calix Society and Alcoholics Anonymous.

The Board of Directors of Calix are grieving Don's passing and have begun the process to purchase and engrave a chalice and paten in his memory which will be then sent to missionaries in Uganda.

Jim E., Columbus, OH., member of The Board of Directors.



Harry McKay was a man's man, a marine. He was also the gentlest of souls that would do anything for anyone, especially if you had worn a military uniform. The Grays Ferry unit of Calix started in 2008. A year or two later Fr. Doug's brother started coming around and next thing we knew he was on fire for the Lord! He was the first president of the Grays Ferry unit and took his role very seriously. He invited all those he knew from the neighborhood he grew up in to come to Calix (I think he had something against x's). He took people to rehab, twelve step meetings, doctor's appointments, therapy, you name it Harry did it. He started a radio show, first with his good friend Eddie G and then with Fr. Doug, where they spoke about the Catholic Faith and recovery. He was also instrumental in starting a number of the programs that were held at St. Raphael's ARC (addiction resource center). Most of all he did anything he could to help his fellow veterans who suffered from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Many of the regular convention-goers first met Harry in 2011 at the convention in Philadelphia. The following year he made the 20-hour car ride with Fr. John Lyons, Joe McGuerin ("Camden Joe") and I for the 2012 convention in St. Paul. That trip is one I'll remember as long as I live!

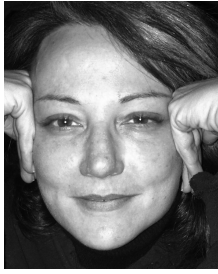
On July 4, 2013 Harry fell and suffered a broken neck resulting in his being paralyzed from the neck down. He would spend the next 14 months in different hospitals, rehabilitation centers and finally a nursing home.

Having a ventilator for all that time made it very difficult for him to communicate. When he would get frustrated when we couldn't figure out what he was trying to say he would just look away and start praying Hail Mary's. Over time he became a victim soul, praying often and seemingly grafting himself to the cross with Christ. He accepted what he was dealt. His room was always like a little shrine with statues, rosaries and pictures. If not for his physical condition it was rather uplifting to be there.

A number of Calix members in Grays Ferry started studying to become secular Franciscans shortly after the accident. Harry was allowed to join us and was permitted to be temporarily fast-tracked to full profession in the hope that he would recover and join us in our fledgling fraternity. Well he never did recover physically but spiritually it appeared that he made a complete recovery. As a secular Franciscan he can be buried in the habit and will have the the Franciscan burial rite during his viewing.

The Calix Society now has another saint pleading our case with Christ. I would recommend Fr. Doug and all their family to your prayers and not to hesitate to ask for Harry's intercession on behalf of our Society!

Submitted by Ken J., Philadelphia, Board Member



PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Gretchen S

Hello friends and members of Calix.

As the newly elected president of our Society, I would like to extend heartfelt thanks to each and every one of you. The growth and love I have experienced in the Calix community have made me want to shout from the rooftops. Were it not for the care of Mike S and Fr Bill a few years ago, I don't know if I would have found my way to this beautiful Church.

I hope that each and every one of you knows that you are not alone, and that that God's love surpasses all knowledge. Our struggles are made lighter by our Calix community, and we care for each other through Christ's love.

This year has been an exciting year for Mike and me. We moved to Tennessee and married the weekend after the convention in Philadelphia. We are making friends in the Catholic community, and have identified an opportunity to bring Calix to Tennessee.

We have many new opportunities to embrace.

The year has brought changes to the Calix community as well. We have our first unit forming in Ireland! The Holy Spirit continues to draw new members allowing groups to grow and potential new units to approach us.

We have had loss as well. In this issue of The Chalice, two members are recognized. I would like to extend my sympathy and prayers to each of you who has experienced loss and suffering this year. You are not alone. May God give you comfort.

In Christ's Love

Gretchen S

EDITOR'S NOTE

Mike Sanders

Reminder. I'm looking for first person accounts to publish in The Chalice. Forward your testimony to the question 'Why Calix?' to me drmikesanders@gmail.com Don't make me come over there!!

This past two months has been both filled with joy for Calix Members who attended the Convention in Philadelphia and heard about the efforts to canonize Matt Talbot. They've also been sad for the Society on a number of fronts. Our Chaplain, Fr. Tom, lost a brother and has been attending to those details. His column will return next issue.

In this issue, you'll see the obituary of a Board Member, Don G., and obituary of a member from Philadelphia, Harry M., who was a driving force to grow the society in Gray's Ferry. He's also the brother of Fr. McKay who is the Spiritual Anchor there.

We've also elected a new President, Gretchen S., and Vice-President, Marlene K. This is a monumental moment for the Calix Society as it is the first time a woman was elected to the office of President. We've had one woman who took over the office of President in the past. Congratulations to both Gretchen and Marlene!

The next convention is being planned and it seems as though it may be held in the greater DC-Baltimore area. There is also a pilgrimage being planned to Dublin, Ireland surrounding efforts to elevate Matt Talbot. More details on both will be coming shortly.

***What I learned about Matt Talbot at the
Calix Convention: An Anon's perspective***

Bruce G., Calix Northern Virginia/Baltimore

To be honest, Matt Talbot's story did not mean much to me prior to this year's Calix Convention. Sure, I knew he was a poor, working-class Dubliner who overcame his alcohol addiction through prayer and a return to practicing the Catholic Faith. A program friend had given me the script of "A Fiddler in Granby Lane" to read earlier this year. This theatrical play, first staged in 1999, covers all of the essential elements of Matt's life story: his drinking career; his relationship with his mother, father and siblings; "taking the pledge"; and the role religion played in his recovery. The play underemphasized Our Lady's role in Matt's recovery, I thought, based on the inclusion of Matt Talbot in a "Total Consecration to Mary" talk given by a local priest. But other people have recovered from alcoholism through practicing their faith, so I was left with the impression that Matt Talbot was important simply because his sobriety preceded A.A.

