



# the Calice

Volume 49

July – August 2022 Issue No. 6



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

By Ken J.

- Two important feast days in my life occur back-to-back in August. On August 14<sup>th</sup> we celebrate the feast of St. Maximilian Kolbe and the following day – or even the same day if you go to the Vigil Mass – is the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

I learned of Maximilian Kolbe in the mid-1990's through a Catholic website, catholicity.com. It was one of the early Catholic websites and I found it soon after attending a retreat in 1993 where I had spiritual awakening and began my conversion in earnest. I had started praying the rosary with a few friends. We called ourselves "the 3 Beads" and whenever 2 or 3 of us got together the rosaries would come out. Through our love of Mary two of us found out about the Knights of Immaculata and Kolbe.

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## President's Column, by Ken J. *(continued)*

On the feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (November 21) in 1997, my friend Paul and I travelled to New Jersey to hear a presentation by Bud MacFarlane, Sr. and afterwards we asked Bud if he would witness our consecration to Jesus through Mary. This would be the first of three Marian consecrations that I did. I would later do Fr. Gaitley's 33 Days to Morning Glory and then St. Louis deMontfort's consecration. I firmly believe that my life is what it is today as a result of my relationship with Mary. She introduced me to Saints like Maximilian Kolbe and Louis deMontfort. She has put so many people in my life that have helped me grow in my faith (and I hope I have returned the favor!).

Returning to St. Maximilian Kolbe. I learned about St. Kolbe before the Venerable Matt Talbot. I also learned that St. Kolbe is a patron saint for addicts. It is likely that I did not hear about the Venerable Matt Talbot at that time because he is not yet canonized. St. Kolbe was not an addict himself. Instead, he volunteered to be put to death in a starvation bunker in the concentration camp of Auschwitz. A husband and father had been designated for the bunker but, hearing his pleas, St. Kolbe volunteered to take his place. He did not die fast enough for the Nazis, so he was given a lethal injection of carbolic acid so his bunker could be used for the next to be "starved". It was that injection that earned him the title, "patron of addicts". It was only fitting that St. Kolbe would receive the injection on August 14<sup>th</sup>, the day before the woman he loved so much would eventually be celebrated - the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary. St. Kolbe died in 1941 and the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary did not become a dogma of the Catholic faith until November 1, 1950.

Prior to his arrest, St. Kolbe created a worldwide movement of people who became Knights of the Immaculata - people who would work for and with the Blessed Mother to bring souls closer to her Son. How many people do we know in recovery that have found their way back to Jesus through Mary? So many alcoholics and addicts who didn't think they were worthy of a relationship with Jesus but got there through his Mother. I was one of them!

I was close enough to St. Kolbe that when we were due to have a child in 1998, I wanted to name him Maximilian. My first two children were Megan and Matthew and Meg and Matt had decided that the next child should also have a name beginning with the letter "M". I thought Maximilian was a shoe-in. That being said, my wife Sue wouldn't have it, so instead, we have Michael Kolbe. And just for giggles God decided to give us a fourth child, three years later that we named Mary Katherine.

I once attended a talk given by Fr. Donald Calloway. In the talk he mentioned that Jesus was the only person who was able to create his mother. And if you really think about it, if you could create your own mother, wouldn't you preserve her sin AND the pain of death. I had always questioned these truths until it clicked one evening that I would do the same thing if I could. In addition to the theological arguments, from a human perspective it made perfect sense. I recently learned, that we also get to celebrate an octave this week. I knew of the feast of the Queenship of Mary but did not realize it was seven days after the Assumption. So, if you include the August 15<sup>th</sup>, it is 8 days from the Assumption to the Queenship and this jubilant time is kicked off by the feast of St. Maximilian Kolbe.

St. Maximilian Kolbe, Pray for us! Blessed Virgin Mary, Pray for us!

