



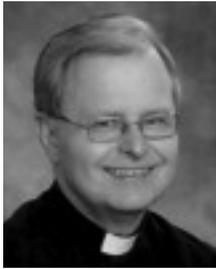
the Chalice

CALIX NEWSLETTER

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CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

By Fr. William Cawley
Associate Chaplain

**Praised be Jesus Christ! Now and Forever.
Amen.**

In writing about the Holy Eucharist, Pope Benedict XVI said: "It is through faith that men and women express their deepest decision about the ultimate meaning in their lives" Sacramentum Caritatis (Sacrament of Charity – the Eucharist). How does that high sounding statement get translated into our lives? How do we live out our faith?

I buried Helen the day before yesterday. She was one of our senior parishioners, a ninety-two year old living witness to the faith. I buried a saint.

Helen was a native of York. She was born here. She lived her life here. She died here. All in this south central Pennsylvania county. She was married to her husband John for forty years and lived as a widow here in the midst of her family and friends all these years since.

Helen lived her faith, simply and yet profoundly. She began her education in a one room public school house in the county, after

which she transferred to St. Mary's School with its twelve grades.

After her marriage to John, the children started to arrive, six of them over the years. In the evenings Helen would read to the little ones from a book of short stories. Each of the stories had a moral lesson to learn. Helen would go in with the children to say their night prayers with them and then she would sprinkle their beds with holy water to ward off any evil during the night.

Helen valued her Catholic education. She wanted all of her children to have one. They all graduated from St. Mary's School and then went on to York Catholic High School, which succeeded St. Mary's, for secondary school. Each fall Helen would take out a loan to pay for the children's school expenses: tuition, uniforms and such. During the school year, she would take in laundry and sewing to pay off the loan, which she would accomplish by the time summer came around. The next fall she would start all over again. She never complained; she simply worked...and prayed...and worked...for her children, day by day, week by week, year by year.

In her later years, living in a senior citizens' apartment complex across town, she would often take a cab to Sunday Mass if she didn't have a ride. After Mass, she would come out-

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

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

side to wait for her way back home and she would stop by to greet me. In her soft, gentle, kindly voice, she would thank me for Mass and slip a five or ten dollar bill into my hand and tell me, "That's for you, Father." As I would thank her, I would be near tears. Such kindness, such devotion, such reverence for a priest. Such faith.

Last Thursday the pastor was overwhelmed with items to be seen to before he left for a week long retreat. The call came in that Helen seemed to be near death at the nursing home and would someone please come out to anoint her. He asked me if I would mind going out. I was delighted to do so.

I entered the quiet of her room. The only sound was the puff and whispered whoosh of the oxygen machine. I spoke to her, but she didn't seem to respond. I began the rite of anointing and, when I placed my hand on her head to call down the Holy Spirit upon her, she opened her eyes and smiled at me. It so startled me that I started the ritual over so that she would hear all of the prayers. She never opened her eyes again nor did she speak, as I completed the Anointing of the Sick and gave her the special blessing for the dying, and then just visited with her. I took my leave and promised her my love and prayers.

At the funeral luncheon her oldest daughter Anna said to me, "When I got out to Mother's later in the afternoon on the day before she died, she kept smiling and she tried to tell me something. When you mentioned to me during the funeral preparations that you had seen her earlier that afternoon and given her the

Sacrament of the Anointing, I knew what she was trying to tell me. She was trying to tell me that you had visited her and anointed her. A day or so earlier she had hoped that you would stop by. And you did! And did you know, Father, that Mom always hoped that you would have her funeral because she really liked you? You were her favorite priest."

Since the pastor was going to be away, he asked me if I would have Helen's funeral, and I had said yes, not knowing when he asked me what her wishes were!

God is good! He was good to Helen. He is good to me. He is good to you!

