



InterACT

The Newsletter of the Association of Christian Therapists: A fellowship of Health Care Professionals and Associates

DATEBOOK... Save the Date!

ACT International Conference

September 16-19, 2010
ACT International Conference, Albuquerque New Mexico, USA
Hilton Albuquerque
1901 University Blvd. NE
Tel: 1-505-884-2500
Fax: 1-505-880-1196
www.ACTHeals.org or contact the ACT Office at 703-556-9222

Regional Meetings Region 12 Retreat

May 28 - 30
"Peace be with you: Recovering Serenity and Freedom" with Rev. Matt Linn. Contact retreats.act@gmail.com or Barbara Carlo 847-963-2223

ACT Pilgrimage

October 5-14, 2010
"Through the Spiritual Heart of France"
Rev. Martin Bradbury, Rev. James Petrie
Contact: Jennie Dodson
Tel: 1-905-335-6902

Spring InterACT

June 15, 2010 deadline
Submit attachments (subject to editing) to: storysunday@optonline.net
Mention InterACT in the subject line..



HEARTS FOR HAITI

Fifteen years ago, when Pat Blaney's daughter urged him to go on a goodwill dental trip to Haiti, he never dreamed it would become his mission in life. He has been going twice a year ever since, and last year, his wife, Janet accompanied him for the first time. Both Pat and Janet are ACT members. She is a nurse and they worked as a team, putting in about eight hours a day, Monday through Friday, seeing as many as fifty people each day who lined up for hours in the hot sun waiting their turn for fillings or extractions. Some walked for hours over the mountains to get their teeth fixed.

A couple from Downer's Grove, Illinois, started this mission, which now has a small, but very functional dental clinic next to St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, in Baudin, a rural mountain community about forty miles south of Port-au-Prince with about 40,000 people. The center of the community is the church and the school. Even though the people are so extremely poor, they dress up for church on Sunday and sing with joy. They pray: "Thank you Lord for this food, the food of life." The recent earthquake caused severe damage to the rectory, the church and the school,

but the dental clinic was miraculously spared.

There is a Haitian proverb: "What the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't feel." In a talk Pat and Janet gave to Region 12 ACT members (Chicago), Pat said, "You can't see the poverty without being affected by it." With voice cracking, he added, "I appreciate life more. I am more tender and I am trying to grow spiritually, to go to Mass more often."

Janet was struck by the anger of the crowd because they were not getting food—acid was burning their stomachs. Most people in this poor outlying area only eat once a week, and parents even pay for mud pies (made from dirt) to fill their children's stomachs. When they were given clean water, medical problems decreased 90%. On his most recent trip, Pat did 130 fillings, doing five or six per person because their teeth were in such bad shape. He plans to return in May. He may be reached at: Blaneydds@yahoo.com

Check out the heart-rending photos at: www.Baudindentalmission.org.
Joan Carter McHugh

inside

Mary of History

Gloria Doino

Lord, I Want to Go Back

Joan Carter McHugh

Spiritual Warfare

Rev. P. Feider

Dear ACT Community



I made a smart decision, February 2010. I attended the ACT Southern California conference in its entirety. Since an ACT Board meeting has preceded the conference, I have in the past stayed for a day or so. This time, since my friend Russ Parker was speaking, I determined to take in the whole of it in order to spend time with him. That would have been sufficient.

However, I was additionally blessed beyond measure! Much more was added to this. A number of factors coalesced to make this a special time for me and to reinforce in me a taste of God's heart and vision for ACT. There was a welcoming atmosphere, a clear desire from those hosting that all be included, that everyone was special, needed and gifted. Visitors were engaged, informed about ACT and invited to join. New members were whisked into a photo shoot and their pictures featured on a poster board at the entrance to the meeting hall. This attitude was catching. I wanted to follow suit and did. The speakers, Russ Parker, Michael Brescia and Sharon Froom (Spirit/Body/Mind), each spiritually deep and mature and professionally excellent (what could be more ACT?), integrated themselves into the conference, responded to their welcome and inclusion and reinforced each other's teaching. Deepening our formation as healer's with the heart of Jesus, listening well to our patients and each other, meeting Jesus in our patients, meeting Jesus in each other, companioning each other on this journey, were spoken from the podium and informally in conversation. I felt that I was tasting what ACT is and what ACT is to be.

