



InterACT

The Newsletter of the Association of Christian Therapists: Healing with the Heart of Jesus

Date Book...

ACT International Conference

Oct. 25-29, 2007
Little Rock, AR
Christian Healing and Mental Health: "The truth will set you free"
John 8:32
Double Tree Hotel
501-372-4371
www.doubletreelr.com
Contact: Nicole at 703-556-9222 or nicole@degnon.org

Save the Date...

ACT Northeast Retreat

"I have called you by name" Is. 43:16
Fr. Rober Faricy and Cheryl Nyguen
April 4-6, 2008
Espousal Center
Waltham, MA

Plan Now...

ACT Pilgrimage

Ireland, May 2008
Father Joe Scerbo, Chaplain
Contact: Jennie Dodson
jenniemdodson@yahoo.com
905-335-6902



THE BIBLE – AN INEXHAUSTIBLE TEXT

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word remains forever (Isaiah 40:8).

The Bible never grows wearisome or stale. It is an inexhaustible text, a book that changes as we change. I read the Bible differently now than at other times in my life, and it remains a vast treasury waiting to be tapped. I find myself saying, "I never noticed that before," even in regard to passages that I may have read many times. The Scriptures release themselves to us over a lifetime; they release themselves as we are able to receive them.

If I don't read the Bible for a couple of days, the world seems a lot flatter and life a lot less interesting.

Many of our ancestors were armed with the saving knowledge from the Scriptures, with minds and hearts soaked in and shaped by the Scriptures. They took to the Bible the way their descendants take to self-help books. The wisdom of Scripture would bubble to the surface. Many of us today need minds fed by the Scriptures. Again

Jerome, and his counsel to two close friends: "If there is anything that can keep us steady and hold our soul in balance amid the tribulations and the bustle of this world, it is first and foremost knowledge of and meditation on the Scriptures."

However, to penetrate deeper into the meaning of the text and appreciate it more fully, requires some intellectual humility. The original authors of the books of the Bible composed their books in times, cultures, and languages quite different from our own. Hence, learning is required to rightly understand biblical texts. One needs to engage in serious and systematic study to understand many Scriptural passages in the setting of their own time. We need biblical experts, the work of scholars. Study helps unleash the power of the Bible. Jerome put it this way: "He who desires to eat the kernel must first break the shell."

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Forrest Stewart Yanke. LCSW, PhD



"The joy of the Lord is my strength" is the perfect Scripture to describe the ACT Leadership Retreat held in Jacksonville, Florida.

From morning to evening, prophetic words were flowing. 1 Thessalonians 5 exhorted us to "holy living and brotherly love."

The new focus was to "plan less and do more." We were told that the "The Lord was planting seeds, asking us to move our tent pegs, pouring Himself out in these latter days. Now was the time to launch out into the deep, and surrender ACT in its time of peace, for the conflict has passed." There was encouragement and there was challenge.

The leaders looked at ACT'S mission and vision. Focusing on ACT'S desire to support empower and witness, "Witness" was found to be the area most in need of attention. This thought was carried through to the core values of ACT stressing the importance of understanding and valuing different gifts in one another. The Myers Briggs Type Indicator was used as a framework to emphasize different gifts and style of witness. Shared wisdom and ethical rules of engagement further emphasized respect for each person and his or her gifts. The ever needed acknowledgement of the "God of the Gathering" (*Shared Wisdom*) followed suit.

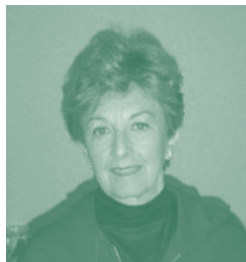
Then we put things into practice. Goals were encouraged; goals were set. Gloria Tipton, Coach of the Goal Coaches, led the way as the group sought out wisdom. We praised, we prayed, we listened for the prophetic word to come forth and it did. We were told "to connect and go out together, stretch beyond our comfort zones, rely on His strength, be

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FRIENDS' SALUTE

PAST PRESIDENT JOAN KENNEDY

Jack DeSantis and Friends



ACT Regions 1 and 2, New York, have something in common...a deep gratitude for the presence of Joan Kennedy in their lives. At a time when there was a local vacuum in leadership Joan came forward with her gentle, tireless, concerned dedication for ACT. She encouraged others to accompany her in leadership that would ensure the continuation of the work of the Holy Spirit so that the people of ACT could be fed and the membership flourish. With a heart for things Ecumenical and the Gift of being a Peacemaker, Joan went on to lead the ACT Board as President. She recognized that the harvest was great and answered the Lord's call. "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few" (Mt. 9:37). Once again, she pointed the way for others. Her legacy of "developing leadership" was evident at the 2006

International ACT Conference; sponsored by Regions 1 and 2...vibrant local leadership prevailed. The work of the Holy Spirit had been continued. Thank you, Joan, for your love and service for ACT on a Regional and International level. You are an inspiration! Our hearts and prayers go out to you on the loss of your beloved spouse. May God's healing love envelop you and yours.

INTERACT

Submissions for InterACT

InterACT welcomes articles, poems and photos for consideration. All submissions subject to editing.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE:

Fall Issue: September 1, 2007
storysunday@optonline.net
Mention ACT in the subject line.

