



PIER REVIEW

THE MINISTRY JOURNAL OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. LUKE, ORLANDO, FLORIDA

Scheduling Repentance

By The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu

ON ASH WEDNESDAY, 1978, I QUIT smoking. I knew for a long time that the day would come when I could no longer live with the contradiction of daily (indeed, hourly) repeating the decision to wage an assault upon my conscience. I needed an occasion. The first day of Lent fit the bill. For the next forty days I had the daily incentive of a structured routine to make it stick.

I don't happen to believe smoking is a great moral issue. I cite it as an example precisely because I consider it a relatively trivial matter. Its importance lies in the principle it illustrates. Conscious sins, even little ones, pollute the conscience. They engage the entire personality in making the momentary decision to light up one more time. And while the moral significance is not great, the effect is no less demoralizing.

I cite this example also because it

demonstrates the practical value of a *structure* of discipline. I did not score any moral points by quitting smoking other than putting an end to the violation of my own conscience. The discipline supplied an occasion to do something I knew was right. If the principle holds in a small matter, it might be trusted to hold in a great one.

The Liturgy of Ash Wednesday places the meaning of Lent in the traditional language of the Holy Scripture:

"The first Christians observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church to prepare for them by a season of penitence and fasting."

True to the tradition, the Prayer Book goes on to highlight the practical significance of the Church's worship and spirituality:

"This season of Lent... was also a time when those who, because of notorious sins, had been separated from the body of the faithful were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to the fellowship of the Church. Thereby, the whole congregation was put in mind of the message of pardon and absolution set forth in the Gospel of our Savior, and of the need which all Christians continually have to renew their repentance and faith."

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Dean Tony Clark at the dedication of the Daniel B. Smith Memorial Window in the Children's Chapel.

Giving Peace a Chance

By The Very Rev. Anthony P. Clark

WE ARE CHRIST'S AMBASSADORS, and God is using us to speak to you. We urge you, as though Christ himself were here pleading with you, 'Be reconciled to God!' (2 Corinthians 5:21, *New Living Translation*)

A MANIFOLD ATONEMENT

The New Testament authors use a variety of terms to describe Jesus' atoning work on the cross: Justification (Romans 5:1), Redemption (Romans 3:24), Sacrifice (1 John 1:7), and Reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19). These images are adapted from everyday life of the New Testament period. Justification comes from the law court, Redemption from the marketplace, Sacrifice from the temple and Reconciliation from the family. Of the four the image of Reconciliation probably has the most intimate and personal connections. Many of us know first hand about the opposite of Reconciliation—estrangement, alienation or separation—in our own families or in friends' families.

GIVING PEACE A REAL CHANCE

St. Paul understood that the most significant alienation, estrangement or separation is between God the Father and humanity. Our sin creates a "Great Divide" that could only be bridged—or reconciled—by Jesus' outstretched arms "on the hard wood of the cross" (from the third prayer for mission, BCP pages 58 and 101). But St. Paul also knew that Reconciliation was necessary at the level of neighbor to neighbor,

enemy to enemy, and co-worker to co-worker. Like Paul, those of us who know Christ's reconciling work can become Ambassadors of Reconciliation: continuing our Lord's work of healing separation, alienation and division in a very broken world. The ministries of Healing and Reconciliation fit who we are as a Cathedral, because we are named for St. Luke, the patron saint of Christian healing.

BECOMING AMBASSADORS

Becoming Ambassadors of Reconciliation will be a major theme through this current season of Lent and upcoming season of Easter. In Easter, for example, we will hear Jesus say, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Then he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven. If you refuse to forgive them, they are unforgiven." (John 20:21-23, *New Living Translation*)

PEACEMAKING: LENT AND BEYOND

Our weekly preaching, teaching and Peacemakers sessions will highlight and explore the basic Christian themes of confession of sin, forgiveness, repentance and reconciliation. We will see ways to make these often 'stained glass' words come alive in our Cathedral, our homes, our work and our schools as we heed our Lord's call to become Ambassadors of reconciliation.