As we begin this Year of Faith in our Church, we are invited to reflect and to study the truths of our faith, to be clearer in our own understandings and to be stronger in our own witnessing of our faith. Knowing the truths is one thing; understanding them is quite another. We need to know more and better than we did from our Catholic school or religious education classes; we are adults and need to encounter our faith on an adult level – and in a sober way. And that's not through the sound bites on news programs or the off handed comments of prominent people who style themselves "Catholic." We have Sacred Scripture, catechisms and teaching statements of our bishops and our Holy Father. As grown ups, we need a "grown up" and accurate understanding of our faith.

But more important than that, we need to live our faith, as Helen did. We won't get to heaven based on what we know but on how we lived by what we knew. As Father Peter John Cameron, O.P. wrote in *Magnificat* magazine,

Chaplain's Corner (cont. on pg. 3)

Chaplain's Corner, (cont. from pg. 2)

“For faith is acknowledging an exceptional Presence that changes us, fulfills us, that reveals us to ourselves and makes us want to adhere to it with all the strength of our freedom.” We believe in an exceptional Presence all right. Beyond the simple notion of a Higher Power, we believe in Jesus, true God and true Man, whose birth we shall celebrate at Christmas, and whose Way we live, one day at a time, as sober, faith-filled Catholics.

May God bless you and may Mary keep you in your Sober Life of Faith!



Thoughts on Being Sent

I may never forget my brother's first Christmas Eve homily, for two reasons. A few days following that Christmas, my mother asked what it would take for her to become Catholic. She had already taken residence in assisted living and remembered hearing that, despite his many illnesses, Pope John Paul II had died peacefully. That attracted her. My brother confirmed her into the Church during a private Mass for our family shortly into the New Year. More memorable, though, was the way he asked us to imagine a meeting called by God.

Assembled were a host of angels and the Son. God described His concern about how the children were straying in the conduct of

their lives and His desire to send a representative. He set the stage of the mission by describing how the one selected will be born into poverty and know a difficult life of labor until the time was right. Then, the representative will be ridiculed, scorned, and made to be a public buffoon. Following a particularly hasty trial, they will be subjected to a very painful death. All of these conditions aside, the representative will carry a message of Hope which will attract many to conform their lives to His.

The assembled couldn't make eye contact and the room fell silent until a singular voice was heard, "Send Me". "Send Me Father, and I will carry Your message" was the commitment from the Son.

A few weeks ago, Ken in Philadelphia brought to the Board's attention a passage in AA's General Service Office meeting minutes found on Silkworth.com that shows there were discussions as to whether AA would interact with Calix or not. Bill W. and another Board member were in favor of interactions, and others were against. It also recounts that Bill W. had won the discussion, but how AA would interact remained vague.

Shortly, the Calix Board and the Archive's Committee will begin publishing letters between Calix and Bill Wilson on our website. We may find ways to publish these to a wider audience to enhance the growth of our Society. I mention this since we as individuals may feel reluctant to approach potential members in AA or other 12 Step meetings because we view ourselves as an "Outside Issue". Being that we're mentioned in AA GSO minutes, and

President's Column (cont. on pg. 4)

President's Column, (cont. from pg. 3)

it was Bill's intention to interact with Calix, nothing is farther from the truth!

As groups, what are we doing to attract new members? Do we have business cards available which include the location and time of our meetings? Do we pass these out to potential members? Are we contacting local parishes about our meetings? Do we ask that information be published in parish bulletins? What are we doing 'To Be Sent'?

Beyond a doubt, the most common thing we hear from new members is "I never knew you existed." Let us enter the New Year unlike the angels who couldn't make eye contact - who in your group is willing to step up? Tell me about your successes and I'll include them in an upcoming message -

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After all, perception has everything to do with a belief in miracles. How do we perceive human life and all of Creation? Do we see it as a miraculous event? We are actually able to change our perception and learn to see everything around us as a profound miracle. Photosynthesis that turns sunlight into the green leaves and plants that cover the mother earth are divine miracles. Even though science may be able to describe photosynthesis by a series of chemical reactions, this fact does not remove it's credibility as a miracle of the natural world. Many native peoples around the planet have a divine connection with the natural world of supernatural healing and faith. It is the traditional way for many of us.

