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Herald of Holiness

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Uncle Cedric, Louise, and Emmanuel

WESLEY D. TRACY



“UNCLE CEDRIC’S BAD BACK is acting up again.” “Pray for Louise, she has a touch of the flu.”

It’s prayer request time again. “Remember Martha Ann, she hasn’t been feeling good—missed church last Sunday.” “Pastor, pray for my dad. He’s going to the hospital for tests.”

I catch the eye of a young theological student. He has that “Here we go again” look on his face. I know what he is thinking and what he is going to say to me after the service. “Don’t our people have any spiritual things to request prayer for? I mean, with all the sin, all the spiritual needs out there, they always request prayer for someone with a backache or the flu.”

He has asked me that before, so I’ve been thinking about it. So after church I’ll tell him that maybe health matters dominate prayer requests because illness is one experience that we all share. As Longfellow wrote,

*Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall.*

That won’t satisfy him, so I’m going to add this. Christians seem to instinctively know that any illness may very well be tinged with the prowling presence of the last enemy—death. After all, one of these days a disease of some sort—stroke, cancer, diabetes—will put nearly all of us in the obituaries. And such diseases may start as a backache, a chest pain, a cold. No wonder that believers often get a whiff of the evil one when sickness comes calling.

This will keep my friend pondering long enough for us to get to the parking lot. But by then he will be back to a “Yes, but” line. I’ll give him a modest proposal. “My friend, instead of worrying about the lack of spiritual depth that you think the prayer requests reveal, why don’t you make it a point to pray every day this week for Cedric, Louise, Martha Ann, and the man who is having tests done.”

I’ll make it easy for him by suggesting that he make a prayer out of Psalm 41:3 (NKJV): “LORD . . . strengthen him on his bed of illness . . . sustain him on his sickbed.” He will soon find that he will be praying for more than health. You can’t eat just one potato chip, and you can’t pray for just one aspect of a person’s well-being. You pray for the bad back, but soon you are praying for the person’s spiritual welfare, marriage, family, or job.

Next I will challenge my young friend to recall how much time Jesus gave to the sick. I will refer him to Matthew chapters 4 and 8, where we see Jesus healing crowds of sick people. Then I shall point out to him that since Jesus was so interested in the sick, maybe he should temporarily abandon his formulating of theological constructs and philosophical hypotheses long enough to visit the sick folks for whom prayer was requested.

I’ll remind him that Jesus said that one of the things we will be examined on at the Judgment is whether or not we visited the sick. Jesus himself so closely identified with the sick that He says to visit the sick is to visit Jesus himself (Matthew 25:36, 40).

Christ’s name is Emmanuel, *God with us*. That means that no sickroom is a private room. Jesus himself lies

on every bed of affliction, every hospital bed, every homebound pallet, every stretcher in a bombed-out city. Emmanuel is with us even on the sickbed. He is not off in some celestial control room, running the machinery. He is cradled in human hearts and minds and bodies. He is with us, and we couldn’t shake Him off if we wanted to. Jesus is right there with the sick, those who cope with the pain, the fear, the panic of staring death in the face. And I will say to my young friend, “He is waiting for you to show your compassion by showing up in the sickroom.”

How awful to be sick and alone at Christmas. “How nice to know,” I will say to my friend, “that every card, every flower, every package of homemade Christmas candy that we deliver to the Cedrics and Martha Anns of the world is also a gift to, for, and in the name of, our Lord and Savior.”

The benediction. I move toward the aisle to meet my young friend. I have my answers ready. But he doesn’t ask

**Alone and sick at Christmas—
does it have to be this way?**

me anything. He doesn’t even look at me. He walks right past me and hooks up with the single young nurse that has just started attending our church. *Hormones*, I groan. *These young people—now who is going to visit all these sick folks? Huh? Well, I’m really busy this time of year. No room in the inn just now . . . But You have heard that before, haven’t You?*

HH

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COVER PHOTO:
H. Armstrong Roberts

If I Could Be Anywhere, I Would Not Be Here

by James H. Diehl

Earlier this year, I was very impressed with a poem written by Jeff Liles, a recent Southern Nazarene University graduate and now a schoolteacher in the greater Oklahoma City area. Let me share it with you today.

If I Could Be Anywhere I Would Not Be Here

If I could be anywhere
I would not be here.
I would be where everyone was nice
and kind to each other.
I would be where nobody threw stones
and nobody cried.

If I could be anywhere
I would not be here.
I would be where no one was lonely
and everyone had at least three
friends.
I would be where no one would laugh
when I made a mistake.
And no one comes in last,
And everyone gets a prize just for
trying.

If I could be anywhere
I would not be here.
But I am here.
*So I will bring where I want to be to
where I am.*

I will find one that makes a mistake
and encourage him to keep trying.
I will look for the lonely
and say, "Can I sit with you?"
I will look for tears of hurt and sadness
and offer my towel of peace and joy.
I will search for the heartless
and give them part of mine.

So, if I bring where I want to be
to where I am,
then *this is where I need to be.*

In every assignment I've had, there were times I would think, say, and even pray, "If I could be anywhere—I would not be here." There were those moments when I strongly wanted to fly away. To drive away. To slip away. To sneak away. Or—to pray, "Please, Jesus, come now and rapture all of us away!" I have an idea those feelings of mine are common to everyone reading this article.

