

the Magdalene

From the Desk of Fr. Neil...



REQUIREMENTS OF BEHAVIOR...FOR ALL

Paul wrote at least two letters to Timothy. We have two of them in our Bibles. Part of the first letter involves Paul's concern with the qualifications of both overseers (bishops as we have come to know them, though presbyters are by no means exempt and are most likely included in the 'overseer' category) and deacons. The three fold office of Bishop, presbyter (or priest) and deacon has been a long standing structure of the Christian Church.

As Paul addresses Timothy as to what he is to be looking for in men who are candidates for these positions, he lists some of the qualifications that should be found in the men who are called and aspire to these offices.... but I am not going to direct this letter to just those men. We all can learn from what Paul says is required for these offices, because though pastors and leaders are to be examples, all Christians are called to lives of holiness, discipline, sacrifice and godliness as an expression of our faith.

Paul says these are vital for them (and us) to cultivate because living otherwise can cause us to *"fall into the snare of the devil"...*and... so that we and they will *"gain a good standing for themselves and also great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus."*

Here are Paul's qualifications in part. *...Be above reproach, the husband of one wife, sober-minded, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not a drunkard, not violent but*

gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money..." and, "...dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain. They must hold the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience."

There is no reason (when applicable) that these things cannot or should not be cultivated in the life of all Christians.

Let's take some of these individually. *"Being above reproach."* None of us can claim to be above reproach in an ultimate sense, for we are all sinners. However, we must strive to not be marked by behaviors that lessen our claim as Christians. Some things we do, even if sinful, do not necessarily hurt our reputations. But other things do. For those in leadership positions, losing one's standing with those who look up to them for leadership can impede their ability to exercise authority.

Next they must be the *"husband of one wife."* This first of all sets the standard that those offices are to be held by men, since only men have wives. But on a more general level, all Christians are called to live according to the unchanging standards that God set forth in marriage. This includes being married to only one person, and being married to the same person. Marital fidelity in all its pureness is what is commanded for all Christians who desire to marry. Genesis 2:24 states that the man leaves his parents and becomes one flesh with his wife. There is no deviating from this without breaking God's commands.

Next, there is *"sober-minded, self and controlled."* Sober-mindedness can be translated as vigilant or watchful or temperate.

O, how many ways we can find to violate these commands! We lose control in so many ways... what we eat, how we spend our money, how we treat others. Our overall behavior should be controlled. And this also includes those who think that we “deserve some time occasionally when we can go crazy or get a little promiscuous or reckless in one way or another.” The Christian is called to self-control at all times, including when having fun and enjoying ourselves. We should be temperate in all things, diligent in our several callings, as the Prayer Book says. On page 590 in the Prayer for Grace to Reform and Grow Better, we pray that God would: “Reform whatever is amiss in the temper and disposition of our souls; that no unclean thoughts, unlawful designs, or inordinate desires, may rest there. We ask God to “Purge our hearts from envy, hatred, and malice; that we may never suffer the sun to go down upon our wrath; but may always go to our rest in peace, charity, and good-will, with a conscience void of offence towards thee, and towards men...” That prayer offers a good summarization of how we are to ask God to guide us each and every day by His spirit so that we may be preserved pure and blameless, unto the coming of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Next, there is *“not a drunkard,”* which we might couple with, *“not addicted to much wine.”* The Greek word here denotes not only drunkenness, but any intemperance in the consumption of alcohol.

Jerome. In his *Letters*, writes about this passage: “Whatever intoxicates and disturbs the balance of the mind, avoid as you would wine. I do not say that we are to condemn what is a creature (creation) of God. The Lord himself was called a ‘wine-bibber,’ and wine in moderation was allowed to Timothy because of his weak stomach. I only require that drinkers should observe that limit which their age, their health or their constitution requires.”¹ Note the difference between moderate use and even

medicinal use and abuse... violating the ones above such as self-control and sober-mindedness.