Ken Johnston, Interim President

On the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

## **The Holy Spirit Was With Us – 64<sup>th</sup> Annual International Calix Society Retreat by: Heather O. (Editor)**

The 64<sup>th</sup> Annual International Calix Society Retreat was held on August 5-7 at the scenic and peaceful Washington Retreat House in Northeast Washington, D.C. It was such a blessing that the retreat house was adjacent to the Saint John Paul II National Shrine and within walking distance of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. There were approximately 40 retreatants including Retreat Director Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie, OMI and Father Paul from the Diocese of Arlington.

### **Archbishop Sylvain Lavoie, OMI**

Our esteemed Retreat Director, Sylvain Lavoie is Archbishop Emeritus of Keewatin-Le Pas and a member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. Archbishop Lavoie primarily works with the First Nation communities in the provinces of Alberta and Saskatchewan in Canada. Lavoie shared intriguing, and sometimes painful, stories of this missionary work. Mostly, stories of addiction, redemption and conversion.

Lavoie has a unique ability to unite the “lessons learned” from his missionary work to the 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous. His talks drew us in and made us think about the quality of our own emotional sobriety. Are we truly working steps 6 & 7? Are we living in the solution? Is there someone we need to forgive? Do we need to forgive ourselves?

Lavoie also shared stories about growing up in a French-Canadian farming family. The stories described his complicated and sometimes troublesome relationship with his “workaholic” father who often neglected his children. Unfortunately, this father-son relationship served as dysfunctional model for Lavoie’s future relationships. Early adulthood proved difficult for Lavoie – he began to develop troubling relationships of his own – including the relationship with himself.

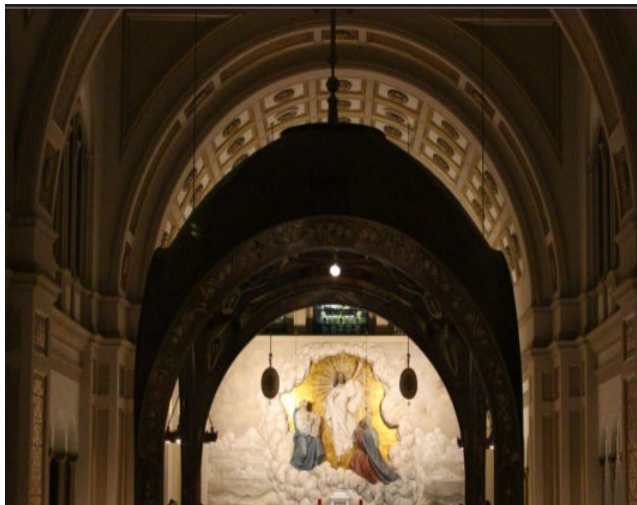
### **The Retreat**

The Holy Spirit moved and surprised all weekend. He provided good counsel and spiritual moments. He was there in our hearts, and we heard Him through people, places and events – all weekend. A friend and fellow retreatant told me that she woke up on Sunday morning and felt a profound shift - a spiritual experience. Her eyes were opened. What an exhilarating way to start your last day of retreat!

One of the absolute highlights of the weekend were the site trips on Saturday. You had a choice of tours – Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Saint John Paul II National Shrine, Capuchin College (St. Padre Pio) or the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land. I chose the Franciscan Monastery and I’m so glad I did. The experience of being in such a holy space, the artwork, the architecture, the beautiful gardens, the carved marble alters, the holy statues, the history and last, but not least, the incredibly realistic reproductions from the Holy Land. One of the most profound spiritual moments was when I was standing before the most beautiful rendition of the Lord’s Transfiguration. I was mesmerized. The artwork was three dimensional and I truly felt like I was there on Mount Tabor witnessing the Lord Jesus Christ in all His glory. My mind was racing, my breathing was steady, and all of my senses were on fire. And then, a fellow retreatant reminded me of what day it was – August 6 – The Feast of the Transfiguration of Jesus Christ. Come Holy Spirit Come!!!