While in prayer at the conference I heard the words, "I am helping ACT build a container. I am preparing ACT to receive more of me and of mine, those called to join with you in ACT. The container has three parts: Attitude, Teaching, and Formation." I experienced a welcoming, listening, "you are special" attitude. I received professionally excellent and faith-filled teaching. I was challenged to provide resources: teaching, healing and companioning for formation, to help each other become healers with the heart of Jesus.

Doug

Douglas Schoeninger, PhD
President ACT



EDITOR'S NOTE

Gloria Doino, MA

Your turn, Spring. Time to thrive and bless us. Time for new projects to vie for our attention. But even with sunny skies we sometimes 'freeze' at the size of the task before us. That's a good time to remember to pray Chronicles 28:20 : "*Be strong and courageous and get to work for the Lord my God is with you. He will not forsake you. He will see to it that everything is finished correctly.*" God is our strength. So, too, may you find strength in this issue's myriad 'overcomers': a dental clinic that survives in Haiti, Barbara Shlemon Ryan's triumph over intense suffering, Fr. Paul Feider's call to recognize Spiritual Warfare for what it is and Denise Dolff's conclusion that *healing is work*. Praise God for these fellow role models ... ACT members, all. Praise God for the International Conference when we gather together. Y'all come!

A-M-E-N!

Come...

Oh, feed me this day, Holy Spirit, with
The fragrance of the fields and the
Freshness of the oceans which you have
Made, and help me to hear and to hold
In all the dearness those exacting and wonderful
Words of our Lord Christ Jesus, saying:

Follow me.

THIRST by Mary Oliver

HEALING EXCHANGE

BLOCKS TO HEALING PART I



Healing is a Choice

Although healing has always been part of God's plan for God's people, not everyone is healed. This is mystery and requires ongoing faith in God's goodness and God's perfect will. But it is also reasonable to look at personal reasons for blocked healing.

Ultimately, healing is work. It just does not happen with the wave of a wand or the taking of a pill. It is true that Jesus has said 'ask and you shall receive', (Matthew 7:7) but the asking requires not just a sincerity of faith, but also a willingness to do what God may ask in return. In this sense, there can be a 'cost' for the healing. Consider the case of Naaman, (2Kings 5:1-15), the great Aramean military victor who would have bypassed his opportunity for healing from leprosy rather than bathe in the Jordan River. The cost was small in effort, but large because of pride. Naaman sought only physical healing, but God had a bigger plan.

Healing may also require persistence. Consider the case of the Syrophenician woman (Mark 7:24-29). How easy it would have been to remain a victim and walk away saying 'I tried but even Jesus wasn't interested in helping my daughter'. Perhaps God had a plan for her healing, and not just for her daughter, and this came only with her persistence.

Healing also requires a willingness to feel the pain, to acknowledge it, in order to be freed from it. If an individual has invested a lifetime in burying the pain, or hiding from it, sometimes it is easier to remain in the pain than to acknowledge it and feel it. Similarly, when one has lived with a certain wound for a long time, it can become comfortable, familiar, even if disliked. It can become the excuse for not doing what would be in one's best interest to do e.g. take responsibility for one's life, for one's sins and failures. I suspect that this is why God asks persistence in seeking healing, at times, or requires some cooperative action. If one asks God for healing, but is still hanging onto one's pain or fear or false beliefs, God will not violate an individual's free will. God sees the heart and will not go where God has not truly been invited.

Finally, then, I believe healing is a choice. Steve Arterburn has written a helpful book with this very title (*Healing is a Choice*, Thomas Nelson, Inc., Nashville, Tennessee) and is recommended reading for further insight and information.