Theme:

JESUS, Who Do You Say I Am? Reflect on the presence of Jesus in your life.

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY ? WE WANT TO HEAR IT !!!

EDITOR'S NOTE...

Gloria Doino



The cry of the prophet to the ancient Israelites was the joy-filled command: "Listen!" "Sh'ma Israel: Hear, O Israel!" In this issue of InterACT we invite you to turn to the Scriptures and "Hear" them anew. From the reverential reading of the Bible, as an "Inexhaustible Text" to the Art of Lectio Divina (Praying the Word) the Sacred Scriptures are our sustenance and our strength. As Christians we believe we are created for union with God through prayer, but in practice we struggle to believe it. Brothers and Sisters of ACT, I strive to remind you that you are "beloved of God". Let us heed the word of the Psalmist, 'Let us listen to the voice of God in His Word. Let us enter into His rest.'

SHHHH!

LECTIO DIVINA

PRAYING THE SCRIPTURES

The monks of old left the din of the city to cultivate the habit of silence. Books were rare and required endless time to copy by hand; so when they read the Scriptures, it was with great expectation and deep respect. This style of reading was called Lectio Divina or ‘Sacred Reading’ and when adhered to faithfully, was meant to lead to contemplation. This ancient practice was kept alive in the Christian monastic tradition and handed down to the present. It continues to appeal to many today.

Lectio Divina is a slow, contemplative praying of the Scriptures done either individually or as a group. The stages of Lectio Divina are not a fixed rule or procedure, but simply guidelines as to how the prayer normally develops. Its natural movement is toward greater simplicity, with less and less talking and more and more listening. Gradually the words of Scripture begin to dissolve and the Word is revealed before the eyes of the heart. Ideally, the need for a word disappears and we are led into inner silence.

Some devotees of the prayer of Lectio remove their shoes and wash their hands before they begin, as an outward sign of their inner stance. They may use a prayer bench. Begin by calling upon the Holy Spirit to be your guide. Approach Lectio in a spirit of reverence and awe. Then read a passage of Scripture attentively until a word, phrase or image strikes you. Next, imitate the prophet Elijah allowing yourself to listen for the “still, small voice of God” (1 Kings 10:12); the

“faint murmuring” sound which is God’s word within the Word for you, His voice touching your heart. This gentle listening is an “attunement” of His presence in that special part of God’s creation which is the Scriptures. Allow Christ the Word to move you as you sit attentively.

Once you have found a word or passage in the Scriptures that speaks to you, then stop reading and hold the word in your heart. Take in the Word, memorize it and allow it to interact within and touch you at your deepest level. If you wish, let the Word cover a difficult or pain filled experiences and allow its healing power to wash over you. Then gradually begin to let go of the Word and enter into the silence. You can always return to it, as an anchor, if distractions occur.

In the final phase of Lectio Divina, simply rest in the presence of the One who has used His Word as a means of inviting you to accept His embrace. It is suggested that you build up to 20 minutes of silence. To love is to know that we need not always speak with the beloved. It is the same in our relationship with God. The Spirit now prays in us as we simply rest in God’s presence receiving His love.

Contemplation, it appears, calls for little else.

Compiled by Gloria Doino, varied sources

<p>Lectio Divina Summary</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Read Scripture attentively until a word, phrase or image strikes you.2. Repeat the Sacred Word to yourself.3. Reflect on its meaning for you.4. Respond to the word: what is the lasting value this Word has in your life?5. Rest in God’s silence. Receive His love without effort. SHHH !

FYI...

BOOKS ON LECTIO DIVINA

BOOKS ON SCRIPTURE STUDY

Brown, Raymond. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. NY: Doubleday, 1997.

Casey, Michael. *Sacred Reading: The Ancient Art of Lectio Divina*. Ligouri, Mo.: Triumph Books, 1996.

Dubay, Thomas. *Prayer Primer: Igniting a Fire Within*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002.

Harrington, Daniel. *How to Read the Gospels: Answers to Common Questions*. Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1996.

Pennington, Basil. *Lectio Divina: Renewing the Ancient Practice of Praying*. NY: Crossroad Pub., 1998.

THE RABBI'S GIFT

THE UNTOLD STORY

Submitted by Rita Versace, NM

“Live together in harmony, being of one mind and one heart on the way to God”. (From the rule of St. Augustine)

There was a famous monastery which had fallen on very hard times. Formerly its many buildings were filled with young monks and its big church resounded with the singing of the chant. But now it was deserted. People no longer came to be nourished by prayer. A handful of old monks shuffled through the cloisters and praised their God with heavy hearts.

On the edge of the monastery woods, an old rabbi had built a little hut. He would come there from time to time to fast and pray. No one ever spoke with him, but when he appeared the word would be passed from monk to monk: “The rabbi walks in the woods, the rabbi walks in the woods.” And, for as long as he was there, the monks would feel sustained by his prayerful presence. One day the abbot decided to visit the rabbi and to open his heart to him. So, after the morning Eucharist, he set out through the woods. As he approached the hut, the abbot saw the rabbi standing in the doorway, his arms outstretched in welcome. It was as though he had been waiting there for some time. The two embraced like long-lost brothers. Then they stepped back and just stood there, smiling at one another with smiles their faces could hardly contain.