PR

MARCH AT A GLANCE

SUNDAYS BEGINNING MARCH 1

7:30 PM Peacemakers (Great Hall)

WEDNESDAYS BEGINNING MARCH 4

10:30 AM Peacemakers (Great Hall)

5:45 PM Evening Prayer (St. Mary Chapel)

6:15 PM Supper

7:00 PM Peacemakers (Great Hall)

FRIDAYS

7:00 PM The Way of the Cross (Cathedral)

SUNDAY, MARCH 15

6:00 PM Lenten Vespers Concert

Cathedral Choir and the Stetson University Symphony Orchestra perform sacred music of the modern era. Hear the exquisite cantata *Lux aeterna* by Morten Lauridsen, plus anthems by Paul Halley, Peter Mathews, and Benjamin Lane.

In memory of former Cathedral Choir member Dr. Thomas Scott, sponsored by his family and friends.

Getting Fired Up

By The Rev. Christine L. Maddux



Bill and Trudy in conversation at home. Bill is a lifelong Floridian. Trudy moved to Florida from Michigan prior to her teenage years and grew up at the Cathedral. The Smiths moved away from Orlando early in their married life and returned in the mid-90s. Bill and Trudy have a son and a grandson who are Episcopal clergymen.

IN THE BIBLE GOD CLEARLY DENOUNCES lukewarm Christians. He had seen the deeds of the church in Laodecia, and “because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth” (Rev. 3:16). How do we avoid this fate? For Bill and Trudy Smith, and scores of other Cathedral members, the answer is Cursillo.

Cursillo (Spanish for “little course”) is a short course in Christian living, intended to ignite Christians into living their faith daily as apostles and saints, not as lukewarm Christians. “You can’t just be a Christian from 10 to 11 on Sunday,” said Bill Smith. He and Trudy made their Cursillo in 1977 and have been active in the movement ever since. “I resisted Cursillo at first, because I thought it was some kind of secret society,” Bill said. “But there’s nothing secret about it. I think Cursillo is the greatest tool God ever gave us to support His Son, because it gets people motivated.”

That motivation is sparked by a three-day weekend, offered locally at Canterbury Conference Center in Oviedo. During the weekend there is a series of short talks and small group discussions on specific topics: such as ideals, study, sacraments, and personal piety. Spiritual activities include meditations, prayer and Eucharist. Through individual spiritual direction sessions, each participant designs a personal Rule of Life. The weekend also includes some surprises designed for fun and fellowship. The leaders are both lay people and clergy. Bishop John Howe often participates, as

does Dean Tony Clark.

The weekend event is only the beginning. The purpose is to take the essentials of an active faith explained during the Cursillo weekend and weave them into the rest of one’s life. This is done by gathering periodically with other Cursillistas to pray, and to encourage one another to continue their Rule of Life and to accept their apostolic responsibility for spreading the good news of Christ.

“Cursillo is the best thing I’ve ever done in my Christian life,” Trudy said, “because it was so explanatory of all the things we need to know and do. And the effect is lasting.” The Smiths have been cultivating Cursillo in their lives and in the lives of others for more than 30 years. They have been leadership team members for more than 20 diocesan Cursillo weekends, and have traveled as far as Bradford Cathedral in Kent, England, to further the Cursillo movement.

Cursillo’s international history began in Mallorca, Spain, thus its Spanish name. At the outset, Cursillo was strictly a Roman Catholic movement. The first Episcopal Cursillo was conducted with the help of Roman Catholic sponsors in the Diocese of Iowa. The Cursillo method remains the same, and the goal remains empowering the ministry of the laity.

Cursillo weekends are planned for March 12-15 (for both men and women), September 17-20 (men only) and October 1-4 (women only). For more information, contact the Smiths at (407) 894-4774, or Parish Coordinator Don Nantkes at (407) 370-3006. PR

“The Cursillo Movement has been one of the instruments most used by God to bless, refresh, revitalize, renew, empower, equip and enable individuals, families and the congregations of this Diocese throughout this first Forty Years, this first Generation of our life together. And I believe it is time to call all of us to a recommitment to it.”

