



PIER REVIEW

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

That Decision is YOU

By Ashton Dohany

“**D**EAR GOD: BEING BAPTIZED AND confirmed is very important to me. It states that I have made a final decision about my religion. That decision is YOU. I am ready for you to accept me as your son, and I am ready to accept you as my holy Father in heaven. I now truly believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior and you as my ruler in heaven, and I promise that I will continue worshipping you and practicing fellowship.”

I wrote down these words for my baptism and confirmation last year. That was a huge moment in my life and I definitely couldn't have done it without EYC and the Wednesday morning Bible study I attend.

I've been attending EYC ever ever since I was old enough—since the sixth grade. EYC meets most every Sunday night from 6 to 8. We start off with a delicious dinner prepared for us by EYC parents. After we eat, we usually play a game or two. Then we talk about fellowship, sing about fellowship, or hear about fellowship. I always

leave EYC feeling good about myself and my relationship with God.

My favorite thing about EYC would probably be the retreats we get to go on as a group. We go on retreats just for fun and to get closer to God, like the Dude Ranch and the Back to School Retreat. We also go on mission trips to bring the fellowship of Christ to others, like our trip to Costa Rica. No matter what retreat we go on we always have tons of fun and rejoice in our Christian faith.

On Wednesday mornings I go to a Bible study that consists of 5 to 8 people. It starts around 6:30 in the morning right before school and usually ends around 7. It's held at the Einstein Bagel on Edgewater Drive and is always a great way to start your morning off. We all order breakfast and then we sit down and read the selected verses. We think, collaborate, and spend time soaking in these verses, and then at the end of the study we pray. We pray about things we'd like to improve in our lives, things we'd like to get rid of, and things we'd like to have come into our lives. We then say good-bye and (unfortunately) head off to school. But we head off to school refreshed and in a great mood.

I couldn't be where I am today, faith wise and spiritual wise, without EYC and my Wednesday morning Bible study. They've helped get me through a lot. They help to start my week off right. Most importantly, they've helped strengthened my relationship with God. PR

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Junior EYC member Katie Taylor confers with Mom, a.k.a. Canon Anne Taylor, during a break on Sunday night.

"I thank God that He has found me worthy to delight teenagers in His Word for so many years."

Pillar Talk

Blessed Beyond Measure

By Canon Anne Taylor
Director of Youth and Family Ministries

ON JANUARY 5TH I BEGAN MY 16TH YEAR HERE at the Cathedral as the Canon for Youth Ministry. It has been a wonderful journey and I feel an overwhelming sense of gratitude for being a part of this Cathedral family for so many wonderful years.

The nice thing about being around for a decade and a half is that traditions are created and teens have a sense of ownership and consistency. With so many people coming in and out of their lives it's nice to know one of the few consistent venues in their life is the church.

When I left for college at 18 from my suburban home outside Minneapolis, I knew I wanted a career that would allow me to work with teens. I didn't know youth ministry existed as a major, but, as God would have it, I chose a college that offered a degree in youth ministry. As a freshman we were told we had to declare a major so we wouldn't waste our parent's money, so my roommate told me about "this youth ministry major" that sounded perfect. No math or science (which were not my strong suits!), and we got to learn about religion and sociology with a little psychology. I loved it from the first day.

I have been a youth minister since graduation, and I thank God that He has found me worthy to delight teenagers in His Word for so many years. I often tell teens as they look to the future, "figure out what you really love, what you're passionate about, and then find a way to get paid to do it". That is what I have had the privilege of doing for the past 27 years.

Each week, as teens from the Cathedral, along with their friends from various churches, gather for our weekly EYC meeting, I marvel at what God is doing in their lives. The teens we have as part of our Cathedral family are incredible. They have hungered for the Word

of God, studied it, memorized it and even written favorite verses on their Facebook pages for their friends to see. They pray with one another, share their faith with their friends, give their witness in front of groups, and are proud to wear Christian t-shirts around their public high schools. I have to admit they make my job very easy. Most people look at me and ask, "How can you work with teenager for so many years"? I smile and say, "Well, somebody has to do it!" Little do they know how blessed I am to be among some of the wisest, most spiritual and intelligent young people around.

I think the thing that surprises me about ministry with young people is that it never gets old. Each year is different as various new personalities are woven into our group. I am always challenged to keep things fresh and new.

The teen's desire to serve the homeless this year has been our newest focus. Many of you don't know that a group of teens meet me and other brave EYC leaders at 5:45 AM once a month to serve over 200 homeless men and woman at the Good News Breakfast at First Presbyterian Church downtown. One homeless woman asked me, "What do you have to do to get the kids here so early?" I said, "Nothing. They want to be here." She couldn't believe teens would get up that early to come and serve. What a testimony to living out the gospel!