After a while the rabbi motioned the abbot to enter. In the middle of the room was a wooden table with the Scriptures open on it. They sat there for a moment, in the presence of the Word. Then the rabbi began to cry. The abbot could not contain himself. He covered his face with his hands and began to cry, too. For the first time in his life, he cried his heart out. The two men sat

there like lost children, filling the hut with their sobs and wetting the Word with their tears.

After the tears had ceased to flow and all was quiet again, the rabbi lifted his head. “You and your brothers are serving God with heavy hearts,” he said. “You have come to ask a teaching of me. I will give you a teaching, but you can only repeat it once. After that, no one must say it aloud again.”

The rabbi gazed at the abbot and said. “The Messiah is among you.”



For a while, all was silent. Then the rabbi said. “Now you can go home.”

The abbot left without a word and without ever looking back.

The next morning, the abbot called his monks together in the chapter room. He told them he had received a teaching from “the rabbi who walks in the woods” and that this teaching was never again to be spoken aloud. Then he looked at each of his brothers and said, “The rabbi said that one of us is the Messiah.”

The monks were startled by this teaching. “What could it mean?” they

asked themselves. “Is brother John the Messiah? Or Father Matthew? Or Brother Thomas? Am I the Messiah? What could this mean?” They were all deeply puzzled by the rabbi’s teaching. But no one ever mentioned it again.

As time went by, the monks began to treat one another with a very special reverence. There was a gentle, whole-hearted, human quality about them now which was hard to describe but easy to notice. They lived with one another as men who had finally found something. But they prayed the Scriptures together as men who were always looking for something. Occasional visitors found themselves deeply moved by the life of these monks. Before long, people were coming from far and wide to be nourished by the prayer life of the monks and young men were asking once again, to live with the monks for a lifetime.

In those days, the rabbi no longer walked in the woods. His hut had fallen into ruins. But, somehow or other, the old monks who had taken his teaching to heart still felt sustained by his prayerful presence... They still felt sustained by his prayerful presence.

By Francis Dorff. O. Pream. Norbertine Community, NM

**“He who receives
you...receives me
and he who receives
me receives HIM
who sent me...
and whoever gives
even a cup of cold
water to one of
these little ones
...truly I tell you
none of these will
lose their reward”
(Matt. 10:40,42)**

GLOBAL NEWS: ACT IN MOTION

Once again, Jennie Dodson, ACT member, has organized and brought to fruition a hugely successful pilgrimage. ACT Canada stood in proxy for every ACT region in the world, especially our developing regions in Europe, Mexico, Honduras, the Caribbean and Africa. The pilgrimage brought ACT and non ACT members together from Toronto and parts of Mexico and California. Besides visiting such blessing centers as Fatima (Portugal), Lourdes (France), and Zaragoza (Spain, Our Lady of Pilar), the Canadian pilgrimage visited the homes and spiritual birth places of great reformation movements in the history of the Christian faith. This included sites that were significant in the lives of Theresa of Avila, John of the Cross and Therese of Lisieux (known as Doctors of the Church in the Catholic Tradition).

Fr. Joe Scerbo, Ph.D., past ACT President and current ACT ambassador abroad, served as spiritual chaplain. ACT members who could not be present were, nevertheless, remembered through intercessory prayer. At the new Cathedral at Lourdes, the participants prayed for “holy boldness” for all and the fostering of a culture of Pentecost in our respective professions. Prayers for Christian Unity were lifted up for ACT and prayers for the success of ACT’s renewed identity statement were shared. All the intentions that were being sent to Jackie Sitte, at the time, through the ACT e mail prayer ministry, were added to the list. Prayers for the Leadership

Conference and ACT’s call to evangelize the helping professions were also remembered.

The Spirit of God seemed to be saying to evangelize by “making friends, being a friend, bringing a friend to Christ.” In praying the Stations of the Cross and the Rosary, the participants found the Spirit of God blessing hearts with deep revelations that helped each person to grow in awareness, courage and gentleness towards self and others. Each night during the stay in Fatima and then Lourdes, eyes feasted on thousands of vigil lights being carried in procession in the hands of both young and old, physically challenged and healthy. In a world of escalating violence, the group prayed that ACT be a “vigil light” to ignite other wicks and in a world that God called “very good” they asked the Lord to make ACT a refreshing and dynamic agent of praise.

The Lord gave the group Psalm 57 for ACT. This psalm speaks of the Passion of Christ. May the Living Flame of His Heart touch and renew the deep center of ACT hearts.

“My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready. I will sing, I will sing Your Praise. Awake my soul, awake, lyre and harp. I will awake the dawn.” (Ps. 57) The next ACT pilgrimage (Ireland) is scheduled for May of 2008. Fr. Scerbo will once again serve as chaplain. If you ask this year’s participants they will tell you it can’t come soon enough.



ACT CANADA PILGRIMS

FIELD NOTES... HEALING SURPRISE

By Rev. Gail Paul



At the ACT International Conference’06 I found myself praying for the Clergy and Religious Group, which I had been asked to lead as Specialty Group Coordinator. At this time they were attending another meeting. It was during this time that God gifted me with one of the most extraordinary experiences of my life.