My impression changed with the opening lecture given by Father Brian Lawless, vice postulator for the cause of Matt Talbot. Father Lawless presented Matt Talbot's cause with vigor and enthusiasm, balanced by good humor and wit. And he retold the same basic story to which I was already familiar. But two new details, or points, hit home and opened my eyes to another way of seeing Matt Talbot. The first point that struck me was when Father Lawless quoted Matt Talbot as referring to St. Teresa of Avila, St. Theresa of Lisieux and St. Catherine of Siena as "Grande Dames." It was

almost as if Talbot knew these three saints personally, and had adopted some of their spirituality. Father Lawless went on to explain Matt's practice of passing notes to priests in confession, asking for clarification on certain points of faith, and Matt's further claim that the Holy Spirit would help him learn when the little notes were not enough. This description of Talbot's spiritual development, combined with an explanation of his ascetic practices (sleeping on boards, wearing chains, etc.) helped me see an interior dimension that I had previously missed. Matt Talbot was more of a universal role model than I had thought.

That Matt Talbot was a worthy universal role model was further driven home by the second attention-getting point. Father Lawless cited a Mexican priest from Guadalajara as using Matt Talbot as a role model for the working-class Catholic men of his parish during the Cristero War; this early 20th century counter-revolution took place at a time when Mexican workers were being forced to embrace atheistic Communism as a solution to their worldly problems. The citation was a bull's-eye for me: Matt Talbot was about "Pray and Work" (or "Ora et Labora" for those with a Benedictine temperament), or how to live one's freedom in Christ. My mind leapt to phrases like "Lay Apostle," "New Evangelization" and "witnessing in one's vocation". That's when Matt Talbot had me! Now I am praying for his beatification and canonization, too.

I am grateful for the Calix Fellowship for so many reasons. Making a new friend in Matt Talbot adds one more reason to the list.

*Day of Recollection for Philadelphia and
Wilmington units*

2014 Convention Highlights

Amy K, Philadelphia

Amy K, Philadelphia

The Philadelphia and Wilmington units held a day of recollection at the Carriage House at the Loyola Center on May 3rd. Participants included members from the Grays Ferry, Glenside, Media and Wilmington units. Thanks to the recommendation and referral by Paul M., we were privileged to have Fr. Michael Shea as the retreat director and Mass celebrant. Fr. Shea is responsible for promoting the Miraculous medal at the Miraculous Medal Shrine in Germantown. The day included Mass, confessions, the rosary, and two spiritual meditations including a deeper look into the apparitions of Our Lady to St. Catherine Laboure. Included in his meditations, Fr. Shea paralleled our Calix objectives in our Credo- the virtue of abstinence (and application of the 12 steps) and our journey towards sanctification. Special thanks to Fr. Tom Wheeler and Br. Jack McLane for hosting our units at the Carriage House. It was a day of both inspiration and introductions of Calix members across four units.

The 57th Annual Calix Convention was held at the Malvern Retreat House on August 1st-3rd in Philadelphia attended by approximately 50 members.

We opened our three day convention on Friday with Mass celebrated by Fr. John Lyons, Chaplain of the Glenside Group. After dinner, Mike Sanders shared welcoming comments and later celebrated his AA anniversary to close the evening. In between Marty Rotella inspired the convention with music and witness. He is a three time Grammy award nominee in Gospel music and very active in other ministries in New Jersey. We laughed, sang, and used accompanying hand motions to such songs as “Step by Step.”

Saturday opened with the opportunity for Eucharistic adoration. Our first speaker was Michael Murphy who is an addiction counselor and travelled to be with us from Dublin, Ireland. In his talk, he enhanced each step with a corresponding scripture passage. For instance, the scripture passage for Step Two was “for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (Philippians 2:13). Following his experience with Calix, Mr. Murphy decided to start a Calix group in Dublin!!

Fr. Brian Lawless (our keynote speaker) also travelled from Ireland and is the vice-postulator for the cause of Venerable Matt Talbot’s canonization. His first talk concerned the life of Matt Talbot and he dispelled at least one myth- that the chains that Matt Talbot wore around his waist were tightly bound. Fr. Lawless explained that the chains were loose-

ly worn as a symbol of his “enslavement to Mary” in his consecration to Mary. Fr. Lawless brought multiple second degree relics from Matt Talbot as well as a first degree relic. Fr. Doug McKay, Chaplain of Grays Ferry, celebrated Mass.

A business meeting followed where the membership was advised the Board was successful in cutting costs and building a prudent reserve. By unanimous affirmation, the Board of Directors activities and membership was affirmed. Gretchen S. and Marlene K. were elected as our Society’s new International President and Vice-President, respectively. Gretchen then spoke about her recovery and how she found Calix. Following dinner, Fr Lawless lead a Novena and healing service using the first degree relic. (Ed. Note: First degree relics are from the body, second degree relics were personal belongings, and third degree relics are things that come in contact with a first degree relic)

Sunday Bishop Maginnis, who approved the first unit in Philadelphia, celebrated Mass with us and we ended the convention with a “Call-up for Calix.” Members were randomly selected to share “Why Calix,” and in this sharing, members desiring to start new units were inspired and supported!

It was a fantastic convention and as Craig C. left the convention he was thinking, “It’s great to be in recovery and it’s great to be Catholic. Many of us would echo his statement!

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	
52 meditations, & their relation to the 12 Steps.	
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.

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THE CALIX SOCIETY
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