Bishop John Howe, from his Address to the 40th Diocesan Convention, Jan. 24, 2009



Deacon Carolyn Petersen and Fr. Dick Grant
at the window dedication on Feb. 22.

Getting Closer to God:

By The Rev. Carolyn S. Petersen

AS WE APPROACH LENT, WE MAY BE dreading it due to our distorted sense of spiritual discipline. The word *discipline* often brings a negative connotation which corresponds in our minds to a sure experience of being miserable!

During Lent we may pat ourselves on the back as we deprive ourselves of things we normally relish and enjoy. When the gruelling forty days are finally over, we are relieved but no better off spiritually.

Surely God is not pleased with our mechanical efforts to perform religious duties like Pharisees! Fasting is a notable discipline, but only with the attitude of drawing closer to the Lord, and understanding that righteousness is His gift and not something that we can manage and possess.

It might be good to reframe the mistaken idea of discipline as forcing our body and mind into submission. God desires to give us his grace freely through time honored spiritual practices. These practices allow Him to transform us, not by us gritting our teeth, but by our letting go and placing ourselves humbly before Him.

How can we do this while living in a world where multiple distractions continually converge upon us, robbing us of our peace and joy? How do we handle daily intrusions and our own sense of urgency as we face the numerous obligations and time limitations which burden

and tyrannize us? Our good intentions to set aside time for the Lord seem to dissolve with each interruption and challenge of the day. How do we overcome these surges of interference that destroy our peace?

The first discipline to open ourselves to the Lord's intervention is to **deliberately set aside a time to be with the Lord in a quiet place and in a quiet way**. We must diligently guard and maintain this practice no matter what intruding forces present themselves.

We need times of solitude and silence first and foremost, as well as regular prayer and meditation, all of which bring us close to God. Every relationship requires time and effort, and our relationship with the Lord is no exception! As St Augustine put it so well, our souls are restless until we find our rest in Him.

Spending time with the Lord in silence becomes the solution to our restlessness and our multi-tasking behavior. We will find our day going much smoother by beginning it with the Lord in this way.

Through this practice of silence and openness before the Lord, we allow Him to create within us what Thomas Kelly once described as an "inner sanctuary of the soul" (quoted in *Devotional Classics* by Richard Foster and James Bryan Smith, p. 205). In this place of quiet and peace we gain intimacy with God and allow ourselves

Making Time

to love Him with all our heart, soul, and mind (Matthew 22:37).

How then do we begin? Begin by setting aside a time for prayer in a **quiet place**.

Read a brief Bible verse: “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10), for example. Rest in silence and allow the verse to permeate your being. If your mind begins to drift, repeat the scripture again.

Let go of any tension or burdens, placing them before the Lord.

Spend five minutes in silence letting the peace of God’s presence wash over you.

You may then wish to **slowly read a short devotional or scriptural passage**. Do not read for information but allow what you read to soak deep within you. Rest in that word as coming from the Lord.

Focus your thoughts on God and allow your heart to open up to Him. Allow Him to speak his truth to you in His still, small voice.

End your time with the Lord with thanksgiving and praise.

This simple activity will certainly get you started in participating with God in a Holy Lent! Begin to notice His constant presence with you moment by moment. Allow yourself to become a sanctuary for the Lord as you glide serenely through the day. PR

Spending time with the Lord in silence becomes the solution to our restlessness and our multi-tasking behavior.