How about *“not double-tongued”*? Another important attribute of the Christian is his speech. We are to be truthful in all things whenever possible. James commands us, getting his words from the Lord Jesus, “But above all, my brothers, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or by any other oath, but let your “yes” be yes and your “no” be no, so that you may not fall under condemnation.”

Let’s take one more, combining *“not a lover of money”* with *“not greedy for dishonest gain.”* This too is a snare that many of us can fall into. The leader in the Church and the layman in the pew must not allow the pursuit of financial gain to be his desire in any fashion. These two fall into the category of covetousness.

Covetousness is a serious sin that all Christians can fall into. If you notice, we break many of these other commands mentioned above because of covetousness. We might covet impressing friends by showing we can go to the edge before losing control. We might covet someone other than our spouse. “The consequence is, that all covetous persons even though this is not openly manifest, apply their minds to dishonest and unlawful gains....he who will not patiently and mildly endure poverty will never escape the disease of mean and sordid covetousness”²

Again, all of these are the requirements Paul sets forth for ministers of the Gospel, Bishops, and Deacons in particular in the context of his letter to Timothy. But all Christians can find their place within these boundaries and pray for grace to overcome any and all of these sinful ways.

SECTION

¹ Jerome. *Letters*. 52.11

² Calvin. Commentary on 1 Timothy 3.

Let us pray then, as we again find in the Prayer Book, to implore God's grace and protection at the beginning of each day. May He keep us temperate in all things and diligent in our several callings, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SHORT STUDIES

BENEDICTIONS

Continuing in our look at the book, *The Ritual Reason Why*, we come to another informative section called simply, *Benedictions*. Dictionary.com says one of the definitions of *benediction* is: "a ceremony by which things are set aside for sacred uses, as a church, vestments, or bells." This is a sufficient definition for what we are to discuss.

In question 110 in the *Ritual Reason Why*, we find this: "Is it not customary to set apart the various 'ornaments of the church, and of the minister's thereof,' for the service of God by a form of benediction?" Answer: "Yes; the natural instincts of piety and the requirements of God himself under the old law, as well as the universal custom of the Church in all ages, alike point to the propriety of so doing."

Question 111: Is there not also a theological reason for the custom?" Answer: Yes; the creation having been put under a curse on account of man's fall, shares also in its degree in the blessing of man's redemption. But as the blessings of that redemption are conveyed to man by means of sacraments, so they are conveyed to the lower creation by the Church's benedictions." What does all this mean?

Adam's fall affected not only humans but all of creation. Man is still the crown of God's creation. As God in Christ is redeeming the

world, so also all of creation will one day see renewal and restoration. In the mean time, the Church acts as a sort of leader in that as Christ is redeeming us, that redemption is passed down through us to all of creation.

God is the only redeemer of all things, but we act as His ambassadors in that we ask God to hallow and set aside or make holy things of creation so that they may have special significance for our use.

For example, water is blessed before baptism. God of course is the one who blesses or hallows the water, but God's minister is the one who performs the outward action of placing his hand over the water and making the sign of the cross. It's still water, but we have now asked God that as He about to make this person a new creation by baptism, so may the water itself be renewed by Him in some way signifying and reminding us that even the creation of all water will one day be restored to its original sense.

Answer 113 says: "The priest in blessing the water sets it apart of the use of the people and prays God to give His blessing to all who use it."

People will sometimes dip a few fingers in the stoops containing water as they enter and exit a Church. This is done to remind us that we were set apart to God's service in Holy Baptism, and also our need for inward purity if we are to give ourselves to worshiping God.

As early as 109AD, we find Alexander I, Bishop of Rome writing about this sort of benediction being already in use in the Church. As you can see, this tradition is extremely ancient and we continue this practice today in the Anglican tradition. Thanks be to God for His hallowing and setting apart these things for our use and may we be always reminded of how Christ has set us apart for His use as well.

