



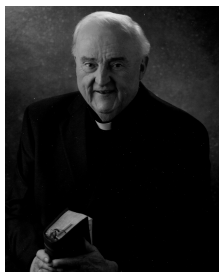
# the Chalice

CALIX NEWSLETTER

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## CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By Fr. Tom Gallenbach  
Associate Chaplain

### Go To Galilee

The outline of this article is taken from the Easter Vigil Mass celebrated at St. Peter's in Rome by Pope Francis. With the eight hour time difference between Las Vegas and Rome I was able to watch and pray the entire Easter Vigil Service with hours to spare before the service at our Church. The Vigil Service in Rome started at 1230 local and ended around 4 PM Thanks to EWTN.

Go to Galilee. From the gospel of Matthew 28-10 we read that an angel stood guarding the tomb when Mary the Mother of Jesus and Mary Magdalene arrived at the tomb. The angel told the women that Jesus was not here. He had risen from grave as he said. Go tell Peter and John and tell the others to go to Galilee and He would meet them there. Going to Galilee, the title of this homily is a metaphor for sending them back to the place where it all began. The place where Christ first called them to drop the nets they were mending and drop everything else they were attending and follow Him. This they did immediately and that was the beginning of their discipleship. It was electric, new and exciting. People were flocking to here this charismatic young man. He was healing the sick giving sight to the blind, mending the

lame and casting out demons. He was speaking in a way that everyone could understand what he was teaching for He taught using stories. After witnessing the scandal of the cross, the disarray and the depression of thought that all was lost; they went to go back to Galilee and be renewed.

Pope Francis told all of us to Go Back TO The GALILEE of our lives and be renewed. From the time of our Baptism, our First Confession, First Communion, Our Confession, Our Wedding or our Ordination, we were reborn, strengthened, forgiven and committed to a life time vocation. Go back, remember, relive and be renewed. Recall the time of your first communion when the Father, Son and Holy Spirit entered your whole being, giving you the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ as food for your journey. Food that would never perish. And food that promised us that if eaten we would never die. Go back and doubt no more, that Christ has broken once and for all the chains of death of the soul and death of the body that our soul would once more be able to fulfill its destiny given to our first parents. To live the life of the body and when that ended, enter into eternal life of intimacy with the Trinity for all eternity. And for someone like myself, to go back to Galilee and renew the day and the time when I made a decision to turn my life and will over to the power of God and follow the path and the steps of AA. Go back to the seashore of Galilee and renewed your faith in our beloved Church by re reading the three fold commission of St. Peter to lead the Church into all ages. Feed My Lambs, Tend My Sheep and Feed My Sheep. The fulfillment of the prom-

*Chaplain's Corner (cont. on pg. 2)*

Chaplain's Corner, (cont. from pg. 1)

ise made in Matthew 16:13: You are Peter and upon you I will build my Church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom. and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Let us go to Galilee and live and die for the Lord... A blessed Easter to all.



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Mike Sanders

### Saint John Paul II

This past Sunday, as our beloved Pope John Paul II was canonized, I kept thinking about the photo my family has of my brother meeting the pontiff. While a seminarian, he had a chance to participate in a private meeting with the Holy Father. The meeting was over in due course and they all went out and ate spaghetti. When it came time for me to get sober, and when I decided to become Catholic, I received a Papal Blessing from John Paul II – it's one of my cherished possessions.

This issue of the Chalice is a bit bigger than usual as I have received some wonderful first person accounts describing what our Catholic Faith, and Calix, has done to change their lives. I am also quite pleased that Fran Dancing Feather drew connections between her Indian heritage and the Catholic Tradition most of us understand better.

I want to hear from more members who wish to share their Calix experience in The Chalice. Or, you can share with us all what your group

does for meetings. Your experience printed here just might spark a flame for other groups. My email address is drmikesanders@gmail.com

In the next issue, we will be providing information about the convention in Philadelphia, August 1-3. The keynote speaker is the Advocate for the canonization of Matt Talbot. We will also have candidate profiles nominated for President/Vice-President.



## OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN

By Fran

"Dancing Feather" Greer

email: frandfg@yahoo.com

### Creator's Helpers

There are people from every faith on the planet that are special helpers of our Creator. This may be a life-long vocation for them or only a few isolated events. They touch our lives sometimes for only a moment or a few hours or days but if we are lucky, they return from time to time and we feel the super-charged love of the Master of the Universe over and over throughout our relationship with them. They are somehow able to humble us and express the love of the Divine so articulately that we may be healed from seemingly hopeless states of body, mind and spirit.

Out of the Mountain (cont. on pg. 3)

*Out of the Mountain, (cont. from pg. 1)*

If they happen to be Native American, people often call them "medicine people" although this label is not expressed the same way in our native languages. They are simply referred to as our "Creator's helpers." The reason for this is that no human being is considered a healer. There is only one Healer and that is our Maker. The Catholic faith teaches about the communion with Saints, which is our ability to talk to and learn from various individuals, who were decidedly some of our Creator's best helpers. Many were great gifted teachers, writers or extraordinary examples of

humans who walked like they talked, in nearly continuously prayerful lifestyles. No one is perfect but many have a gift of faith that is impressive to the point of seeming to interact constantly with the supernatural realm of the Divine. How did these individuals arrive at this particular station in physical life? We often hear stories of them being called by God. We also hear of their earlier lives that were often filled with horrific or nearly deadly events that can destroy many people but somehow they survived. Perhaps they survived through a strong faith or even

from a tiny whispered prayer that would appear no larger than a mustard seed. The point is that they recognized the healing they received, as nothing less than a miracle of Creation itself.

American Indians sometimes refer to these divine beings as Manitous. Our stories all the way back to the earliest Creation stories are filled with the activities of the Manitous and the love of our ancestors who are the most valuable keepers of our culture, our faith and our hope for the future of our people. Native and Catholics alike believe in ongoing communication with those who have gone before but the only one any of us actually pray to, is our Creator. Perhaps we ask for the intercession of the Manitous or Saints but our prayers for this intercession are addressed directly to the One Creator of us all. Natives and

Catholics share these common characteristics and at the same time many of us mistake these two faith journeys as nearly opposite in nature. Great gaping chasms of misunderstanding still drive a cruel historical wedge of resentment and fear between the two. There are still many wounded among us who refuse to forgive the atrocities of a dark past. At the same time, the Creator's helpers among us from both sides of this controversy, tell us that in order to discover Divine healing of the body, mind and spirit, we must forgive all things that we feel have nearly destroyed us. Holding on to resentment is like taking poison and expecting the other person to die! Perhaps our Common Creator will create a new "helper" who can teach us to truly "forgive us our trespasses, \*AS\* we forgive those who have trespassed against us." Aho and Amen!

### *My 12 Steps to Calix*

*By Gretchen C.*

A few years ago, as I watched the pale sunrise in a winter sky, I consciously acknowledged that my spiritual life was as barren and dead as the world outside my window. I was indifferent, apathetic and sad. Something in my soul was broken that my concept of God couldn't fix.

Earlier that year, I almost lost a loved one and was unsteady from the shock. That experience along with a few other disturbing events had brought me to road's end.

Just as some years back I accepted my alcoholism, I realized the higher power "of my understanding" wasn't working and I was in bad shape. I experienced a spiritual moment of clarity: "I was powerless over God".

AA got me sober, and by working the twelve steps I was staying sober on life's terms. However, the longer I stayed sober, the more uncomfortable I felt with my concept of "higher power".

Thanks to a loving sponsor and lots of meetings I have not had a drink since August of 2001. I eagerly seized the concept of "God of my understanding" and said my prayers to the whatever I crafted at that moment. My defiance of Christianity still existed. And just like alcohol, a God of my understanding worked until it didn't.

Like many of us in recovery, I have a sky high tolerance for pain. Putting down the drink dealt

*My 12 Steps to Calix (cont. on pg. 4)*



*My 12 Steps to Calix, (cont. from pg. 3)*

with my physical pain. AA dealt with my emotional pain. Now it was time to address my spiritual pain. My thinking went like this "the AA's with a strong faith in Christ don't question and confuse their faith. They know how to pray and live. Too bad I don't like Christianity." I didn't have that spiritual peace and joy I saw with some. I had no idea what I was missing and I let an old tape run my spiritual life.