My solitary praying was soon interrupted by a woman whom I shall call Patricia. I vaguely remembered her attendance at a sexual abuse healing retreat that Fr. Larry Carew and I had led at ‘the Oratory of the Little Way’ in Gaylordville, CT in 2002. Patricia was expecting to find Fr. Carew in the clergy meeting but he had already gone back to his parish in Connecticut. As we chatted and got reacquainted, I remembered many details of the retreat.

I remembered that at the retreat, as I prepared to baptize a man who had received a lot of healing, Patricia had raised her hand and said:” I just got in touch with a new personality that I didn’t know before. Will you baptize her?” I was so shocked that I did not know what to say. I had to think on my feet as the man stood before me. My ‘United Methodist Manual’ had not prepared me to baptize a person’s alter ego. I wanted to be sensitive, but the

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ACT JOURNEY

Mike White, MD

Act has been on a journey since its inception 32 years ago. The trail has been uphill, downhill and sideways and we have had our share of ruts in the road. Now the tide is turning. When ACT was in its infancy the connection between medicine and spirituality was an oxymoron. Now more and more medical schools are offering courses on the relationship of medicine and spirituality recognizing the interest and need that exists. They are presenting seminars on the subject and are providing continuing education units for these events! At our Gulf Shores Conference, Dr. Harold Koenig quoted studies that demonstrate that 85% of patients were open to prayer with their Doctors but, alas, only 15% of the Doctors were comfortable with the idea. Early on in our history, one of the charges given to us by Our Lord was to reclaim the healthcare community for Him.

This year's international conference in Little Rock provides an excellent opportunity to carry this word to many who have an openness to learning more about the place for spirituality in their occupations. We in ACT have been tremendously gifted and we now need to share these gifts so that they may grow in new ground and renew us simultaneously. This is the moment to make our babysteps grow into giant strides. We have a blend of dynamic speakers and timely workshops. Please consider spreading the word as an opportunity to grace both friends and colleagues.

Make a list of ten people you want to share the news with and send the addresses to Nicole Ritchey or Robin Caccese. You may be doing someone a life-changing favor.

ACT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

LITTLE ROCK, AR

OCTOBER 25 - 29, 2007

Thursday, October 25

3:00 pm Registration
 5:00 pm Travelers Mass
 6:00 pm Dinner on your own
 7:30 pm Welcome
 7:40 pm "Is there a Scriptural Basis to Mental Health?"
Robert Sears, S.J.
 9:00 pm Social greetings/meet your peers

Friday, October 26

6:30 am Eucharistic Adoration
 7:30 am Breakfast
 9:00 am Praise and Worship
 9:30 am Introduction to ACT
 10:00 am "Does Your Spiritual Health Play a Role in Mental Health?"
Carlos Muira, M.D.
 10:50 am Break
 11:05 am "Ministering to Mental Health Patients – A Christian Counseling Psychotherapeutic Approach"
Cheryl Marsh, APRN, BC
 12:00 noon Lunch
 1:30 pm "The Social Spiritual Implications of Mental Illness, Reclaiming Your Authentic Identity, Dignity, and Social Life"
Heather Stewart, LCSW
 2:30 pm Panel discussion
 3:30 pm Break
 4:00 pm Workshops
 5:30 pm Dinner
 7:30 pm Healing Mass

Saturday October 27

6:00 am Eucharistic Adoration
 7:00 am Eucharistic Mass
 8:00 am Breakfast
 9:00 am Praise and Worship

9:30 am "The Secret of Forgiveness"
Reverend Russ Parker
 10:30 am Break
 10:45 am "The Secret of Forgiveness, II"
Reverend Russ Parker
 12:00 noon Lunch
 1:30 pm "How does Christian Healing Relate to Mental Illness?"
ACT Healing Manual Team
 3:30 pm Break
 4:00 pm Workshops
 5:30 pm dinner
 7:30 pm Ecumenical Healing Service

Sunday, October 28

6:30 am Eucharistic Adoration
 7:30 am Breakfast
 8:30 am Christian Service
 10:00 am Eucharistic Mass
 11:30 am Lunch
 1:00 pm Specialty Group Meetings
 3:30 pm Induction of New ACT Members/Business Meeting
 5:30 pm Dinner
 7:00 pm Party

Monday, October 29

6:00 am Eucharistic Adoration
 7:00 am Eucharistic Mass
 8:00 am Breakfast
 9:00 am Praise and Worship
 9:30 am "Ecumenism, Evangelization and ACT"
Rev. Austin Joyce
 10:30 am Break
 10:45 am "Going Forth"
Douglas Schoeninger, PhD and Forrest Yanke, PhD
 11:30 am Commissioning
 12:00 noon Go In Peace, to Praise and Serve the Lord!

Registration information for the 2007 ACT conference can be found at www.ACTHeals.org or by contacting Nicole Ritchey at 703-556-9222 or nicole@degnon.org

PROGRAM SPEAKERS



Father Robert Sears, SJ, well known ACT member and currently superior of Gonzaga Jesuit Community at Loyola University Chicago will open the conference with the topic: “Is there a Scriptural Basis to Mental Health?” He holds a doctorate from Fordham University in Spiritual Theology where he wrote his dissertation on the Theology of the Holy Spirit. He has taught courses on Jung, Theology, Family Systems, Healing, Adult Faith Formation and Ignatian Spirituality. A counselor, spiritual director and author, Father Bob is a Board member of ACT and active in the charismatic renewal.