Additional Practices for a Holy Lent

- **Breath Prayer:**
As you go throughout the day, breathe in a name for the Lord such as *Jesus, Lord, Yeshua*. Breathe out a scriptural prayer such as “Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.” (Philippians 4:4, NIV)
Or “My soul, wait silently for God alone.”(Ps. 62:5); or “You, Lord, lead me beside the still waters. You restore my soul.”(Ps. 23) (You will notice that this scripture will pop up in your mind during the day like a spiritual reflex.)
- **Take a walk, intentionally being present to the Lord.**
Notice the gifts of His creation, and give Him thanksgiving and praise. Write a psalm to the Lord.
- **Fasting from Criticism.**
Determine that you will deliberately refuse to engage in criticism and speaking negative things. Ask the Lord to help you replace these thoughts and comments with praise and thankful words and thoughts, which enable you to have an attitude of gratitude.
- **Fast from one meal a day.**
Focus your thoughts on the Lord, and glorify Him. Fasting is good way to reveal the things that control us.
- **Daily Personal Examen and Confession.**
Examen is an ancient practice to help us notice where God is present throughout the day. Ask questions of yourself, such as: What gave me life today? What discouraged me? When did I have a deep sense of connection with God? When did I feel bereft and separated from God? What was difficult for me today? What went well and why? Confess your limitations to God, and become silent, listening for His response.
- **Pray the Daily Offices in the *Book of Common Prayer* every day.**
- **Make an appointment with a spiritual director.**
A spiritual director can facilitate your understanding of spiritual disciplines and assist you in incorporating them in your daily walk with the Lord.
- **Read Richard J. Foster’s *Celebration of Discipline* for a better understanding of the spiritual disciplines.**
Deacon Carolyn offers a class in Foster’s *Celebration of Discipline* once a year. Deacons Carolyn Petersen and Christine Maddux are trained spiritual directors and are available to offer spiritual direction should you desire it.



Mark and Lynne Sears have been active members of the Cathedral since 2000. Both are deeply involved in the Cathedral Honduras mission. Mark completed his M.A. in counseling from Reformed Theological Seminary in 2007 and now serves on the staff at the Episcopal Counseling Center in Orlando. Mark was elected to the Cathedral Chapter in 2008.

The “R” Word

By Mark Sears

ONE OF THE MOST HEALING WORDS in the Bible is *reconciliation*. Our very salvation is based upon Christ reconciling us to God through his atonement. He is also calling us to be reconciled with one another. When true reconciliation occurs, incredible healing can take place emotionally, spiritually and even physically. However, reconciliation is often an ignored aspect of our relationships, including our relationship with God. We know that we should seek peace and reconciliation with others, but it is not always easy and at times can seem impossible.

Falling short of reconciliation with others in our lives occurs for many reasons. When we have been hurt or offended, we tell ourselves we are “letting it go” when in fact we are not really addressing or expressing our feelings. This can go on for years, leading to feelings of bitterness and depression and leaving us feeling hopeless.

Sometimes we block our own growth and healing through stubbornness or self-righteousness. We may go through the motions of forgiving someone and believe we are doing the right thing, when in reality we have not held them accountable for their actions. This is a sign of unhealthy boundaries and is ultimately harmful, not healing.

One step towards true reconciliation, forgiveness, is often misunderstood or applied inappropriately. In their book *Bold Love*, Allender and Longman address forgiveness and reconciliation at length. They discuss how one

can seek forgiveness and reconciliation with anyone in their lives, even those who may have abused them in some way. In their discussion on living with a difficult person or situation they write:

“... If *forgiveness, fulfilled in reconciliation*, is to occur, evil must repent with clarity and conviction. Does this mean that if repentance does not occur, then forgiveness cannot be offered? If forgiveness is defined as *a continuing process of hungering for restoration*, revoking revenge, and offering good gifts, then we are to forgive until there is reconciliation. But, reconciliation should not occur until there is repentance” (emphasis added).

Allender and Longman do an excellent job in their book, and I recommend it to anyone, especially those of us who have difficult people in our lives or are healing from past abuse.

“*And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.*” This is the “good news” of the Gospel which we are called to spread. The *task* we have been given is that of *reconciling people to Him*. We begin with the people we are closest to, and then reach out to others. Jesus demonstrated this throughout his ministry and showed us how wonderful our healing and the healing of others in our lives can and will be. All this may sound next to impossible and seem too demanding until one considers the benefits... and, of course, the alternatives. PR



During their Dude Ranch retreat EYC teens pause and reflect after casting their sins upon the waters.

Between a Rock And a Clay Pot

By Canon Anne Taylor

AS WE ARE REMINDED IN PSALM 32, “Happy are they whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sin is put away.”