I had been confused about God for a very long time. My grandfather was a beloved Southern Baptist Minister who later in life became a missionary. He and my grandmother were loving and serene, they exemplified good Christian lives.

As the young granddaughter of a prominent minister, I was acutely aware of my need to be proper and well behaved. One time I showed up for Bible study in grubby cut-offs and an old t-shirt, my hair in a tangled pony-tail. I felt dirty and ashamed. I was seven years old. One time I asked the Sunday school teacher if people slept in heaven. She said "no" that they "sang songs of praise 24/7". My interest in getting there decreased greatly. I still love naps. I was so shy I couldn't bear the thought of standing in front of the congregation and being baptized. What if I was found wanting?

My childhood was confusing, and not as calm others. My immediate family did not attend church unless my grandfather or his brother (a Cumberland Presbyterian minister) was pastor of a church in the vicinity. I don't recall much about the sermons, except I felt exposed and disingenuous and bored. Along the way, I internalized those feelings of not belonging and fell away from the church.

I did dream about Jesus once. I was crying at His feet, and He reached out and touched my shoulder and told me "it will be all right". I will never forget the feeling that I had when He touched my shoulder. It was as if all the pain and confusion and clouds were transformed into pure light.

However, when you are twelve, how do you tell anyone? I told myself it was because I was having a hard time at home and was subconsciously reconciling my confusion. I put away the idea of Jesus. I tried to find that peace for years through other means.

When I came into AA it was no problem for me to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity, and I was happy to turn my care over to a God of my (mis)understanding. My problem was that I couldn't define God.

The nature of my spiritual impoverishment told me that I was unlovable. My idea of a higher power wasn't working anymore. I began to earnestly pray for God to remove my shortcomings and to help me find Him.

During that hard time a few years ago, I described heaven as two dogs and me (my sponsor's heaven would be next door). That's it.

Me, my dogs, and a God of my understanding; my broken, arrested misunderstanding of God that I cobbled from bits of this and that and incapable of nourishment is who I was before I found Calix.

I was speaking to a friend in AA about my trouble defining my higher power and he said "why don't you let God define you?" It was as if a lightning bolt crashed down from heaven and awakened my soul. So I prayed some more. It was working. God was leading me to Him! I was so bereft of spiritual peace I prayed for an open mind and to know God.

My friend, Mike, suggested that I come with him to a Calix meeting and so I did. It was like going to my first AA meeting. I was frightened and sat in my car. Mike had given me directions how to find Calix at the church, but I was so nervous I got lost. I made it to Mass though, and my life changed. I felt at home, and very welcome. The Chaplain was gentle and kind. His voice was calming. I loved to hear about Jesus and the Church. The people in Calix make me feel like a true Christian.

I like to think of my story as twelve steps to the Church.

It is said that we stop emotional growth when we pick up the bottle: it works until it doesn't. I believe the same happens with spiritual growth. When I prayed to find God, God found me. God has always been there. My spiritual concepts needed guidance, and Calix provides that for me.

I was baptized and confirmed last Easter. I've been to a Calix convention, and I try to attend every meeting I can. I love the Calix Mass, and our discussions afterwards. Calix and our chaplains have taught me that each of us does matter to God.

My inner spiritual landscape has changed from a cold barren day to a place of comfort and love. I pray with ease and eagerly turn my will over to the care of God. And the gifts I've received as a result go well past my wildest dreams!

*Ed Note: Gretchen C. is an elected member of the Calix Society Board of Directors and has been nominated for President/Vice President at this year's election*

*How my brother's journey inspired the first  
Calix Society in Arkansas - by KD*

Sometimes, bad things can happen to good people and good people can make poor choices. There are no guarantees in life that prevent pain and suffering, but I will always take heart! A person is never alone if he/she has Jesus all along life's way to lighten the load, absorb the shock, provide the strength, give the courage. I think this is called God's grace – something we receive especially after taking Communion at Mass. Once straying from the lighted path, a person can get lost in the darkness and feel alone and be entrapped into many snares – some of his/her own making and some the work of the evil one. It takes much effort to get back on the lighted path. I have seen this struggle and what can happen when someone falls away from the Sacraments of the Catholic Church. It is an absolutely indescribably painful and helpless feeling and experience to watch a loved one worship worldly things and then fall victim to the false and empty promises - and there's nothing I can do to stop it. I've tried.