I am blessed beyond measure, and I thank all the Cathedral members for allowing me to serve the Cathedral teens for the past 15 years. If you want to find out more about what EYC offers each month or how your young person can get involved, check out our Cathedral web site at www.stlukesacathedral.org under "Episcopal Young Teens", or email me at awesumanne@hotmail.com.

PR

Unforgettable



Brendan on the floor telling his story at the EYC Sunday night meeting.

By Brendan Ellixson

BEING AN ACOLYTE AND BEING IN THE youth group at Saint Luke's Cathedral have both been quite the experience. I have seen funny things, joyful things, friendship, and the power and presence of God in both. Both show some aspect of worship that not everyone has experienced. You get more into the service being an acolyte being up there with the other leaders of the church. EYC also helps us learn something totally different each time with a view we never thought about until somebody there mentioned it.

Being an acolyte makes you more involved in the church service. You learn what all the important parts of the service are and what they mean. Everyone is happy to do any job that needs to be done to make every service flow smoothly.

The acolyte coordinators each week do a great job. Some read a "thought of the day" to get us thinking about what it means to be doing what we're doing. It is a great experience to be alongside worship-filled people Sunday by Sunday. I am with men that have been in the Armed Forces, including one who is still in the Air Force. Recently I washed the Bishop's hands at a special service to appoint new deacons and subdeacons for churches in the area. It has been an honor to be with the people I have been with and to meet the people I have met.

EYC gives you a chance almost every week to get your mind off of all the stress of school, sports, and the daily ordeals that everyone has. It is a chance to start over and have fun with the

time we have together. The last church I was at did not have much of a youth group or even a group of people that met to talk about God or worship. EYC has games, prayer groups, and small groups to talk about the weekly lesson and to help us express our feelings about the past week.

One thing I have not mentioned is the food! Parents of kids in EYC put a lot of time and effort into putting together a wonderful meal each week. I know everyone is thankful for them and their devotion to making our meeting time the best possible. There are kids of all ages and all different interests, and we all come together to make a great group for great experiences.

Membership in EYC and serving as an acolyte at St. Luke's are both unforgettable experiences. With all the fun of Sunday nights and the serious, quiet Sunday mornings, it makes a very wonderful day to get your mind back in line for playing the role we were sent to play by God to play. I would not trade anything for the feeling of worship I get out of both activities that I do on Sundays because I enjoy them thoroughly and plan to keep being involved in them. ^{PR}



Above, Shelby Shannon, Ainsley O'Reilly and Lindsay Ellixson pile on at a meeting. Below, EYC members practice a rope course for building trust at their August retreat.





Emily Jakubisin is a sophomore at Lake Highland Preparatory School.

Life-Altering

By Emily Jakubisin

Forever I will have this mark upon me: that I have been there and know what it is to be homeless.

BEFORE THIS PAST SUMMER, BEFORE ONE life-altering week, Soul in the City held little more meaning to me than a quick, humdrum way to earn community service hours. While I'd never gone, my brother and sister had, and they always came home with reports that blended into one another: they'd worked at the Boy's and Girl's Club one day, the Coalition for the Homeless the next, and so on. It sounded basically like community service boot camp, a cram session of selflessness that I could stick on my LINK forms at school to show I'd completed the required hours for the upcoming school year. Little did I know that this would be a week that would change my perspective forever.

and deodorant I would be grateful for later. The book? Not so much.

This particular year our week had a special theme: the issue of homelessness in our community. We were driven to the Christian Service Center, a non-for-profit organization that offers room and board for homeless persons each night, and were educated about homelessness specifically in Orlando. The facts were astounding—especially when we were told that Orlando was ranked the third meanest city in the U.S. toward the homeless.

We were rudely awakened at five o' clock the next morning by the banging of pots and pans, just like the hundreds of homeless who have spent nights at the CSC. We ate a small meal and were sent out onto the streets in small groups, wearing clothing that was not our own, and armed with a list of things to do—sort of like a scavenger hunt. The list consisted of things like “go dumpster diving” and “collect 10 cans to cash in”—activities the homeless MUST do every day to survive.