## The Holy Spirit Was With Us – 64<sup>th</sup> Annual International Calix Society Retreat by: Heather O. (Editor) (continued)

The second highlight, a true treat, was the “closing circle” ceremony led by Archbishop Lavoie. Every retreatant had a few minutes to share their experiences from the weekend. It was wonderful to hear the stories of the transformed hearts and minds! Once everyone finished sharing, Archbishop Lavoie began reading a poem titled, “Changing My Direction” by Ricky W. Mr. W. is currently serving a prison term. He wrote the poem not long ago. As the Archbishop began reading, my friend and fellow retreatant’s cell phone rang. It was Ricky W calling. COME HOLY SPIRIT COME!!!



*The Transfiguration of the Lord  
Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land  
In America*

This is my Son,  
whom I love.  
Listen to him!

Mark 9:7



Changing My Direction  
By Ricky White

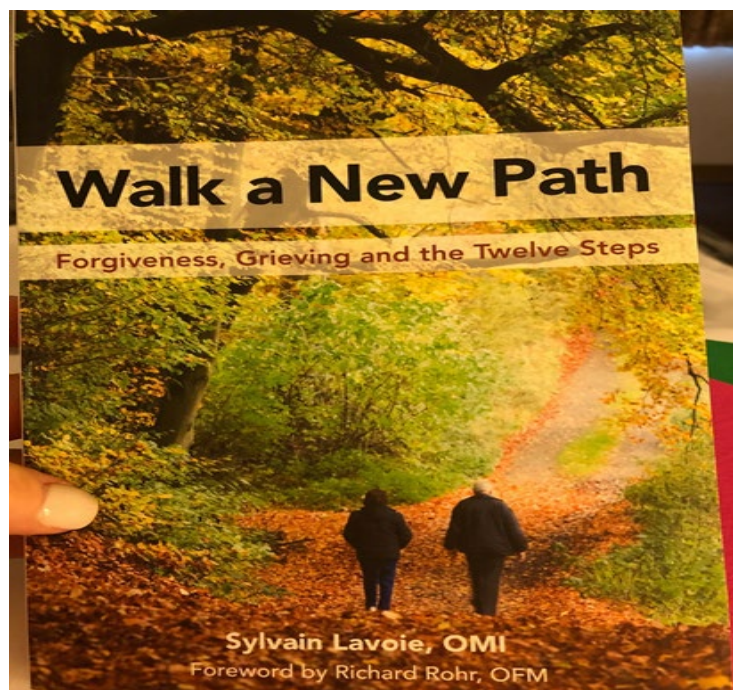
Lord, here I stand before you, professing to make a heart-filled change  
My mind, my emotions, and whole life, I must now and always rearrange  
I've come to a greater conclusion today - of what type of man I should really be  
It's to seek more growth in knowing You, - while trying to change more of me  
I believe in all that you are, to the very depths of my heart and soul  
And Faith, Love, and Hope, - will surely motivate me in my every goal  
Years ago, I thought I was making so much progress with my salvation  
But I slipped and fell, my path detoured by some strife and tribulation  
And though it was a temporary set-back, I've been reborn by conviction  
I've picked up the pieces and I'm moving onward, Changing My Direction  
All that pride I said I gave up - "Well", - I finally let it all go  
Becoming more humble and obedient, - truly reaping all that I sow

In all my affairs I die daily, my aspirations of being more like you  
While saying and doing all that exalts you, - enduring some suffering too.  
So, guide me each and every day, those things that I shall do and say  
For I'm Changing My Direction, to glorify you in every way  
And, I'll stop complaining as much, about the things that run interference my way  
While focusing more on your Doctrine of Grace, while living Just For Today  
So, let's reconcile all this together, and fill me as I grow a little more  
Know that this transformation was needed, - so my spirit will not die, "but soar!"  
And because I'm Changing My Direction, all things have passed, - "I've become New"...  
I'll work on my character with Godly principles - while producing good fruit too.  
So, Continue to watch over me Lord, as I pursue a better life of distinction  
Because, all this is really about glorifying you, - while I'm Changing My Direction"  
By Ricky L White (BCC)

Phil 4:13 , Rom 12:2 , Col 3:10 , Gal. 4:20



2022 64<sup>th</sup> Annual International Calix Society Retreat



## This is My Body by: Father Douglas McKay, Calix Society Chaplain

There is a delightful story about a religious teacher and her catechism class. While in church, Sister pointed at the crucifix and then at the tabernacle asking her pupils, “Who can tell me the difference between Jesus on the crucifix and Jesus in the tabernacle?”