SCRIPTURE

MARY OF HISTORY



Mary of Nazareth, mother of Jesus, woman of a thousand faces is part of our Christian history. Scripture places her at the three pivotal events that form the Christian mystery: the Incarnation, the Pascal mystery and Pentecost. In Luke 1:38 Mary humbly acknowledges that she is "the handmaid of the Lord." Elizabeth calls Mary, "blessed." (Lk.1:42) And Mary responds by proclaiming the greatness of God in the Magnificat. (Lk1:46). In addition, her legacy at Cana remains our call to action: "Do whatever He tells you to do." But who is the 'Mary of history?' A review of contemporary Scripture studies, archaeological research and analysis of the literature of her time can reveal much to us about the life she might have led. Why reconstruct Mary's world? The life she led was so intertwined with the mystery of Jesus that it can only shed light on the life of her son.



Known as Miriam and believed to be a native of Nazareth (a town in Galilee of about 1600 people) Mary would have taught Jesus to speak Aramaic. Hers was a multilingual world where Roman soldiers, Greek merchants and Hebrew speaking scholars co-existed. She belonged to the peasant class where life was exacting. A triple tax to Rome, the Temple and King Herod the Great was nearly unbearable. "They eked out their survival through agriculture and small business ventures." (Catholic Update May'08)

Palestinian girls of the time married about the age of 13 to insure virginity and maximize child bearing. But don't let age mislead you. The 'Mary of history' would have been far from fragile. She would have walked the hills of Judea, traveled to Jerusalem, and slept in the open country when she traveled. That took vigor. The image of the Holy Family, as a group of three living in an idyllic carpenter shop, has come to us through the loving efforts and devotion of artists. Yet, Jesus was raised in oppressive times. More than likely Jesus, Mary and Joseph banded together in an extended family unit where three or four houses, of one or two rooms each, were built around an open courtyard, in which relatives shared an oven, a cistern, and a millstone for grinding. Domestic animals were housed at ground level. Mary would have given multiple hours to domestic chores, carrying water, gathering wood, cooking meals, washing clothes. The young Jesus learned how to survive at

Continued on page 7

Association of Christian Therapists 2010 International Conference

Healing the Roots of Addiction:
Inviting Jesus into the Pain

"...Be transformed by the renewing of your mind"
Romans 12:2

Hilton Albuquerque
September 16-19
Albuquerque, NM

Association of Christian Therapists

The Association of Christian Therapists (ACT) is an international organization providing educational, spiritual and social benefits and healing opportunities to Christian healing providers. ACT invites physicians, dentists, nurses, clergy, pastoral care providers, psychotherapists, counselors, educators, health practitioners and others to join in the united effort of integrating spirituality with their professions.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

A blend of plenary sessions, relative thematic workshops and basic and intermediate workshops focused on how to blend Christian spirituality and healing into a clinical practice setting.

Featured Speakers

Richard Rohr, OFM

Internationally known speaker and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation. Father Rohr uses many different platforms to communicate the message of the Gospel including 12-Step spirituality.

David Mee-Lee, MD

A leading expert in co-occurring substance use and mental disorders with over thirty years experience in program development.

Jackie Sitte, RN, CARN, LADC I

A registered nurse, psychotherapist, published author and popular retreat and seminar leader, counsels individuals, couples and groups in many locales.

Allen Berger, PhD

A nationally recognized expert in the science of recovery and relationship therapy, known for his work on integrating psychotherapy with the 12-Steps

Information and Registration: ACTHEALS.ORG

LORD, I WANT TO GO BACK

Joan Carter McHugh

Just weeks after turning 70, Barbara Shlemon Ryan's world fell apart. "I felt like an elephant was sitting on my chest," she told her female internist, who diagnosed her problem as an esophageal spasm and handed her a new diet to follow. As if that wasn't enough, she had someone walk Barb to her car because she was a bit dizzy and disoriented.



On the ten-minute drive to her daughter Amy's house, Barb followed the white line in the road, praying not to kill someone. As soon as she stepped out of the car, she fainted in the driveway. Amy's nine-year-old twins found her lying there and called an ambulance. Barb was taken to the ICU where she remained unconscious for eight days.