Traveling through the Paramore area on foot and looking homeless for all the world to see, as we were, is not an experience I recommend. We were received with dirty looks, unkind attitudes, and an alarming feeling that the whole of downtown Orlando loathed us. Stopping by the library to use the restroom we noticed it most acutely. People did not hesitate to point at us, walk away in the opposite direction, or merely gaze at us as though we were not worth the dust on their shoes. The looks continued as

The week did start out pretty uneventfully. We participated in some team-building challenges that tested our abilities to communicate with and trust in one another. Two days in, we were told that we had five minutes to grab three items, put them into shoeboxes, grab our backpacks (weighed down with five to ten pound barbells) and sleeping bags, and be in the parking lot. The items we chose, we were told, would have to be enough to sustain us for the next twenty-four hours. We would be provided food. I chose: a clean t-shirt, deodorant, and a book. Another girl who'd been rooming with me brought toothpaste for us all to share, which relieved the rest of us of an item to carry. The t-shirt

Games on Sunday night. Emily smiles from the right hand corner.



Mia Jakubisin, a senior at Lake Highland Preparatory School, enjoys a moment of Solo Time at the EYC retreat at Warren Willis Camp in Leesburg.



Growing Faith

By Mia Jakubisin

EYC IS A PLACE FOR FELLOWSHIP, a place for friendship and acceptance, and a place for growing faith. I have been an avid member of the Cathedral's youth group for seven years now. As I look back on my years in EYC, I find myself smiling at the memories, the friendships, and the spiritual growth that took place.

EYC has provided me with some of the best times of my life. From summer mission trips to weekend retreats to skiing, I have made so many memories. I can honestly say that our two annual retreats are the two best weekends of my year, every year. We live and laugh and learn together, and grow in Christ. Not only do I look forward to our special events, but every Sunday night is an event to look forward to as well. We are truly blessed to have a place where so many young men and women can join together weekly to eat, play games, worship, and grow as young Christians.

Not only do I look forward to EYC events for the fun they provide but for the fellowship as well. I remember being so nervous in sixth grade coming into a group with high school students. But it was such a welcoming atmosphere, I soon forgot all my nerves. Even the seniors reached out to me and included me. It was really neat for me to be able to interact with and be accepted by older students. They also provided guidance. Through testimonies and one on one conversations I learned a lot from older members of EYC and was so grateful to be able to have that relationship with them. It meant a

lot to me to have older students to look up to, and that is a huge reason why I continue to go to EYC. It brings me great satisfaction leading small groups and talking in front of younger students, because I know what that did for me as a young member of EYC. I strive to be the same example for my fellow members that I had when I was younger.

Finally, the greatest thing about EYC is the spiritual guidance it provides. The stresses of school and other activities can weigh one down during the week, so it is such a blessing to be able to meet Sunday nights and start the week off right. I have heard countless testimonies, listened to a range of incredible speakers, and had so many learning filled Bible studies, EYC has been the foundation of my growth as a young believer. It is a place where we can temporarily forget about the stresses of life, and simply enjoy fellowship with other believers, learn and grow in Christ, and worship our Lord and Savior.

I am so grateful to have had a place like this for my middle and high school years. I know it is an opportunity not everyone gets, and we are blessed here at the Cathedral. I am so glad I could spend so much of my youth surrounded by people who share my faith and help me grow in my faith.

I can't say that I would be the same person without having had EYC in my life. I thank God for what I have gotten through EYC and pray it continues to provide the same enriching environment for young Christians. PR

It brings me great satisfaction leading small groups and talking in front of younger students, because I know what that did for me as a young member of EYC.

Below, David Hardy, Samantha Arcara, Mary Michael Taylor and Matara Frances





Jamie Gardner and one of the Little Roses.

They Changed Us

By Jaimie Gardner

Each and every time I've been there, I have never ceased to be amazed by the love these girls have. Really it is they who change me.

ISIT ON THE BUS, KNEADING MY HANDS IN nervous anticipation. Around me is the excited chatter of the rest of the group—but I am deep in thought. Will the girls remember me? What if they don't like me? I quickly go over in my head all the things I needed for the Vacation Bible School. Did I pack everything? What if I forgot something?

The bus stops and I look up: We're at the gates. The guard gets off the bus and the gates open. We're here. We're at Our Little Roses. I clutch my backpack, swinging it onto my back as I file off the bus with everyone else.

The moment my foot hits the ground I see a swarm of girls rush out of the home, heading straight for us. My face breaks into a smile. They run and embrace us, leaping into our arms and shouting exclamations of joy. I smile, hugging them all in turn and realizing that not a single one of them cares if I forgot something. They are happy to see *us*; and I am overjoyed to see them.

over the summer. We have finally rescheduled for this March/April, and we are all so excited!

This trip has had so much planning and team building that I feel it can withstand anything. We're bringing to the girls Vacation Bible School and a modified version of EYC, as well as service projects and fun activities. What I especially love about Our Little Roses is that, even if all our plans fall through and none of our supplies make it, the girls won't care.