A little girl raised her hand, stood in the midst of her classmates, and answered. “Well, Sister, it’s like this: on the crucifix you can see Jesus, but He’s not really there. In the tabernacle you can’t see Jesus, but He’s really there!”

During a homily, Saint John Vianney, standing in the pulpit, pointed at the tabernacle, and proclaimed, “He is there! He who loves us so much!”

My first memory of the Real Presence of Jesus in the tabernacle happened when my grandmother took me by the hand and walked me to Saint Anthony’s Church in Philadelphia for the celebration of the saint’s feast day. During the Mass, June 13, when I was about 5 years old, I smelled the fragrant flowers and saw the ascending incense. Hearing the melodious hymns caused my spirit to soar higher than the choir loft where I knelt next to my grandmother looking down at all the singing worshippers. In the rainbow light, piercing through the stained-glass windows, I watched grandma fixating on the white host elevated in priestly hands during the sounds of resonating bells.

Before the Mass ended, I focused on the priest who was placing a golden cup into a golden box. In the sacred silence, I pulled on grandma’s dress, and I asked, “What’s he doing down there?” “Shh, Father’s putting Jesus in the tabernacle.” “Really?” I asked. “For real,” she said. “Well, won’t he get a sore back in there?” “Shh,” she whispered, placing her index finger over her puckered lips.

Today, I really believe in the Real Presence of Jesus in all the tabernacles of the world, not because grandma told me so, but because Jesus said so. How can our protestant brothers and sisters miss the Eucharistic truth and how can so many Catholics not get this vital truth after pondering the “the Bread of Life” discourse? (John 6: 22-71)

In this Gospel passage, Jesus proclaims *nine* consecutive times and speaks the double ‘Amen’ *four* times to tell us most solemnly about His Real Presence in the Most Blessed Sacrament. Like teachers preparing their students for final exams, the divine teacher highlights what’s really important for the test of life. We would do well, spiritually speaking, to let “the Bread Of Life” discourse penetrate our immortal souls, especially these verses of the *Double Amen*: “Amen, amen, I say to you... Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life... Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven... Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life... Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. “As a result many of his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him.” He let them go. “Jesus then said to the twelve, ‘Do you also want to leave?’ Simon Peter answered him, ‘Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.’” So vital!

Surely, He meant what He said!



**This is My Body by: Father Douglas McKay, Calix Society Chaplain (*continued*)**

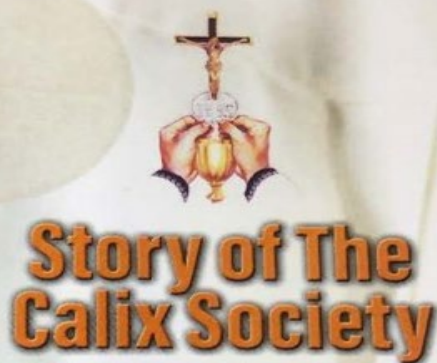
The mother of a child—who was preparing for First Holy Communion—asked her son, “Johnny, what is it that you are going to receive in Holy Communion?” “Oh mommy, it’s not *it*, but the Body of Jesus.” “Johnny, it looks like a wafer of bread.” “Yes, it does; but *it’s* not.” “How do you know, my son, that it is the Body of Jesus?” “Because, mommy, Jesus said so, and He ought to know!”

On the crucifix we can see Jesus there, but He’s not really there. In the Most Blessed Sacrament—in all the tabernacles of the world—we can’t see Jesus there, but He is really there! How do we know? Jesus said so, and He knows.

*While they were eating, Jesus took bread,  
said the blessing, broke it, and giving it to his disciples  
said, ‘Take and eat, this is my body.’*

Matthew 26:26

***Father Douglas McKay’s newest book is ready for sale!  
Stay tuned for sale information.***



**CATHOLIC  
SPIRITUALITY  
FOR ADDICTED  
PERSONS**

*Father Douglas McKay  
Calix Society Chaplain*



***Well Done My Good and Faithful Servant – Tribute to Jim B.'s Service on the Board of Directors By: Heather O. (editor)***

Jim B. of Minnesota has retired from the Board of Directors after thirty years of service.