Dr. Carlos Muira is a psychiatrist and an assistant professor at the University of Ottawa. He works at the Royal Ottawa Health Care Association in the area of Depression, Bipolar Disorder and Schizophrenia. His expertise is in the area of the integration of psychopharmacology, psychotherapy, and spirituality. His topic is: “Does your Spiritual Health Play a Part in Your Mental Health?”



Cheryl Marsh, APRN, BC is a Board Certified, Clinical Nurse Specialist in Adult Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing. She has been active as a leader on both the Regional and International level of ACT. Cheryl received degrees from St. Francis Hospital School of Nursing, her BSN from University of Hartford and her MSN from Yale University. She has worked almost exclusively in behavioral health since 1968. She is married to Ben Ticknor, an ACT member. She will speak on: “Ministering to Mental Health Patients- A Christian Counseling Psychotherapeutic Approach.”

Heather Stuart, LCSW is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker currently employed at the Menninger Clinic in Houston, Texas. She is a Primary Clinician on a young adult sub-acute residential program with diagnosis ranging from depression/anxiety to personality disorders and substance abuse. Heather has served as a youth minister, as well, and relies on her Faith and Knowledge of Christ to navigate the way she approaches work with clients and their families.” The Social Spiritual Implications of Mental Illness, Reclaiming Your Authentic Identity, Dignity and Social Life” will be her topic.



Rev. Russ Parker is director of Acorn Christian Foundation which exists to resource and educate the Church in the Christian Healing Ministry. In this capacity Russ has created many educational materials. He is a well known author, with a degree in Phenomenology and Theology from Nottingham University where he did his thesis on Dreams as a religious phenomenon. He will address the conference on “The Secret of Forgiveness.”

Austin J. Joyce, D.Min. has been working in the field of marriage and family therapy as both a pastor and clinician. He is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist in Pennsylvania and a certified chaplain: clinical pastoral education. He has held three different pastorates as a minister in the Presbyterian Church U.S.A. He currently works part time at the Harvest Community Presbyterian Church in West Chester, PA. He maintains a Clinical practice working with individuals, couples and families in Wayne, PA. Additionally, he works as a Behavioral Specialist providing Wrap Around services for children and their families in the Berks County region of PA. He is a graduate of St. Joseph’s University, BS (1973); Princeton Theological Seminary, M.Div. (1978); and Colgate Rochester Divinity School, D.Min. (1982). With his colleague Dr. Barbara Krasner he has written a book on Contextual Theory and Therapy entitled, *Truth, Trust and Relationship* (1995). He has written or co-authored various articles in the therapeutic field. Austin is an ACT member.



CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

We are pleased to offer you twelve workshops from which to choose during the ACT International Conference, October 25-29, 2007 in Little Rock, AR:

“Mental Health and Truth: Addressing the Lies that Masquerade as Truth, The Truth shall Set You Free”

by Frances Schoeninger, MS

Exposing, examining, and dismantling harmful beliefs

“The Use of TheophosticHealing Prayer in Mental Health”

by Ann Arcieri, LMSW, ACSW, Jim

DeMar, PhD, LCSW, and Julie

Woodley, MA,LMHC

“Mental Health/ Coping with Losses”

by Sr. Maria Theresa Hronec,

SS.C.M.

Spiritual self-awareness empowers the caregiver.

“Surviving the Loss of a Loved One by Suicide”

by Anne Cronin Tyson, MA and Rev.

Dr. C. Karen Covey Moore

“Treatment of Dissociative Identity Disorder”

by Benjamin B. Keys, PhD

A Christian inner healing and art therapy approach

“Resting in His Presence”

by Mona Pagel, MSW

An experiential workshop on preparation for or debriefing of daily work

“Using the Healing Wisdom of Poetry, Novels, and Movies to Heal the Soul”

by Charles Zeiders PhD

Finding and applying divine healing grace hidden in literature and film.

“Science, the Gospel, and Mental Health: Psychological and Spiritual Implications of a Relational Universe”

by Karen Kozica Chichon, PhD

The shift in world view to a relational universe.

“Life in the Spirit I”

by Sr. Betty Ann Igo, M.Ed, MSPC, SFP

“Life in the Spirit II”

by Sr. Betty Ann Igo, M.Ed, MSPC, SFP

“Growth in the Spirit I”

by Denise Dolff, MA

“Growth in the Spirit II”

by Denise Dolff, MA

2007 INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE PRAYER

We thank you, Father, for calling us each by name. We come before you now, in agreement with one another, that you begin **now** to pour forth your Holy Spirit upon this conference & all who attend it. We ask you, Lord, to call many others to come forth to your banquet table. Give us the holy boldness to bring your love & an invitation to those we meet & to those to whom we minister, that they also may drink from your fount of mercy and healing. Teach us, Jesus, to be more like you. Prepare our hearts to receive your gifts graciously as we gather in your name. Open us up, Lord Jesus, that we may receive all that you offer, & send us forth in the fullness of the fruits and gifts of your Holy Spirit to more deeply touch all those with whom we have contact. Amen, and Amen!!!

