

THE MAGDALENE



From the Desk of Fr. Neil...

An *Assumed* Role of the Church.

As I reflect on the success of our recent fundraiser, Center Stage: Disaster Relief for the Philippines, I was pleased with the overall success of the event. I believe that we need to continue to pray that the Holy Spirit would remind us that we have a lot to be thankful for, and that out of the abundance we enjoy, we would continue to share it with others who do not have as much.

One thing that came to my mind as I was thinking about our fundraiser was St. Paul and his view on something related. Paul's role is difficult to categorize. He was a missionary, traveling evangelist, pastor, and even filled the role of bishop or overseer. He cared very much to teach and instruct the Churches he planted. In a number of letters Paul speaks quite boldly about the finances of the Churches and his expectations regarding them. Support for fellow Christians was of the utmost importance to Paul. (see Galatians 2:10)

The Church in Jerusalem, a very early Church and the place where the Christian movement began, fell under some very difficult times of persecution and subsequent financial difficulty. What is interesting is the approach Paul took to get the Jerusalem Church the help they needed. Paul did not write to the other Churches and simply mention the needs of Jerusalem and see what people would do. He used his authority and he wrote to the other Churches, not asking, but reminding them of their obligation to help the Church in Jerusalem. This is what I mean by

an assumed role of the Church. This, to Paul, was automatic. Again, it was not to simply ask, but to instruct the other Churches of what was their duty. He just assumed that this was part of being a Christian. Christians help one another, and it's not up for debate. And we are to assume the same thing. This is one of the assumed roles of the Christian Church.

To see what I'm talking about, look at how Paul spoke to the Corinthians in his first letter. He writes, *"Now concerning the collection for the saints: as I directed the churches of Galatia, so you also are to do. On the first day of every week, each of you is to put something aside and store it up, as he may prosper, so that there will be no collecting when I come. And when I arrive, I will send those whom you accredit by letter to carry your gift to Jerusalem. If it seems advisable that I should go also, they will accompany me."* (1 Corinthians 16:1-4 ESV) The bold emphasis is mine.

Each Christian, (notice he never says 'only the wealthier members' but each of them) is to put something aside, weekly in this case. Christians are to put something aside for the collection of the Church and we are to consider it an obligation. Paul is not asking, he is instructing. He doesn't want any collecting to happen when he gets there. He expects that the Church will have taken care of the collecting before he arrives and upon his arrival, the funds will be ready for transportation. He will be sending chosen saints to take the funds to Jerusalem. If need be, he will accompany them in their travels.

In his second letter to the same Corinthian Church, he says *“We (meaning Paul and Timothy) want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints—and this, not as we expected, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and then by the will of God to us.”*

This Church in Macedonia was obviously a poor one. Yet according to Paul they “begged earnestly” that they might also take part in the relief of their fellow Christians. Though they were extremely impoverished, they gave abundantly from a wealth of generosity. The Macedonians had met Paul and most likely they too felt his conviction about the Church’s assumed role of giving to others who are in need.

Paul gives an analogy as well. He writes, *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich.”* Jesus, obviously was not financially wealthy, but His wealth was His deity. And as Paul says in his letter to the Philippians, here is the wealth Christ enjoyed and what He traded it in for.... *“Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on*

him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Philippians 2:4–11 ESV).

In the next chapter, chapter nine of 2nd Corinthians, Paul continues his thought this way, *“Now it is superfluous for me to write to you about the ministry for the saints, for I know your readiness, of which I boast about you to the people of Macedonia, saying that Achaia has been ready since last year.”* Paul says, and I’m paraphrasing, *“...it is superfluous for me to write to you about your assumed role as the Church. I know you are ready, and I’m glad you are, because I have been boasting about you to the other Churches.”*

Then he says, *“But I am sending the brothers so that our boasting about you may not prove empty in this matter, so that you may be ready, as I said you would be. Otherwise, if some Macedonians come with me and find that you are not ready, we would be humiliated—to say nothing of you—for being so confident. So I thought it necessary to urge the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for the gift you have promised, so that it may be ready as a willing gift, not as an exaction.”* In other words, *“Don’t embarrass me. I have boasted about you, so don’t let me show up and find out that I’ve been wrong about you.”*

Writing to the Church in Rome, Paul says, *“At present, however, I am going to Jerusalem bringing aid to the saints. For Macedonia and Achaia have been pleased to make some contribution for the poor among the saints at Jerusalem. For they were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For if the Gentiles have come to share in their spiritual blessings, they ought also to be of service to them in material blessings”* (Romans 15:25–27 ESV).

Paul has been very firm about the role the saints have in aiding their brethren. He is pleased that they have complied, and he is proud to boast about them to the Church in Rome.