There is a religious order of Catholic nuns who live in Big Bear, California. They are called the Sisters of the Sacred Heart. A few years ago their founder was diagnosed with a terminal illness and told by her doctors that she would soon die. She asked everyone she knew to pray for her. She wanted her friends and family to pray that she would have either a miraculous healing or a miraculous death. Perhaps, there are many among us that have difficulty perceiving death as "miraculous" in any way at all. Her prayer request was her personal testimony of a very strong faith in the hereafter. She set an example for those who would continue the charity work she had started. She had a very peaceful passing among her peers, who quickly reported that Sister had indeed experienced a miraculous death. So what was the actual miracle in this story? Perhaps, the miracle was the faith she passed on to others, that a loving Creator would never let you die alone without taking your faith wherever you go, even into the Great



OUT OF THE MOUNTAIN
 By Fran
 "Dancing Feather" Greer
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Miracles—Everything or Nothing?

Are there really miracles? Do we believe in miracles? Some of us in recovery believe that we are clean and sober by the grace of a loving Creator. A "grace" is a free gift. It may come to us even though we may be completely undeserving of any kind of gift. Perhaps, the free gift of recovery is a real, living miracle.

Out of the Mountain (cont. on pg. 5)

Out of the Mountain, (cont. from pg. 4)

Faraway! We have seen throughout history that people of every chosen faith on earth, who have a powerful faith in their Creator, are often great heroes among their peers. It is their commitment to their own spiritual lifestyle that makes them strong human beings.

Intention is the beginning of any commitment. Do we insist on happy endings? Do we believe that love is stronger than evil? Both loving intentions and evil intentions are very powerful motivators, each in their own right. If our intention is to harm others, we probably will to some extent. If we choose the darker side of existence and commit to it, we will be able to attract and magnify that same darkness, at least within our own lives. If we choose love we will be able to attract and magnify it not only in our own lives, but in the lives of others. Love and spiritual commitment are very strong healers. The twelve steps afford us the opportunity to choose love, commitment, intention and focus that can heal us and change our entire lives and the lives of others who are on the same healing journey.

Focus is a learned activity. It takes practice and help from others, to achieve a strong focus on the healing journey of twelve-step recovery. We already have expressed the intention to recover from our broken past and seemingly hopeless state of body, mind and spirit. Now we are faced with the choice to commit and focus. If we agree to be teachable, honest, open minded and willing every day, we are focused and committed. If we trust our Creator as we understand Him, clean our own internal house and help others recover, we will enter into a world of constant miracles. We will

come to expect to find them everywhere. We will be living the divine miracle of our own personal dance within the miraculous sunlight of the Great Spirit.

Calix in the 21st Century

I must apologize for the extended downtime of the website in the September/October time-frame. We were attempting to upgrade a lot of the software that supports the website and ran into multiple issues. In the future we will work more closely with the vendor to insure we don't experience anything like this again.

As Christmas is upon us, please remember to access the Calix website first (www.calixsociety.org) and click on the Amazon banner before shopping at Amazon. Calix will get a percentage of your purchase!

If you use Facebook we can search on "Calix", and you will find two pages, one for the national Calix organization at "Calix Society" and one for the Philadelphia units at "Philly Calix". You can "like" one or both to get the latest updates from Calix. Let me know if your unit has a Facebook page, and we can list in in an upcoming issue of The Chalice!

The membership renewal notices were recently sent out for 2013. You can renew on the website by clicking logging on to the website and clicking on "membership". Another option that is available is to become a "lifetime" member by making a recurring monthly donation of as little as \$5. To use this option log on to the website and click on "donate". You can then choose the monthly amount and then click on "subscribe" to complete the process using PayPal. The amount chosen can be paid with your credit card or checking account.

Calix in the 21st Century (cont. on pg. 6)

Calix in the 21st Century, (cont. from pg. 5)

Speaking of “donate”, if you are in the position to make “year-end” charitable contributions for tax purposes, please consider making a donation to The Calix Society. You can donate as little or as much as you want by going to the donate page of the website and clicking on the “Donate” button.

Thanks for your ongoing support of the society!