HEALING SURPRISE

Continued from page 5

best idea I could come up with was “I would like everyone to reaffirm their baptismal vows. Will that work for you? She graciously said ‘Yes’ but I could tell that she was being sensitive to my dilemma. For several years I had felt guilty at not responding in ‘the spirit of the law’ rather than ‘the letter of the law’. Earlier in that 2002 retreat, Patricia had shared with me that she had multiple personalities because of a childhood of Satanic ritual abuse. I felt that God was now giving me the opportunity to apologize and to confess that I had not responded as I felt I should have done. I asked her to forgive me. She did and we continued to talk.

A little later in the conversation Patricia looked at me with a startled expression on her face. She said that another new personality had just manifested itself to her. Miraculously, in the next hour, I was witness to, more than participant

in, more of her healing. She used principles of theophostic counseling she had learned over the years and her deep faith in, and dependence upon God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit to dialogue with the new personality. It was a fearful, but brave, young, impertinent questioning child that Patricia did not remember meeting before this conversation began. That child, she learned, was the protector that had absorbed all of Patricia’s abuse pain and did not trust anyone, even Jesus, when Patricia first tried to introduce her to Jesus. Neither did that child trust God the Father. However, she eventually but guardedly, accepted the Holy Spirit. I became curious about the child’s name and asked Patricia the name of the little girl. It was Patty. That seemed to me to indicate significant integration of personalities was near. Just as the conversation with Patty came to a natural stopping place for a first meeting with Kathy, the door opened and in walked the Clergy and Religious Specialty Group.

In preparation for that Specialty Group meeting I had e mailed members of the group to come prepared to share some of the signs and wonders of God’s healing grace that they had seen in their ministries in the previous year. However, I now felt compelled to invite Patricia to stay and be our feature representative of a sign and wonder of God’s healing grace among ACT members. She shared her excitement about the new level of healing she had just experienced.

Patricia met with me twice more during the conference. After I left early Monday morning, she met with a Catholic nun for further healing. She had found a safe, caring place to seek God’s healing power. She took full advantage of the opportunity for prayer..

God chooses when and how the needed healing happens. *Give thanks to the Lord, Thank His Name, make known His Deeds among the People.* (Psalm 105)

THE BIBLE

Continued from page 1

Some of my happiest hours have been spent in the academic study of the Bible.

I have friends from the Bible, both men and women. I like them and always have since I first read the Bible. I like Gideon, Ruth, Boaz, Paul, the people in *Tobit*. I think I have learned much from their personal qualities.

So many Christians, especially Catholics, are generally ignorant of the Bible. They have a nodding acquaintance with a few of the major Biblical books, and know nothing of so many of the neglected Biblical gems.

There is the Song of Songs, esteemed as one of the most beautiful books of the Bible written in lyric poetry that celebrates new love and the green earth. It is filled with vibrant images: "For love is as strong as death...Deep waters cannot quench love, nor floods sweep it away" (8:6-7). In its literal sense the book is a celebration of the passionate love between men and women.

There is the short, fascinating book of *Ecclesiastes*, generally regarded as a beautiful little masterpiece. The pessimism and melancholy of the book somehow seems to be telling it like it is. The writer presents himself as someone who doesn't know exactly what it is all about. He is in search for an answer to the problem "what do people gain from all the toil at which they toil under the sun?" (1:3). He encourages us to enjoy the little pleasures of life that can lighten the burden of living. A bit of advice *Ecclesiastes* offers is to be good but not too good.

The Book of Ruth is one of the great short stories that has come down from antiquity. It has the hum of real life, and is told with great affection and delicacy. In four brief chapters (or 85verses) the author creates unforgettable characters.

The delightful book of *Tobit* is a short story in which there is an angel and a demon, a magical fish and a faithful dog, an adventurous journey and a lady in distress. The helpful traveling companion, Azarius, is in reality the Archangel Raphael.

And, of course, there are the psalms which often rise to great poetry and capture the whole range of human emotions. They are marvelous ways of expressing our own innermost feelings. They give rise to all the cries of the human heart. Ambrose of Milan in the 4th century wrote, "What experience is not covered by the psalms? The psalms are a cry of happiness, an echo of gladness. They soothe the temper, relieve care, lighten the burden of sorrow...They are a shield when we are afraid, a promise of peace and serenity. The psalms are the cry of all humanity, and also the applause of the universe."

"There was once a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job." With these words, the Bible introduces one of its most memorable characters. The *Book of Job* is one of the classic pieces in world literature. It is terrifying and beautiful, haunting. Its descriptions of nature are of a power which has never been surpassed. The book deals with the profound problem of the meaning of suffering in the life of a just man. Many have found the book to be an eloquent presentation of their own pains and sufferings as they have struggled with the ways of God.

Whatever study we give to the Bible is rewarded. For everyone the Bible remains a vast treasure waiting to be tapped. It contains words that have an inherent power; words that can open us to ourselves and words that can be a source of courage and hope. The Scriptures are where we find the principal nourishment for our faith. Prayer should be informed by intelligent understanding of the Scriptures. There is so much literary power and grace in these holy books. With the

Scriptures we can say to God: Come to look for me, for I too am seeking you. Search for me, find me, gather me to you.