During that time she had a near death experience. The last thing she remembers is a technician hooking her up to a cardiac ultrasound machine, when her spirit started to leave her body. "Tim and I had taken a 7-mile walk to the ocean in Ireland and it felt just like that. I felt bathed in peace, love and joy." Then Jesus spoke to her saying, "Barbara, you can go back if you want to." Barb said she really had to ponder that because she was so happy and full of joy. She thought about her five kids, her twelve grandkids, her ministry, all the people she loved and even the earth itself, then she told the Lord, "Lord, I want to go back."

"I didn't know that I would go back to four years of intense suffering." She complained, asking the Lord why He didn't tell her she would return to a "living hell." Jesus said, "I didn't tell you that if you went back your life would be joyful."

No one did a chest x-ray because they thought the problem was with her heart. Barb actually had double pneumonia. The nightmare really began when either a nurse or a hematologist injected her with a needle infected with the *staphylococcus aureus* bacterium, commonly known as MRSA. "Ten others were also injected," Barb recalls, "and four died that same week." One of the women who lived had both of her legs amputated at the hip to try to stop the spread of the infection.

It took Barb six months to learn to walk again, to

feed herself, to return to normalcy. "I cried and cried and cried" Barb admits, "because I was so angry at God." Fr. Amon Tobin, her pastor in Melbourne, Florida, who was her spiritual director, was also mad at God. "Anger was taking my energy," Barb said, and they both realized they would have to "get over it."

Last Easter, Barb went to the Sacrament of Reconciliation and confessed her rage. "My anger completely lifted," she said, and she has been on the road to recovery every since. "Now I have the bones of a 30 year old and the body of a 40 year old!" Barb laughs with childlike wonder.

Barbara is currently writing a book, "Why I love Catholic Priests," which she plans to dedicate to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Her trial by fire taught Barb to be super-vigilant about her health, an attitude she urges everyone to adopt because "today's medicine doesn't understand germ warfare." And she also encourages us not to fear death, saying, "If you have lived a good life, be at peace. Death is beautiful."

Thank you, Barb. We will pray for you and your new book for you are dear to the heart of ACT.

PRAYER FOR THOSE NURSING THE SICK

Lord, may I see you today, and every day in the person of your sick and while nursing them minister to you, Lord. Though you hide yourself behind an unattractive disguise of the irritable, the exacting, the unreasonable, may I still recognize you, and say, "Jesus, my Patient, how good it is to serve you." Lord give me this seeing faith, then my work will never be monotonous. Oh, beloved sick, how doubly dear you are to me when you personify Christ and what a privilege it is to be able to serve you. Dearest Lord, make me appreciate the dignity of my high vocation and its many responsibilities. Never permit me to disgrace it by giving way to coldness, unkindness and impatience, and my God since you are Jesus, my Patient, be patient with me bearing with my many faults, looking only to my intention which is always to love and serve you in the person of each of your sick. Lord increase my faith, bless my efforts, and sanctify my work, now and forever. Amen
(Adapted from a Visiting Nurse Association Prayer)

INSIDE ACT

Fran Devonshire, Region 12, invites you to attend their annual retreat: **"Peace be With You: Recovering Serenity and Freedom."**

Presenter, Rev. Matt Linn, S.J., known for his integration of physical, emotional and spiritual healing will focus on how Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to transform the apostles from hiding behind closed doors to being bold risk takers rooted in deep peace. Visit retreats.act@gmail.com for details. We extend a welcome to Marcia Moore, new member in the region, and at the same time offer prayers of condolence on the loss of her husband. **Ann Marie Porta, Region 17** reports a highly successful retreat led by Fr. Lou Lussier who spoke on **Intergenerational Healing**. Seems that Ann Marie will be doing a Life in the Spirit Seminar, as will **Fran Franchina, Region 6**. Fran e-mailed that they have over a 100 people signed up to attend, noting that these "Holy Spirit Events" are a great way to introduce ACT to potential members. **Linda Schubert, Region 20** is pleased to announce her new publication: **The Gift of Tongues**, (A Doorway to Miracles) \$5.00, available from Linda's website www.linda-schubert.com. Linda writes that of all the books she has written this one is "closest to her heart. It's all about love and the power of the Holy Spirit." **Royce Johnson, Region 7** shares the model for their monthly meetings. Gatherings are kept to two hours and loosely structured. Scripture, listening to the Spirit, reflection, sharing and a conversation on particular social issues comprise the meeting. At a recent meeting they discussed how to receive an angry message and return it with love. They will be studying an ACT case study from the Journal for Christian Healing for an upcoming meeting. Through frequent contact with each other their goal is to keep ACT in the daily awareness of the members as they