GETTING RID OF SINS

During our recent retreat at the Dude Ranch, the youth had an opportunity to talk about the one thing that was blocking their relationship with God. Each of them wrote that particular sin on a small rock and with their small group walked down by the lake. Then one by one each threw their “sin” into the lake. It was a powerful moment

After they threw the rocks into the lake the teens huddled in a circle and prayed together. These were not superficial prayers but very honest prayers asking God to take away their sin. One young man prayed that God take away the anger he felt toward his father. A girl prayed to be able to forgive her parents. A boy confessed that his language set a bad example for a Christian.

On the following Wednesday morning during a high school Bible study, one of the teens said, “That rock thing really worked. I prayed for healing of a relationship, and God answered my prayer!” Psalm 32 goes on to say, “Then I acknowledged my sin to you, and did not conceal my guilt.” The teens on this retreat experienced just that—they confessed their sin, gave it to God, and covered it in prayer.

A VERY PRACTICAL SKILL

Reconciliation is one of the most important and significant gifts God has given us through

his son Jesus Christ. I was reminded of this one night when we had the EYC gathered around a small fire in the courtyard. Students were burning their sins asking God to forgive them through this experience. An older woman coming out of the 6:00 p.m. service pulled me aside and said, “Thank you Anne, for teaching the kids the importance of forgiveness in their young lives.” She went on to tell me about a friend in her 70’s who never learned how to forgive and is now a bitter old woman. Teaching young people how to forgive and how to live as forgiven is a gift they will take into their adulthood.

THE “GLUE” OF RECONCILIATION

During our retreat in Honduras at El Cocal the older girls from Our Little Roses were also able to have this same experience during one of the sessions. They were given a clay pot and markers to decorate symbolizing themselves. Each put her name on the pot and placed it in a paper bag. Then they were asked to hit their bags against the concrete floor to break the pots into several pieces. Afterwards they glued the pots back together. The girls noticed that the glued pots were now stronger (once fully dried) than they were when they were just “normal pots” (people without God). The message we left with them was that God knows we sin and are not perfect, however he loves us and provides us with all that we need to take the broken pieces of our lives, and allow Him to be the “glue” to put our lives back together!

Teaching young people how to forgive and how to live as forgiven is a gift they will take into their adulthood.

Brenda, one of the senior members of Our Little Roses, prepares her clay pot for the ritual breaking and gluing back together, symbolizing our wholeness as “broken” sinners “glued” back together by God’s forgiveness.



Mary Cohea and Sue McCue banter after the dedication of the Daniel B. Smith Memorial Window in the Children's Chapel on Feb. 22.



WWW.STLUKESCATHEDRAL.ORG

TELEPHONE 407.849.0680

FAX 407.849.0922

pier \pîr\ n.

1. *Architecture* Any of various vertical supporting structures, especially:
 - a. A pillar supporting an arch or roof.
 - b. The portion of a wall between windows, doors, or other openings.
 - c. A reinforcing structure that projects from a wall; a buttress.
2. *Literature* The monthly ministry journal of The Cathedral Church of St. Luke, Orlando, Florida.
 - a. Editor/Designer
The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu
 - b. Contributing Writers
The Rev. Christine L. Maddux
Ellen M. Smith
 - c. Proof Readers
Rosemary Atwater and Theo Gordon
 - d. Photographs
The Rev. Canon J. Gary L'Hommedieu

SCHEDULING REPENTANCE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Lent is not so much a time to “give something up” as it is a time to get on track with our life’s work of repentance. It takes a lifetime for us to face squarely the truth of who God is and who we are in comparison. It may take the better part of a lifetime to realize the value of the grace God offers us in forgiveness. It takes a whole life to take God’s love to heart. If there’s something we need to give up, it’s taking God’s love for granted.

Lent gives us a date on the calendar to get back on track with doing just that. The season is long enough so that we have enough time to replace a few bad habits with some new good ones. Wherever you are in your personal career of getting right with God, why not renew your effort in Lent.

Get back on track!

PR