When I found your words, I devoured them; they became my joy and the happiness of my heart" (Jer.15:16). (Dr. Thomas Hicks, Professor Emeritus, Sacred Heart University Fairfield, CT.)

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Continued from page 2

willing to be obedient at a moment's notice, reach people at their points of need." In conclusion, we were reassured that "the Holy Spirit would fertilize the gifts."

Task groups were formed to evaluate the four Strategic Plan areas: Spiritual Life, Strengthening the Regions, Specialty Groups, and Communication. Each group considered the previous day's wisdom and incorporated it into its work. Consideration was given to: cultural diversity with age and race, divine time management, points of connecting with new members, retention and reaching out, as well as communication and outreach strategies. Reports from the groups were an exciting time of sharing. New action plans emerged.

There was a new excitement about ACT and for ACT as the leaders brought the time together to a close. The Board met on Monday and among many things, prayed for the grace to follow through on the Lord's leading. The International Conference lies ahead. Pray for its success. Be open to witness to those who might not know Jesus in Little Rock, Arkansas. Thanks go to Mike White and Jackie Sitte for their discernment and detailed work.

May our Lord Jesus Christ bring more and more fullness into your life with Him and into the work He has prepared for you in bringing about His kingdom in the healthcare professions.

INSIDE ACT REGIONAL SPOTLIGHT 10 FOR 10

Renee Lavitt

At the recent conference, sponsored by Canada's Region 10, *Sound the Trumpet: Come and be Healed*, the participants were treated to an impressive array of speakers. Father Robert Faricy, SJ, Cheryl Nyguyen, Father Francois Paradis, OMI, Dr. Klassen and Dr. Pasquale Fiorino joined gifts to present a powerful conference. Mary Salvador and Pasquale Fiorino were the coordinators along with Denise Dolff who served as MC.

A description of what forgiveness truly is, the need for forgiveness in inner healing and the process for forgiveness were highlighted. The discipline of Contemplative Prayer and its place in our spiritual lives was stressed. The presence, power and activity of the Holy Spirit were ever present. The use of the Gifts, especially Word of Knowledge regarding the healings that were taking place was most powerful. A spirit of joy and peace pervaded the atmosphere. Every detail, even to the decor of an English Tea was admirable. Region 10 participants give it a 10! There appears to be a new wave of the Spirit working in ACT. Amen, let it be so.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Congratulations to Robert Sweggart and Maggie Ashton as they take over as Co- Coordinators of Region 4. Thanks to Jackie Sitte who is the outgoing Coordinator for all her work. She will remain as Secretary Treasurer.

Kudos as well to Anne Behneman and George Guschwan for being Joint- Coordinators of Region 24.

TRY THIS... BOOK LOVERS REJOICE!

From the town library to Oprah, Book Clubs are flourishing. Read about the things that matter most to you with your ACT companions. Our program pick for this issue is a Reader's Club that can be sponsored through a Region or a Specialty Group. It can be billed as ACT's Region-Wide Read (or Specialty Group Read). Your insights/ reactions can be shared during a teleconference, by group email, or before the main program at a Regional meeting. Ask book club members to swap titles and read reviews by doing a search on the Internet to help you make a selection. The magazine "Bookmarks" can help you to run a book club. The book club can also sponsor a guest journalist for a Regional meeting once a year. Book suggestion: Transfiguration by John Dear, S.J. A priest, retreat leader, author and peace activist, Dear is executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, an Interfaith organization. Dear guides the reader on the path to finding peace within and bringing harmony to a world torn by hatred and violence, through following in the footsteps of Jesus. Dear uses the gospel account of the Transfiguration inviting readers to continue Jesus' mission of peace and love. He divides the book into 3 parts: an inner journey, a public journey and the journey of all humanity as he delves into the challenges of learning to love ourselves and others and embracing the choice to live in peace. Book lovers you know who you are; stand up and be counted! All you need is the 'power of one' to get the program rolling.

INTER-FAITH EXCHANGE: INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Catholic Theological Union, Chicago is commencing a new degree program (Master of Arts in Interreligious Dialogue) as of September 07. The focus of the program will be the three Abrahamic faith traditions- Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. It has been created to provide both theological and practical studies for those interested in becoming leaders in the interreligious arena. Areas of study will prepare students to be teachers, representatives of religious organizations and or skilled workers in the fields of business or government. In the news release announcing the new program the school indicated that it would " seek to maintain a balance of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim students reflecting the balance of Jewish, Christian, Muslim professors who will function as the core faculty." By graduation it is expected that the participants would be theologically literate in one of the faith traditions other than his or her own.



GLOBAL MOMENT

ACT members, CANADA , on pilgrimage in France, emailed back home to say that they were interceding for all the intentions on the ACT prayer list.

Thanks go out to our brothers and sisters in ACT for their faithfulness and prayer support. ACT members at large are reminded that noon is a suggested time for ACT members to pray for one another.

FATHER DICK SINNER REMEMBERED

Jeremy Ashton

This was his actual name.