ORDO CALENDAR ACTIVITIES

On Thursday, November 26th, Fr. Neil will hold a **Thanksgiving Service at 9:00am**. Although the holiday is no longer considered a Christian holiday, Thanksgiving is rooted in the history of the Pilgrims, who were Christian "Separatists.". The first general day of Thanksgiving was proclaimed by President George Washington, who at the request of Congress recommended Thursday, 26 November, 1789, to the people of the United States "as a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many and signal favours of Almighty God."

Let us pray from the BCP: Almighty God our heavenly Father, guide the nations of the world into the way of justice and truth, and establish among them that peace which is the fruit of righteousness, that they may become the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

GUILDS, GROUPS & EVENTS

YOU MUST COME TO OUR YEAR-END NEW2YOU JEWELRY SALE

Saturday, November 14th (8am – 2pm) will be the last time you can support our church's largest fundraising activity, NEW2YOU, for the year.

This sale will include NEW HANDMADE ITEMS from the Craft Guild and lots of beautiful pieces of jewelry for sale. Please make every effort to come out and look over what the ladies have worked so hard to put out for sale. The upstairs Clothing Store will be open with great bargains at \$3.00.

All money from this sale will go to our Outreach Mission in Pakistan.

PAKISTAN BISHOP ANDREW IS COMING!

ACC Bishop Mushtaq Andrew from Pakistan will be visiting St. Mary Magdalene November 6TH through **Sunday the 8th**. **Please attend either the 8:00am or 10:00am Service to welcome him.** Bp. Andrew will give us a firsthand account of his mission church in Pakistan. There will be a church wide **Pot Luck after the 2nd Service**. This is a great time to invite family and friends to church.

Our Parish supports the missionary work of Bp. Andrew and his role in bringing the Word of God and the Gospel of Salvation to Pakistan. This is an important mission and vital to the survival and growth of the Christian Church globally. Bp. Andrew is very grateful for all that we have done to support him and his Church. Please let him thank you directly.

WE ARE HAVING A BURGER BASH

Why eat alone when you can eat with your church family? On the **4th Sunday in November**, the Men will be grilling hamburgers and hotdogs for a good old fashioned picnic with all of the fixins. Join us after the 10:00am service **around 11:30am. \$5.00 per person. Children 9yrs old and under are free.** Watch for announcements in the Narthex.

CRAFT GUILD PLANNING SESSION

On **November 15th**, the Craft Guild will be meeting in the Parish Hall to talk about **new projects for the upcoming year**. If you are a crafty person, can crochet, knit or quilt, please join us that day to discuss and plan projects where we can support those in need and have a little fun at the same time. Bring a brown bag lunch if you would like.

WHAT'S A BUDGET?

October is "Pledge Month". By now, everyone should have received a pledge card in the mail or one at the church. These cards are the foundation of our budget for 2016. Years ago, a church member asked, "What's a budget?" It is an estimate of income and expenditures for the year. We use our member's pledges as an estimate of income, and we use last year's billings to estimate our expenses. The difference between our total income and total expenses is what Fr. Neil uses for building improvements, other non-reoccurring purchases and programs like saving to employ a second priest. All the money we raise during the year is left strictly for Outreach Projects to our missions and local community services to aid the poor or homeless.

Please be diligent in **returning your Pledge card by the first of November** to allow the budget to be prepared, assessed, discussed and approved by the Vestry.

Please be prayerful at this time asking God to guide you in your support for His Church and its mission to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

GOD'S HARVEST FOR MARY'S KITCHEN

Our Outreach Project for Advent this year, God's Harvest for Mary's Kitchen, will begin November 22 through December 20th. Prayerfully bring canned fruits, canned vegetables and canned beans, as well as peanut butter and jelly. We will collect the items in the containers in the narthex and the giving tree will be set up next to it. A Giving Tree will also be set up for those who would rather give money.

"He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor."
Proverbs 22:9

THE NEWS REPORT.....