Help with any part of the website is available by emailing help@philly-calix.com.

God’s Goodness by Mary Costello

There are a lot of not-very-nice things about growing older. In my case, growing older has meant not being able to drive, a clumsy (often dangerous) walk, fatigue and pain. I have spoken with many people who complain of loneliness, being cut off from friends and family and a lousy diet. Sometimes the lousy diet is dictated by a tummy not eager to accept certain (favorite?) foods or the inability to cook the things we’ve always loved.

But the downside is often balanced out by people’s goodness, little messages of God’s love showered down on all of us. I’ve had people (even little children, usually boys reminded by a parent) who were fifteen feet in front of me wait so they can hold the door for the little old lady with the cane. Friends wait to cross a street to offer an elbow to assist with the curb.

Folks in my “condo-munity” bring my garbage can and recycle bin to the garage on the days I forget to return them to their proper home. Nobody ever yells at me when I forget.

My family continues to provide for my every need. Just call me “Queen Mary.” There’s a line in an old poem that reads, “When she frowned, all smiles ceased together.” That’s my life.

Another plus is the fact that no one ever asks for my help. Friends who move have to find someone with feet in working order. Family members hanging wallpaper better call in a professional. Lucky for them (professionals and family members alike).

When someone invites me for lunch, I don’t feel guilty for not offering to help with the dishes. They know I’d probably trip over the dog dish in the kitchen and break all their good china.

I can sit all morning and watch the birds in my backyard and not feel guilty. There’s a song in “Mary Poppins” that invites us, “Feed the birds, tuppence a day.” That’s obviously pre-inflation prices. It’s quite a bit more expensive in 21st C America. However, guilt-free bird watching is cheap at any price.

Speaking of birds and bird watching, I hope all of you are doing some morning reading /meditation while you’re watching the little wrens fly in for breakfast. It makes all the difference in the world in how we face the day. Here’s a morning prayer to remind us of being grounded in God’s love. It’s from “A Little Book of Celtic Prayer” edited by Anthony Duncan and it was written in the 10th C. The author is unknown (I have shortened it a bit):

I wish, O Son of the Living God, ancient King, for a secret hut in the wilderness that it may be my dwelling.

A very blue shallow well to be beside it, a clear pool for washing away sins through the grace of the Holy Ghost.

A beautiful wood close by around it on every side, for the nurture of many voiced birds to shelter and hide in.

Facing south for warmth, a little stream across its enclosure, a choice ground with abundant bounties which would be good for every plant.

A lovely church decked with linen, a dwelling for God of Heaven, then bright candles over the holy white Scriptures.

This is the housekeeping I would undertake: I would choose without concealing fresh leeks, hens, speckled salmon, bees.

My fill of clothing and of food from the King of good fame, and for me to be sitting for a while praying to God in every place.

I'd only add some good books and a good CD player for my music. I'd be content for ever. How about you?

In Memoriam

Please let us know when we have lost a Calix friend!

Beatris Jacques - Omaha NE Unit
Dec. 21, 1920 – Oct. 20, 2012

"May her soul rest in peace...."

I am enclosing a contribution of \$25.00 because I wish to support the society in its apostolate to recovering alcoholics. Please send me a membership card and place my name on "The Chalice" mailing list.

Name _____

Street _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Apt/Unit _____

Calix Unit(s) I attend _____

Telephone (_____) _____

Email _____

“The Holy Father renews his Apostolic Blessing to all who collaborate in this important apostolate at the service of Christ's brethren.” (Letter from: Cardinal Villot, June, 1977)

CALIX LITERATURE	
No Turning Back by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC	\$17.00 Ppd.
Drop the Rock (New!) Removing Character Defects By Bill, Todd and Sara	\$10.00 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.
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The Soul of Sponsorship <i>From letters between Bill W. & Fr. Dowling</i> by Robert Fitzgerald, S.J.	\$13.00 Ppd.
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The 12 Steps and Catholic Spirituality by Fr. Leo Dolan	\$1.00 ea.
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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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Please check your label-

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

Consider joining the Gratitude Club.