Each and every time I've been there, I have never ceased to be amazed by the love these girls have. They don't care if we bring crafts or not; they just want to be with us, to be loved by us. Over the years I have formed relationships with many of the girls, who are some of the sweetest, purest people I know. I go there to see their faces glow at the sight of the simplest, most ordinary things. I go there to show them in the most tangible way that God loves them and has a plan for them. I go there to love those girls and show them we care.

But really it is they who change me. I am humbled by their happiness in the most horrible of circumstances. I am constantly reminded of how lucky I am and how it is our responsibility to help those less fortunate than ourselves.

Going to our Little Roses is the most life changing experience I've ever had and I am so excited that I have the opportunity to return in the coming months. God has truly blessed me through each and every one of those precious girls.

PR

Below Hope Darley, Maggie Utsey, and two of the Little Roses girls during a water balloon fight at the compound in San Pedro, Sula, Honduras.



I have been to Honduras twice—this coming spring break will be my third time—and it is one of my favorite places in the world. I cannot think of anything I'd rather be doing over spring break. Our team, led by Anne Taylor, has been planning this trip since August '08. Our original trip, planned for July '09, was cancelled because of the coup

“Be still and know that I am God.” Psalm 46:10



Mary Michael Taylor, daughter of Chuck and Canon Anne Taylor, is a sophomore at Edgewater High School and a near lifelong member of the Cathedral family.

A Quiet Heart

By Mary Michael Taylor

THIS PAST NOVEMBER EYC DID A TAIZÉ service in the Cathedral. I was unsure what it would be like, but very excited for the new experience. We walked in the Cathedral. Its beauty was striking with candles lining the altar. We sat down inside the altar rail and got comfortable. The service began with an introduction and instructions to remain silent during this experience. The music played a hymn, scripture was read and we remained silent.

At first it was hard to quiet my heart. I had just come from dinner and games in the Great Hall with my best friends and our conversation and laughter lingered in my head. Thoughts of the coming week were also present and pressing down on me. I had a load of homework to do, a messy room, club events to plan, and I was feeling overwhelmed. As a Christian leader (I'm the sophomore class president and an FCA Captain at Edgewater High School) I am always being observed by my classmates. Sometimes the pressure can really eat away at me and challenge my relationship with the Lord.

But after the first scripture was read, I began to let go and enter into God's presence. I gave it all to Him. I gave Him my worries and my stress, my to-do list and my personal unhappiness, and I felt the Holy Spirit rush into me. I felt led to stand up, and as I did I saw my friend praying near the candles. I went to her and prayed over her. I knew without a doubt that God was there listening and loving us in His house.

The Taizé worship was a different way of worship for me. It taught me how to quiet my heart and listen to God. But more importantly it showed me that the Cathedral is the Lord's house. This service put the Cathedral in a new light. Though I can't always feel God's presence, I know He is there if I just take the time to quiet my heart.

I'm thankful that EYC gives me and other teens the opportunity to worship God in creative, new ways. On every retreat we have "Solo Time," where we take our Bibles, go outside and spend 30 minutes with God in silence. Having time to experience God in silence and listen to His voice is something I don't get to do often enough. I'm thankful to be in a youth group that challenges me to be quiet with God and grow deeper in my knowledge of him.

In Psalm 46:10 God reminds us: "Be Still and know that I am God." I'm thankful that Taizé gave me a chance to quiet my heart and be still before the Lord. As we plan for the next Taizé service, I am excited to see how God will continue to work in my heart and in the hearts of my closest friends at EYC. PR

EYC member Claire Morgan takes advantage of Solo Time at the back to school retreat.



CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF ST. LUKE
130 NORTH MAGNOLIA AVENUE, STE. 200
ORLANDO, FLORIDA 32801

Boardwalk space is precious during Solo Time at the EYC back to school retreat.



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. Proof Reader
Theo Gordon
 - c. Original Photographs
Members and Supporters of EYC

LIFE-ALTERING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

we traveled into the city. By the time we all met up at Lake Eola, we felt belittled, low and, worst of all, as if we actually DESERVED to feel that way.

I've often been guilty of turning the other way and pretending not to see when confronted with a homeless person in need of help. It's hard not to feel as though you are insignificant in the face of this problem which is so much larger than you. It is so hard to convince yourself to do the right thing when society presents to us the message that the homeless aren't worth our time.

Having experienced a day in the life of a homeless person, I find myself changed for the better. I am no longer able to turn away from those who are so clearly in need. I know what it's like, and I know I need to help. Forever I will have this mark upon me: that I have been there and know what it is to be homeless.

PR