Rev. Bob Corrao

go about the life saving and life changing work of their professions. **WOW** seems to be the most appropriate word for the **Southern California ACT Conference** as described by Doug in his letter, this issue, and reported in The Dove Newsletter sent in by **Rita Cornyn, Region 21**. The hunger and the passion of the speakers to serve Jesus was evident. The Healer with the Heart of Jesus award was given to Doug Schoeninger, ACT president, and Lori Mountain for their ongoing commitment and service to ACT. Many reported experiencing healings from the conference. Blessings are extended to **Region 5's Bob Corrao** on his ordination as a priest of the Anglican Church. At a recent regional meeting, Bob gave his powerful witness of an 11th hour call to priesthood. In addition, wife, **Jean Corrao**, gave a talk on Holy Leisure (Otium Sanctum) calling all to create 'rest' for the soul. **Jane Bason** is starting a SEW group primarily for Doctors. Members remembered **Peter Marshall** with affection at the regional Mass offered for him by Fr. Larry Carew. Peter's death, in Feb., comes as a tremendous loss to ACT. He, his wife, Jo, and their family have been an integral part of ACT since its earliest days. We grieve for the family and we grieve for ourselves. **Fr. Larry Carew**

presented his newest ecumenical DVD series, **Healing the Shepherds**, a Healing Encounter for those in ministry. Dozens of ordained priests, ministers and lay people have been refreshed and re-commissioned as they are ministered to by this anointed program. In addition, over a hundred prisons are showing another DVD series on Healing created by Fr. Carew. Visit communityofthecross.com. Sadly, news arrived that Raymond McCarry, son of member, Bill McCarry, Region 5, died over Easter weekend. Ray, himself, had brought his father, to the last ACT meeting where we had a chance to visit with him. Our hearts go out to Bill, his wife and family as we pray for them and remember. **"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted."** (Mt. 5:4)

thought...

This, too, shall pass. Now would be nice.

reflection...

"Discourse about God needs to be rooted in dialogue with God."
(E. Johnson)

miscellaneous...

There are some questions that can't be answered by Google.
(anonymous)

book review...

"The Furious Longing of God" by Brennan Manning. David Cook Publisher. Love one another and know that God has a furious longing for each of us is the theme in Manning's book. The reader rests in God's love and savors the gift of grace. The intimacy of God's love says Manning is closer than we think. A great spiritual read especially for the broken hearted.



SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Rev. Paul Feider

There is a power that has influence over your life. This influence wars against your spiritual growth. It is called spiritual warfare and it affects each of us. As a spiritual director I want to make you aware of how it comes, and how it affects your life and that of your family.



Spiritual warfare is the force of Evil which seeks to keep us from drawing closer to God. The devil does not want us to deepen our relationship with God and so seeks ways to convince us that we do not need to. Evil preys on us the most when we are about to do something which will be spiritually beneficial for ourselves or others. I experience it most when I am about to lead a spiritually enriching retreat or a healing service which will lead many to Jesus. For me it comes as a headache, a feeling of tiredness, a series of distractions or a voice that says I shouldn't bother doing the event. I share this with you because I care for your spiritual wellbeing. Recently I have noticed many people being stifled by spiritual warfare. I hear people rationalizing away the need for community worship and the need to take private time to pray or read the Gospels. I hear people making excuses when a powerful spiritual event is coming. I share this because if you know what evil is trying to do to you, you can make a choice to say "no" to evil and do the spiritually enriching thing anyway.