Paul exercised His Apostolic authority, urging and even insisting that the Churches offer aid and assistance to other Churches who are struggling. It is our duty as well. It is a role the Church has that should just be assumed.

As we consider the year end, and how we should be thinking about next year and our giving, we should reflect on how we have been blessed in so many ways by God. We have successfully organized and executed a large fund raiser, and have participated in many other smaller-scale outreach efforts this year as well. Let us then assume that this is our duty and not participate grudgingly or of necessity.

Paul wrote to the Galatian Church, *“And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.”* (Galatians 6:9–10 ESV). +

FAITH AND GOOD WORKS

From the Anglican Teaching Leaflets

Controversy has raged at many periods in Christianity about how one is "saved", that is, accepted by God, sure of eternal life on the day of reckoning. Some have said that faith alone can save. Others have put more stress on good works. Fortunately, this controversy is not so keen today, perhaps in part because of a growing consensus about the relation of good works to faith.

It would seem quite clear that the starting point is faith, faith in God, belief in His Son. Among Christ's last words were these: *"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved . . ."*

(Mark 16:16). Throughout His ministry on earth, Jesus repeated the same thought dozens of times with variations. Clearly, if Christ's words mean anything at all, they mean that salvation begins with faith.

Saint Paul and the other Apostles understood this and reinforced the theme again and again in their Epistles. Saint Paul spoke of "justification by faith" or "sanctification by faith" at least five times, meaning that by faith we are accounted righteous by God. We recall that when the rich young man asked how he could gain eternal life, the Lord said to him, in effect, that he should cast away all earthly idols and believe and follow Him.

Now, faith in Christ is not a pro forma thing. It is not signing a pledge on the dotted line and filing it away as evidence. It is not membership in a Christian Church which one attends every Sunday. It is not even an intellectual conviction. It is rather a unified commitment of mind, heart and will to God, a commitment which permeates and changes our lives, our attitudes and our actions. God accepts that kind of commitment of faith and accounts us righteous for it. That accounting, and the grace which God thereby bestows on us, is the beginning of salvation.

Where then do good works come in?

Saint James has given us the shortest and most concise answer: "Even so, faith, if it hath not good works, is dead..." Faith has no reality, is meaningless, unless it so permeates our lives that it results in good works, that is, deeds and actions arising out of righteous motives— out of faith in the love of God and of His Son, Jesus Christ. The moral here is the old and simple one that actions speak louder than words. No matter how much we may profess our faith and say the Creeds, it is a dead letter unless it works

through us in a regenerative way and shines forth in our lives.

Theologians may develop this theme at endless and confusing length. But it is really not so tangled and difficult. "Lord, I believe" comes first. If we really believe and demonstrate it by the fruits of faith (good works), God accepts this faith, imperfect as it may be, and accounts it to us for righteousness, sending us the gift of grace to strengthen our faith, to increase our good works, and finally to "save" us from sin and death, and gain for us eternal life. +

Sermon for the Feast of Saint James

Fr. John Altberg, Rector of Saint Joseph
ACC Parish in San Mateo, Ca.

In the Sermon of the Feast of Saint James I said...

With alarming intensity, the fate suffered by Saint James is today threatened with increasing intensity very near the site of the murder of James by the very same method. What, you might reasonably demand, am I talking about? The distance from Jerusalem to Damascus (Syria) is only about 135 miles – San Mateo to Sacramento. Christians in Damascus are being told to abandon their faith or be killed with a sword. Indeed a chilling reality. Evil is at work this very day in Syria and Iraq.

What are we called to do...? This is not a call for the Church to enter into the domain of geopolitical partisan politics or launch a personal mission to a distant land. But it is a call to consider with enhanced seriousness that for which we corporately pray every Sunday That God may help turn the hearts of evildoers in troubled parts of the world so all may live in peace with their families. Suddenly the life and death of St James becomes current...no longer an abstraction of nearly 2000 years ago.

In the past several days the world witnessed new horrors, again contemporizing old behaviors...

Similarly, consider the death of Saint John the Baptist – same method, same geography. A quick look at the Church Year Calendar reveals 29 August commemorates The Beheading of John the Baptist.

The church sets aside such days to remind us of the potential for humanity's depraved behavior.

The message of John the Baptist was simply, STOP THIS NOW. Many failed to listen...the consequences were, and remain, far-reaching.

Noted Biblical Scholar Harold Attridge, The Lillian Claus Professor of New Testament at Yale Divinity School wrote...John the Baptist was killed because he was critical of the contemporary Herodian ruler, Herod Antipas. All of the sources agree on that, both Josephus and the testimony of the gospels. Exactly what was involved in that critique is not entirely clear. The material in the gospels suggests that it had to do with Herod's marital practices and his personal morality. There may have been something more political involved in John's condemnation of Herod, insofar as Herod Antipas was tied in intimately with the Roman imperial authorities. In any case, John was executed by Herod as a troublemaker and a political upstart.