I am proud to call Jim my friend. I first met him during the Wednesday on-line meetings at 12:00 p.m., that Jim continues to host. After getting to know him, I wanted nothing more than to serve on the Board of Directors with him –helping to bring our society into the lives of people who could benefit from what we have to offer. Jim assisted with the application and supported me through the entire process. Thank you, Jim, for having faith in me. We will miss your happy and calm personality, your corny jokes (ha) and your warm smile at our monthly meetings. You are loved.

Jim will remain an active member of our society - you will see him at meetings, Days of Recollection and retreats.

*“Jim was easy to like right away. He was then and is now, always sincere. He is a hard worker, and someone we have all grown to count on. He is a great example of a devout Catholic and a good friend.” - Craig C., longest current serving Board member of the Calix Society.*



Calix Board members (left to right)  
Mike G. Heather O. and Jim B. – Retreat  
2022



Jim B. – Retreat 2022



## Theology of the Body “Pearls” by: Fred H.

### A Theological Time Bomb

*“John Paul’s Theology of the Body has ramifications for all of theology. It challenges us to think of sexuality to grasp the essence of the human – and through that, to discern something about the divine.” Few “priests preach these themes. A very small, even microscopic, percentage of the world’s Catholics even know that a ‘theology of the body’ exists” ... The TOB is “one of the boldest reconfigurations of Catholic theology in centuries ... a kind of theological time bomb set to go off with dramatic consequences, ... perhaps in the twenty-first century” (George Weigel, Witness to Hope, pp. 335, 343).*

When I was first introduced to TOB I felt that theological bomb go off in my heart and soul. Years into sobriety yet struggling with resentment and rage I white knuckled through my sober days, fighting my multiple addictions with a grim determination. My sponsor, a devout Catholic, suggested I check out TOB.

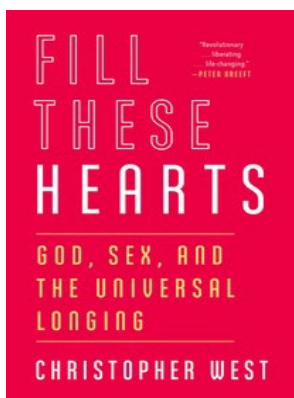
That same day I discovered Christopher West and the Theology of the Body Institute. Within a year or two I found myself enrolled in a study program through Pontifex University which coupled my love for sacred art with TOB. I was taking the deep dive.

It wasn’t long before I realized I was no longer white knuckling through my days, bitter and resentful. My twelve-step group had equipped me with the phrase ‘if I’m disturbed then I’m the problem’ and as I took that to prayer in my frequent distresses, I found God gently showing me what was disturbing me and redirecting my desires to Him. In true TOB form, he kept saying things like, “Son, what you’re really longing for is infinite, intimate connection with me and nothing else will suffice. Can you trust me to help you untwist and transform your broken eros into the true and good Eros which can propel you to connect with me?”

Yes Papa, may it be unto me as you have said. It has made all the difference in my recovery and my life. I’m so grateful!

### Our Current TOB Study Material:

Join us on Thursday’s at 8pm EST as we study Christopher West’s “Fill These Hearts”, an excellent and very easy to read introduction to our beloved St. John Paul II’s Theology of the Body. The key for us in recovery is understanding this “Universal Longing” and aiming it at the only One who can satisfy. This book explores that key thought in the most beautiful way.



**MEMBERSHIP DRIVE**

Just a reminder that by keeping your membership current, you continue to support the efforts of the Society at the international level. We ask for \$25 annually. Another way you can help the society – which includes membership – is to become a “Sustaining Member”. Sustaining Members pledge a monthly donation (via PayPal) for as little as \$5 each month. For more information about paying membership, please visit:

<https://www.calixsociety.org/membership/> .