Fr. Dick always spoke up for others, myself included. Dick did not look cool. He was physically what you would call “stolid”. He wore, it appeared, whatever was handy and missed the scrutiny of kindly souls who might have made him presentable. His priestly leadership included singing, characterized by Pete Seeger-like absence of style. But his fervor got people going. His shirt pocket was always stuffed with literature about oppressed Political Refugees, which he would hand you as he elaborated on the subject, unasked. He risked his life transporting hundreds of refugees across dangerous borders, in an old beat-up car, without money and without much support or sanction.

What stands out to me most of all is this. My church experience up to then had room for only two types of clergy—those who believed in miracles, prayer, expressive worship and things like the literal truth of the Resurrection, and the other kind: those who believed in social justice. He had both kinds of goodness beautifully wrapped in one package. Dick Sinner did not just preach justice. He did it, even when it cost a lot. And he did not just pray. He gave. I once prayed with him for an emotionally struggling woman. Compassion poured from him. And it was obvious he believed Jesus was doing something.

My wife, Maggie’s comment about him was the best, “He never sought glory for himself.” He was one of the reasons I wanted to join ACT.

SPECIALTY GROUPS

Join us in welcoming Royce Johnston as the new coordinator for the Associate Specialty Group.

GOOD SAMARITANS NEEDED



It has come to our attention that ACT friend, Michael John POIRIER, anointed Christian Musician and Worship Leader (Regional and International ACT conferences) is in need. He is battling malignant melanoma in his eye and is undergoing treatment. Michael John is requesting prayer for his healing and his family. This unexpected setback, has forced Michael John to cancel many prayer concerts, his main source of income. Several ACT members have brought to our attention that, if you feel so led, a tax deductible contribution may be made to help Michael and his family. Donations may be sent to: Holy Family Apostolate, P O Box 30414, Edmond, OK 73003. or www.holyfamilynow.com. Michael’s ministry speaks for itself and we ask that you pass this information along.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS OF ACT

Region 10
Florence St-Jean
Waterdown, ON Canada

Contance Kay Ulery
Kitchener, ON Canada

Region 24
Marty Montgomery-Jennings
Powhatan, VA

SPECIALTY GROUPS WANTED: CHAPLAINS

Rev. George Handzo, associate vice-president of strategic development at the Health Care Chaplaincy, Manhattan, N.Y. (www.healthcarechaplaincy.org) reports that there is a lack of personnel to train and supervise Hospital Chaplains in the Metropolitan area, resulting in a shortage of Chaplains at large. The center for education, research and consulting is working within an Inter-Faith Community to counter the situation. At the same time CNS (Catholic News Services) reports that corporations and small businesses are hiring Chaplains with the hope, “That a bit of spiritual support will help to build morale, increase productivity and retention rates and aid in dealing with employees’ mental health.” Outside competition for good Chaplains is a real problem for the Hospitals.

In the darkest of moments Chaplains are called upon to be a ray of hope to families and patients dealing with the emotional and physical strains of illness. Whether it is the Sacrament of the Sick, words of wisdom or a friendly ear that the Chaplain brings, the sight of a Chaplain is often a welcome respite for the weary. The absent chaplain will be sorely missed when families need an additional and God-friendly person to help them through the maze of conversations that center on end of life issues, organ donations, traumatic injuries and the like. The arrival of stricter privacy laws has added to the red tape Chaplains may encounter when acquiring permission to visit.

Although no quick solution appears on the horizon the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. in Decatur, Georgia feels that figures are improving. Let’s hope they are right.

A-M-E-N!

Gramoor Ecumenical and Interreligious
Institute New York



Oh God, Holy and Eternal
Trinity
We Pray for your church in the
world,
Sanctify its life; renew its worship;
Empower its witness; heal its
Divisions;
Lead us, with all our brothers and

sisters, toward communion in Faith, life and witness
So that, united in one body
By the one spirit,
We may together witness
To the perfect unity of your love

nuggets...

“Fresh air impoverishes the doctor”
Danish Proverb

“The best things in life aren't things”
Art Buchwald

“That which you are seeking is causing you to seek”
Anonymous

TOOLS FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND RENEWAL

Marble Collegiate Church Subscription (Tape /CD)
Bible Study with Sr. Carol Perry (Ten months \$175)

Biblical Scholar Sr. Carol Perry brings the personalities and world of the Bible to life. Mailed monthly from September to June, the subscription includes approximately 35 lessons. Online at: www.MarbleChurch.org Phone: (212) 686-2770

Living in the Power of the Holy Spirit: A Catholic Bible Study (Book). Online at www.wordamongus.org/store or Call 1-800-775-WORD

miscellaneous...

“a merry heart doeth good like a medicine” (Prov. 17:23)

Scripture Scholars have recently confirmed that after thirty-nine and a half years of wandering in the desert, it was Mrs. Moses who secretly asked for directions

keep connected

Association of Christian Therapists (ACT)
6728 Old McLean Village Drive ~ McLean, VA 22101
(703) 556-9222 ~ fax (703) 556-8729 ~ ACTHeals@degnon.org ~ www.ACTHeals.org



Association of Christian Therapists

6728 Old McLean Village Drive
McLean, VA 22101-3906

**REMINDER: Use your member number
(DIRECTLY next to your last name) to access
the members only section of the ACT website at www.actheals.org**

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