If we keep losing the battle with evil, we suffer and our children suffer. I see many children missing a chance to grow spiritually because their parents are losing the spiritual warfare battle. As a spiritual director I see adults making excuses, rationalizing, and being held in the bondage of worldly distractions because they will not say "no" to the devil. I want you to know that when you seek to take time with God in worship, private prayer or Scripture reading, you can expect to hear inner voices like, "I'm too tired, I don't feel too well, it's too cold outside, it's too hot outside, what will I wear, what will my spouse say, I have to clean for guests, what if my friend or children call..." The devil uses our natural desire for pleasure to keep us from spiritual growth. Sometimes the excuses may even seem like a good thing, but they are a distraction from the better thing, namely, your relationship with God.

No one can choose for you. The battle of spiritual warfare affects everyone. You either let evil control your behavior or, with the help of God's grace, you choose to say "no" to evil and choose God. It is your call. Choose well. Choose God.

fyi...

Charismatic Renewal marks 50 years according to CHARISMA magazine. They pinpoint the date with the personal Pentecost experienced of Father Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal priest. From there it spread throughout the U.S. Although it waned in the 90's in America it continues to grow globally.

REMEMBERING...

Peter Marshall
Rock of our region
Rock of his family
Anointed healer
Committed to ACT
Loving Father
Fun loving friend
Enduring with us
To the end.
Empowered by the Holy Spirit
Lover of all
Gifted man of God
Resting now in his eternal embrace
Pray for us who miss
Your precious face.



Peter Marshall

With love from us to you,
Jane Bason, Region 5

SCRIPTURE

Continued from page 3

her side. Scholars doubt that Mary would have known how to read or write, literacy was rare among women of the day. Information was acquired mostly through conversation and the recitation of stories and poems, along with songs. Her listening skills were well honed. Mary would have trained Jesus to be a keen listener.

She was close to 50 when Jesus died, well beyond the life span for most women of the day. Tradition holds that Mary moved to Ephesus with the apostle, John. "A shrine in modern day Turkey honors that tradition. The 'historical Mary' experienced poverty, oppression, violence and the execution of her son. She was his silent support. In the midst of every day life, she remained faithful, regardless of what it held." Can anything good come from Nazareth? YES. (Adapted Catholic Update May'08/Gloria Doino)

keep connected

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Association of Christian Therapists

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ACT INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Visit www.actheals.org for complete descriptions and registration information

Friday, September 17

Life in the Spirit Seminar I

Sr. Betty Igo, M Ed, MSPC, SFP

Identifying Spiritual Stress

Kenneth Fung, MD, MB, B.Ch, BAO, FRCS

Sexual Addiction: Etiology, Treatment and Recovery

*Benjamin Keyes, PhD, EdD, Merrill Reese, PhD,
Charles Zeiders, PsyD*

Helping People Change; Motivating, Engaging and Attracting Clients into Treatment

David Mee-Lee, MD

Group Meditation for Healing

Gyulan Gail Paul, DMin

Healing Addiction through the Hearts of Jesus and Mary

Fr. Robert Sears, SJ, PhD

Healing the Pain through Christian Listening

Joanna Zeiner

Saturday, September 18

The Serenity Prayer, a Meditative Approach to Healing

Sr. Maria Theresa Hronec, SS.C.M.

Life in the Spirit Seminar II

Sr. Betty Igo, M Ed, MSPC, SFP

Uncovering the Hidden Agenda: Co-dependency

Marcia Moore, MEd

Healing Our Religious Addictions through Ecumenical Intimacy: From Idolatry to Relationship

Jackie Sitte, RN, CARN, LADC I

The Journey from Christian Therapist to Master Christian Therapist

Len Sperry, MD, PhD, DMin

How Love Addiction Correlates to the Pain of Abortion

Julie Woodley, M.S., Restoring the Heart Ministry

Madness & Addiction in the Culture of Narcissism: A Jungian Critique of the Addicted American Mind

Charles Zeiders, PsyD