PATIO AFTER SUNSET WOW! WHAT A NIGHT!

Our very special thanks to all who either came or contributed to Patio After Sunset. 38 beautifully dressed people, laughed, talked, ate and danced the night away. Our new church photographer, Michaela was on the scene taking pictures to share with the congregation. Every silent auction item was sold and, at the end of the night about \$3,000 was donated. Money continued to come in through the week and a grand total of \$4,135.00 will be given to our mission in Pakistan. God bless you all for your caring and generosity.

TOYS FOR MARY'S KITCHEN

Mary's Kitchen was overwhelmingly grateful for the car full of toys that New2You donated to their poor families. These are toys that had been collected over the past couple of years and did not sell. Thank you for your contributions.

THE 10TH ANNUAL MEN'S CHILI COOK – OFF ANNOUNCEMENT

The winners of the 10th Annual Chili Cook Off were Randy Lee for the "Best Tasting" Chili; and Pete Tucker for the "Second Best Tasting" Chili. Both of these men competed against 12 other Cooks. Randy best out his son, Brian's Chili Recipe; and Pete who stepped in to support the event because his son, Jonathan who is a long-standing Chili advocate, was on vacation. It goes to show you that practice doesn't always make perfect in the case of Chili.

While everyone was busy tasting Chili, Elizabeth Sneddon was buying raffle tickets and won the Starbuck's Basket. All proceeds collected went to our sister Church in Pakistan.

LECTURE SERIES ON ANGLICAN WORSHIP & COMMON PRAYER

Fr. Neil's 2-part series on Anglican Worship and Common Prayer was most informative, especially to our new Anglicans. Confirmands and anyone else wishing to obtain the notes and materials on these lectures, please contact Russ Smith.

CRAFT GUILD DEMONSTRATION GIFT WRAPPING

What a blast! About ten of us girls piled into the Parish Hall to watch a demonstration given by Jackie Foss on gift wrapping for a special occasion. Jackie showed us how to select the appropriate paper, picking out ribbon and shared with us her fabulous collection of embellishments. Before we knew it, we were all having a wonderful time gift wrapping for Christmas. Best of all, she taught us how to gift wrap boxes that could be reused. Now the girls are busy making boxes to sell for the New2You Jewelry, Crafts and Clothing Sale. Our special thanks to Jackie and all of the girls that attended.

SPECIAL THANKS TO SAM

Our special thanks to Sam for playing the organ on the last Sunday in October. The music was perfect.

TREAT ROSTER NEWS

The 2016 Treat Roster is in the works. If you would like to be an Alternate Treat person,

someone who gets called to bring treats on short notice, please contact Shirley Wicketts.

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

NOVEMBER		
All Saints Day Mass	11/1	Both Services
Men's Fellowship	11/1	9:00am – 9:30am
Women's Devotional	11/1	9:15am – 9:50am
Lecture Series -- Elements of the Mass	11/1	11:30am
New2You Sale	11/14	Sat 8am – 2pm
Bishop Andrew – Pot Luck	11/8	11:30am – 2pm
Women's Guild	11/8	Dark
Men's Christian Fellowship (MCF)	11/	Dark
Vestry Meeting	11/11	7:15pm
Craft Guild – Planning Season and Brown Bag Lunch	11/15	11:30am
Final Budget Committee meeting	11/25	7:00pm
Sunday Brunch	11/22	In-House Brunch – Burger Bash
Thanksgiving Mass	11/26	Said Mass
DECEMBER		
Women's Guild Fellowship Event	12/2	7pm – Osborn home
MCF Group Event	12/2	7pm – Carlson home
Men's Breakfast and Set up Christmas	12/5	Sat 8:30am
Tree Trimming and Caroling	12/6	11:15am
Vestry Meeting	12/9	11:15am
Christmas Eve Services (Thursday)	12/24	5:30 pm and 11:00pm
Christmas Day Mass	12/25	8:00am