When I reconnected with my little brother after a couple of years of being apart, he was in the grips of an addiction to alcohol. Good friends and priests suggested I attend Al-Anon, which helped me quite a bit and where I learned some valuable and healing principles such as "I didn't cause it, I can't control it, I can't cure it." Still, what can I DO? Why doesn't the Catholic Church have an alcohol rehab program? Why is our Catholic Charities always sending inquiries to other churches or to other organizations when we could be doing something? I knew that my brother needed to reconnect with his Catholic faith and the Sacraments where he could find his strength. Towards this end, I did an Internet search to see what already existed.

The first search result in the list was something called "Calix Society". It was CATHOLIC! After reading about the organization, I was very impressed with the history and although it wasn't a full recovery pro-

gram, it was a compliment to a very successful one that many alcoholics have found recovery in: Alcoholics Anonymous. It said it was an extension of the 11th step of AA that calls for spiritual development. In AA, one calls God a "Higher Power" but in Calix the alcoholic can freely talk about the Holy Name of Jesus, which is a powerful prayer in and of itself. In the Calix materials the national office sent to me was this statement: "The ultimate goal of Calix is to lead members back to the rich sacramental life of the Catholic Church for it is in the Eucharist that we truly meet our Higher Power, our Lord Jesus Christ." This is exactly what I thought my brother needed. What I also liked about the organization was family and friends were also invited to come. This would include me, and I very much wanted to be there.

Since I work for the Catholic Diocese in my state, it was such a blessing to be able to directly speak with our Bishop and other staff members who could help get a chapter of the Calix Society established in our state, the very first one. The first meeting we held in 2012 was overwhelming because I was expecting about 5-7 people. We had advertised in all the parish bulletins in the state and approximately 30 people came, including my brother, to hear what Calix Society could offer them spiritually in their recovery. After the first successful meeting, the intent to establish a Calix Society chapter was approved by our Bishop and the charter was then signed by the Calix International Staff with the official date of March 12th, 2012. My brother appreciated the meetings and said it brought his recovery full circle. It meant a lot to him that the Catholic Church supported him in his recovery. Now, Calix Society is a part of our Catholic Charities alcohol/drug ministry and listed on our Diocesan website. We can offer Catholics, or anyone, this option as a part of their recovery – one we can call our own.

Our meetings on the 2nd Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. at the Catholic Diocese begin with a Mass celebrated by our Chaplain, or if he is

*How did I get here, (cont. from pg. 5)*

unavailable, by another priest and God always seems to provide this for us. After the Mass, we have hospitality that includes food and coffee/water and then we gather around a large group of tables to discuss the “Why Calix” topic, always chosen by a member. Sometimes it centers around an AA step of the month with the added spiritual flourishment or sometimes it is about a prayer or other spiritual topic. I relish the discussions because I am always learning something new – a prayer, a concept and these help me to understand my brother’s situation and where he might be in his journey.

As of this date, my brother has been in and out of several recovery programs. I understand that this sometimes is the case, and I pray that he will start “Letting Go and Letting God”. Calix is here for him when he is ready to come back, and he knows it is here, just like he knows my family is here and Jesus has never left him.

*Ed. Note: The Little Rock Group has been very active and has produced some wonderful informational pieces. Let me know if you’d like to see some of these materials. Good job Little Rock.*

### ***The Calix Society: God’s Gift -***

***By Brother R.***

When I sobered up in February 1990 I was a non-Catholic Christian. I had nothing against the Catholic Church. I was not raised in an environment that fostered animosity toward members of other Christian faiths or non-Christian religions. Though my character defects were many, anti-Catholicism was not one of them. One of the reasons I was able to embrace Alcoholics Anonymous was because it is a program not antagonistic toward people for whom religion is important. Being a Christian was not a hindrance but a help to getting sober using the 12-Steps.