To become a Sustaining Member please visit:

<https://www.calixsociety.org/donate/>

Additionally, I have mailed multiple membership cards over the past few months. Please email me at [treasurer@calixsociety.org](mailto:treasurer@calixsociety.org) if you have not received your card or have any questions.





Social Media & News from the International Board of Directors

# Like and follow us on social media



FACEBOOK: The Calix Society

INSTAGRAM: calixsociety

TWITTER: @CALIXTALBOT

MEWE: The Calix Society



## from the International Board of Directors

- ✓ Welcome to newly elected Directors – Kevin S. (Sydney, Australia) and Jen D. (New Jersey)
- ✓ The Chalice will be published on a bi-monthly basis. **Your articles are necessary and welcomed.** Kindly e-mail your articles to Heather at: [serenityhet@yahoo.com](mailto:serenityhet@yahoo.com).
- ✓ **Keep you eye out for an announcement of the 65<sup>th</sup> Annual International Calix Society Retreat in August 2023. The retreat will be held in either Long Island, NY or Malvern, PA.**

## Call for articles!!!

Please consider submitting an article for the September/October issue about what drew you to The Calix Society and how you found us. See the below chart for future topics!

*We also invite articles on any subject matter that is relevant to The Calix Society and our tenets. For example, testimony concerning your sobriety and faith journey or transformation experiences you'd like to share that relate to sobriety and our faith.*

Contact editor Heather Ondik at [serenityhet@yahoo.com](mailto:serenityhet@yahoo.com) or 215-910-2393 with questions or to submit an article. Since writing is not everyone's favorite thing to do, if you'd like help, writing assistance is available. ☺

Edition	Topic	Submission Deadline
September/October	What drew you to The Calix Society and how did you find us?	September 30
November/December	How has your membership in The Calix Society enriched your sobriety and your program of recovery (12-step program)?	November 21
January/February	Tell us how your journey with the Sacraments has influenced your sobriety.	January 21
March/April	How has the Holy Spirit helped you along the path of happy destiny (your sober journey)	March 21

## Humor Corner

–Jesus was standing over the woman caught in adultery and challenged the crowd that “He who is without sin, cast the first stone.” Suddenly, a rock hits the back of his head. Jesus turns and exclaims, “Mom!”

–What do you call a priest in charge of the school play?

*The spiritual director.*

–A Jesuit, a Dominican, and a Franciscan were walking along an old road, debating the greatness of their orders. Suddenly, an apparition of the Holy Family appeared in front of them, with Jesus in a manger and Mary and Joseph praying over him. The Franciscan fell on his face, overcome with awe at the sight of God born in such poverty. The Dominican fell to his knees, adoring the beautiful reflection of the Trinity and the Holy Family. The Jesuit walked up to Joseph, put his arm around his shoulder, and said, “So, have you thought about where to send him to school?”

–Why did the priest giggle during his homily?

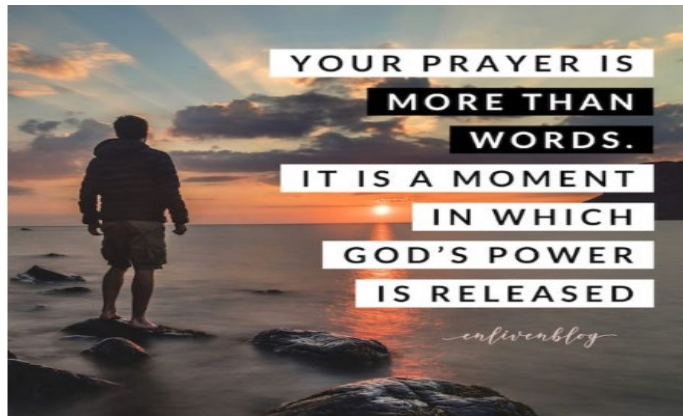
*He had Mass hysteria!*



## Prayer Requests

**PLEASE FIND THE PRAY REQUEST FORM ON THE WEBSITE:**

[www.calixsociety.org](http://www.calixsociety.org)



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The Calix Society  
P.O. Box 26  
Glenside, PA 19038  
800.398.0524