What do we take away from all this...?

It is altogether too easy to declare irrelevant the deaths Saint James and Saint John the Baptist as "long, long ago" ...simultaneously many have come to accept current acts in other parts of the world as "far, far away"...it is very easy to become jaded and indifferent because it is 'not in my neighborhood'...though common, deadly are the consequences of indifference...far away or close to home. +

Guilds, Groups & Events

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING CENTER STAGE!

Moved by the call from Bishop Rene Canillo, missionary and permanent resident in the Philippines, Fr. Edlin set into motion the need for St. Mary Magdalene to come to the aid of our Anglican brothers and sisters by prayer and monetary donations. On October 12th, members, family, friends and co-workers of St. Mary Magdalene Church came together on Sunday afternoon to stand up and be counted among the numbers of Christian donors diligently working to restore the islands of the Philippines back to stability after one of the most disastrous years in their history. Damages resulting from Typhoon Yolanda were devastating with 14.1 million people including 5.9 million children affected. Just four months after, 4.1 million people were still displaced. After the typhoon passed, the island of Bohol experienced a 7.3 earthquake. Infrastructure (water and power) was damaged or destroyed. Chaired by St. Mary Magdalene's Women's Guild, "Center Stage: Songs from the Stage and Screen", a musical production of classic songs from the stage and screen, held at Los Coyotes Country Club in La Mirada, California, brought in almost \$9,000 from ticket sales, opportunity drawings and silent auction items. Guests enjoyed a Broadway caliber performance and a delicious buffet as a "thank you" to guests supporting the cause. Progress is still slow in the rural areas of Bohol and Cebu, but Bishop Canillo continues to travel to these areas providing assistance where needed. "... More places are open to the Gospel, the Anglican way, and are wanting us to come", says the Bishop. Let us pray we never forget our duty to love one another, and to do the work that Christ has placed before us.

4TH SUNDAY BRUNCH

Our 4th Brunch in October was a great time. We ate at Tutto Fresco in Orange. We also had, of course, a great time fellowshiping together. Mark your calendars for our next brunch on November 23rd at a local restaurant. Watch for flyers in the narthex for more information regarding location and time.

SUPPER CLUB

So what is the "Supper Club"? First, it is not actually a "Club." There is no formal membership or set group of people that come together each month. Simply put, it is just a date for dinner. Each month, a parishioner volunteers to plan a "night out on the town" on the 2nd Tuesday. The parishioner picks a restaurant or activity, makes a sign-up sheet, directions, etc., sets out the info in the narthex and makes the reservations, if needed. There is no restriction on city or type of food. Everyone pays for themselves. Watch the website and/or upcoming bulletins for information on the next destination. If you are not a SMM church member and want to join us, please contact the church office for more details...or just meet us at the restaurant. 714-532-2420. Otherwise, please SIGN UP in the Narthex.

Next Supper Club: November 11th

WOMEN'S DEVOTIONAL

Ladies, join us in the Women's Devotional led by Karen Carlson. The purpose of the Women's Devotional is to provide a safe place to share needs, experience prayer and learn more about living our Christian lives together.

Women's Devotional meets on the 1st Sundays from 9:15am to 9:50am in the "Nursery Room". Please come and join us.

November 2nd

Thankfulness: What, Why, and How

MEN'S CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Join the men of St. Mary Magdalene Parish for a time of conversation in the Parish Hall.

Coffee, donuts, Bible study and devotional will become part of the St Mary Magdalene's Men's Fellowship on the First Sunday of each month. At 9:00am, immediately following the 8:00 am service the men will meet in the Parish Hall for 30 minutes of Bible study, devotional, prayer, coffee and donuts. At 9:30 we will break for Morning Prayer.

Placing the Men's Fellowship between the morning services will allow husbands to attend after 8:00 and/or before 10:00 while their wives attend the Women's Devotional during the same hour. We are studying the Book of Proverbs. Bring your Bible or borrow one from the church. The donuts will be especially good!!!!

The MCF meeting on the second Sunday of the month will be an executive meeting where all men are still welcome, but event planning and other business items will be discussed.

Questions? Call Lou Carlson or the Church office 714-532-2420.

Next Meeting November 7th

NEW 2 YOU JEWELRY SALE

New 2 You will be hosting their annual jewelry sale on Saturday, November 1st in the church parking lot from 8am – 2 pm. Come shop through beautiful costume jewelry. With Christmas just around the corner, this is a great time to get some gifts for the ladies in your life!