Shortly after beginning my journey of recovery—a journey that has continued unabated these

past 24 years—I was blessed to meet a number of devout Catholic men and women for whom Jesus Christ was their “High Power.” Such joy, such kindness, such caring and compassion, such spiritual depth I had not seen in the members of my Christian denomination. “I want what you have”, I said. “Do what we do” they replied. And so I began my exploration of Catholicism. A decade later, during the Easter Vigil of the year 2000, I entered into full sacramental union with Christ and His Church. The man who was my RCIA sponsor has since become my AA sponsor.

In 2001 I was blessed with the opportunity to attend a conference in Minneapolis, MN sponsored by Guest House, the Church’s in-patient rehab for clergy and religious struggling with addiction. While there I was introduced to Calix quite by Divine Providence. As I entered the main conference room with over 500 seats I saw a table neat the back at which only one man was seated. I took a seat beside him. We struck up a conversation. It turned out that the man next to whom I was seated was a priest, Father B. from England and a friend of Bill W. & Doctor Bob. We became fast friends.

During the course of that weekend Father B introduced me to Calix through his own personal testimony and by showing me the Calix literature available at a table outside the conference room, manned by Jim, our former Calix secretary. Shortly after returning home I became a member of Calix.

A few years after my initial meeting with Father B, I was given the opportunity to travel to England to be part of the annual Calix Retreat held for Calix member from throughout the UK. Calix members come from various parts of the British Isles to attend this retreat held each year on the weekend after Easter Sunday. I have been gifted with several return trips to the UK to be part of their Calix retreat. It was at one such retreat that I was officially inducted into Calix.

My love for the Calix Society is rooted my love for Christ and His Church. It is a love that has deepened over the past 13 years. In Calix I am free to proclaim that Jesus Christ is my Higher Power. I am free to say without apology or qualification

*The Calix Society: God’s Gift (cont. on pg. 7)*



*The Calix Society: God's Gift, (cont. from pg. 6)*

that through Him, and unheard of in my drinking days or my decade of sobriety prior to joining Calix. Because of the language we use in Calix to help understand the Steps—which is to say the language of 2000+ years of spiritual wisdom—ever single step of the 12--Steps has taken on a depth of meaning unmatched by anything I have heard spoken in any 12--Step meetings or 12--Step literature found anywhere else.

Too often at the various 12--Step meetings I attend—which by their very design are open to people of all religions or no religion at all—I am aware of a distinct and at times overt dislike for any personal sharing that smacks of religion in general, Christianity in particular, and Catholicism even more particularly. In Calix I need not worry about someone having an issue with me using Jesus' name for something other than a swear word during my share. In Calix I don't have to apologize for my devotion to Christ or my love of the Church He founded.

This is not to say that I have turned my back on any 12--Step meeting; quite the contrary in fact. Because of what God has given me through Calix I am able to attend any 12--Step meeting anywhere and apply my Faith in Jesus Christ and the things He has taught me through His Church to the Steps and to what I hear shared by others in a way that makes Meetings not less but more spiritually beneficial to me. And, God be praised, on occasion I am able to share a little something I've learned in Calix that will help another sick, suffering person struggling against his or her drug of choice to find freedom.

At the end of the day I am just a garden--variety drunk. I got sober through the grace of God in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit and working the 12 Steps. In the beginning, before I was Catholic or a member of Calix, God used the 12--Steps and the fellowship of AA and other 12--Step groups to get me clean & sober [Steps 1, 2, 3].. After a decade in the Halls Christ chose to bring me deeper into sobriety by calling me into His Church, there to encounter the very God of the Universe through the Sacrament, most especially the Sacrament of Reconciliation [Steps 4 through

10] and the Eucharist wherein Christ gives His very Self: Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity [Steps 11]. And through His Church God introduced me a great gift, the Calix Society [Step 12]. +++++

*Brother R. is a hermit living in the Diocese of Portland, Maine. You can learn more about him and his ministry of intercessory prayer by visiting [littleportionhermitage.org](http://littleportionhermitage.org).*

## 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 \$12.00 Ppd.  
(Grays Ferry Chaplain)

### 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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