Jewelry Sale: November 1st

BAPTISM

On Wednesday, October 1st, Father Neil baptized Amelia Lea Mauzey, daughter of Andrew and Becca Mauzey. The Baptism service was combined with Holy Eucharistic. Congratulations to Amelia and her family!

BOB HOPE USO FIELD TRIP

The week of October 5th, Father Neil, Violet Younis (outreach coordinator), and Lou Carlson (Men's Christian Fellowship director) visited the Bob Hope USO office at Ontario airport to present a check for \$1216. The proceeds were donated by St. Mary Magdalene Church on behalf of Herbert J. Brant Jr., Richard Lange, Howard Cecil Tucker and the memorial funds set up in their names. All three men are retired military. The memorial funds also paid for the new American flag that is displayed in the Narthex.

BIBLE STUDY & EVENING PRAYER

Currently, we are studying the Book of The Acts of the Apostles. The large bulletin board in the Parish Hall has been covered with a map of the greater Middle East. We will be tracking the missionary journeys of St. Paul and the other Apostles and Disciples of Jesus in the coming months by using the map. This will give us a better idea of just how far the early Christians travelled to spread the Gospel.

Bible study meets every Wednesday of the month at 6:30pm, except the 2nd Wednesday. Evening Prayer follows at 8:00 in the church.

REMINDERS

MEMBERSHIP

All persons, eighteen years or older, who are baptized and confirmed, regular attendees and

communicants in good standing for at least three months are considered members of the church. If you would like to begin the process of becoming a member, please contact Fr. Neil for details on how to transfer your paperwork and to apply for membership.

TELEPHONE TREE REVIVED

Over the next few months, we are working on reviving the telephone tree. It is time again to make sure that every member of the parish has their contact information on file in the parish office. If there is ever something important that the entire parish needs to know about, every member needs to be contacted. Phone numbers and email addresses these days are fluid and change from time to time. To ensure you are on the list, please see the sheet in the Narthex and put down how best to contact you, whether through email or phone. We need a way to contact every member of the parish.

Amazon Smile

A reminder to all of you Amazon shoppers. Next time you shop online, you can help your church at the same time. Just go to www.smile.amazon.com. Once you are logged in, a small percentage of every purchase goes directly to St. Mary Magdalene. It's simple and quick; all you need to do is log into Amazon through www.smile.amazon.com and put in St. Mary Magdalene's name at the checkout. An even easier way is to add www.smile.amazon.com to your favorites and every time you shop online you can do it through SMILE with one click. Smile makes a difference!

Dates to Remember

COFFEE HOUR TREATS

November

2 – Le Van	9 – Mauzey
16 – McMahon	23 – Guild – In House Brunch
30 – Menees	

December

7 – Mercado	21 - Morsk
14 – Guild	28 - McMahon

Please plan on setting out treats at 8:30am and cleaning up after the 11:15 fellowship time. Be sure to switch with someone else if you are unable to take your Sunday.

ALTAR FLOWERS / SANCTUARY LIGHT DONORS FOR NOVEMBER

Altar Flowers

9th – Jim & Shauna Bell/Thomas & Julie Pence
16th – Jenefer Luckey & Cecily Gates
23rd – Jim & Shauna Bell

Sanctuary Light

30th – Peter & Kay tucker

If you are interested in “giving” one of these for a future Sunday, please sign up in the Flower and Candle binder in the narthex of the church. **Our suggested donation is \$30 for flowers & \$12 for the light**, but feel free to give what you are able. Mark flowers / candles on your check and place it in the offering plate during mass.

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

NOVEMBER EVENTS		
New2You Jewelry Sale	11/1	8:00am - 2:00pm
Men's Christian Fellowship - Proverbs	11/2	9:00am - 9:25am
Women's Devotional Group	11/2	9:15am - 9:50am
Martha's Guild Meeting	11/9	11:30am
Men's Christian Fellowship (executive mtg.)	11/9	11:30am
Supper Club	11/11	7:00pm
Vestry Meeting (no bible study)	11/12	7:15pm
Craft Guild	11/16	11:30am
4 th Sunday Brunch	11/23	11:30am
Thanksgiving Day Mass	11/27	9:00am
DECEMBER EVENTS		
Women's Xmas Gift Exchange	12/3	Wed-7pm
Men's Group Christmas Fellowship Event	12/3	Wed-7pm
Men's Breakfast & Set up for Christmas	12/6	Sat 9am
Men's Christian Fellowship - Proverbs	12/7	9:00am – 9:25am
Tree Trimming	12/7	After 10:00 Mass
Final Budget Meeting	12/8	7pm (Church)
Vestry Meeting	12/10	7:15pm
Brown Bag Lunch/Christmas Caroling	12/14	12:30pm Caroling
Christmas eve Services (Wed)	12/24	To be announced
Christmas Day Mass(Thurs)	12/25	To be announced