It is so easy for all of us living in the late 1990s in the midst of pressures of every kind and description, to play the "If Only" game.

CHANGE THE SITUATION WHERE YOU ARE. IMPROVE IT.

If only I lived somewhere else.
If only I had been offered that job—that
church—that position.
If only I had married someone else.
If only that hurtful thing had not hap-
pened to me.
If only I had graduated.
If only that "break" had gone my way.
If only I had been born beautiful.
If only. If only. If only.

Liles has captured it for us:

If I could be anywhere
I would not be here.
But I am here.
*So I will bring where I want to be
to where I am.*

That's the secret! Change the situation where you are. Improve it. Make a sanctified difference. Stop the "If Only" game and start following the words of Jesus to "give . . . a cup of water to drink in My name" (Mark 9:41, NKJV). Just a cup of water. Just an invitation for a lonely person to sit with you. Just a short note or letter to one who is suffering. Just a \$10 bill pressed into the hand of one who is out of a job. Just a phone call. Just a cup of water given in Jesus' name.

Sure, you can do it! Every day of your life you can do it. And so can I. It's the essence of what being Christian is all about.

If all of us would only stop our complaining and truly start believing the statement "then *this is where I need to be.*" we could purposefully and positively change our world for the better. We would be salt and light in a decaying and dark world. We would be Christians in both heart and actions.

Jesus could have said the same thing "If I could be anywhere I would not be here." But He was here. He chose to stay. He chose to go all the way to the Cross. He chose to make an eternal difference in this sin-cursed world. He wants to live today through you and me. He wants us to stop wishing we were somewhere else and sincerely believe "then *this is where I need to be.*" And now is the time God intended for me to be here. Then, in the Spirit of Jesus Christ, "I will bring where I want to be to where I am." **H**





Orangewood Nurses

A few months back, the newly organized parish nurse program at the Orangewood Church was reported in the *Herald*. I want to report to you that this ministry is a great blessing to all. They are truly angels of mercy. I hope that all of our churches will take this program as a must.

Barbara Sage, a missionary as well as a registered nurse . . . has traveled around the world in missionary endeavors for our church through the years, but now says she feels more like a missionary than ever because the need in America is so great. God is blessing her important ministry right here in Phoenix.

The spiritual tone of the parish nurse visits are so very special. Our thanks goes to Rev. Marion McKellips and Orangewood Church. We are indeed blessed by these Christian nurses who consider this their ministry.

Verna Ratford
Phoenix, Ariz.

Forgiveness, the Best Choice

I appreciated Morris Weigelt's article in a recent *Herald of Holiness* issue lauding the glory of forgiveness as a radical alternative in a world in which revenge and bitterness seem to reign. . . .

Even as we encourage the *choice* to forgive, we should contemplate the specter of "cheap forgiveness" that is often mistakenly proclaimed . . . by the church. "Just forgive and forget" remedies prevent both the victims of real emotional, physical, and spiritual abuse as well as the perpetrators of these intended or unwitting offenses from ever experiencing forgiveness *as grace*.

Like saying "Just do it," cheap forgiveness reverts back to a work of the flesh that can never heal. Of course a person *should* forgive and forget. Of course one can utter the words "I forgive" under the pressure of his or her own or the community of faith's expectations. After all, they are told, "It's the Christian thing to do." But all these efforts are the stuff of works righteousness. They leave perpetrators unchallenged (even uninformed) and victims trying to do what is impossible on their own—forgive. Victims are thus crippled not only by the harm initially suffered but also by their own inability to produce within themselves what they are told they "should" do.

Whenever pastors and church leaders reduce the process of forgiveness to a three-point "Just do it" sermon or leave the impression that the burden of forgiveness lies solely on the effort of the victim, they convey a cheap, works-based forgiveness. This mistakes the beginning of the process for the end. In doing so—either unwittingly or intentionally—the church and the world are cheated, the gospel's deeper resources are left untapped, and those pursuing forgiveness are set on a "try harder" treadmill.

Forgiveness approached and experienced *as grace* is dramati-

cally different. The choice to forgive is just the beginning of a spiritual journey. It is no spiritual shortcut. Persons choosing the path of forgiveness do not avoid the pain of suffering; instead, they choose to cooperate with God in a healing, liberating way of grace. It is a process rich in learning to lean heavily upon the Everlasting Arms as one comes to his or her wits' end. One learns both courage and long-suffering. One learns to be both utterly honest and gentle with oneself and others. Along the way, in God's unique variety and timing, grace breaks through in restoring ways.

Weigelt is right: forgiveness is the best choice for hurting people . . . to forgive as a grace-full journey, not . . . a quick-fix straightjacket.

John Hay Jr.
Indianapolis, Ind.

Perfectly Clear

The staff of the *Herald of Holiness* did a great job with my article "The Case for Adoption" in the August 1995 issue. I thank you.

However, I feel one correction should be made. As printed, the article said, "Sometimes during the [adoption] process, a guardian *ad litem* will be appointed by the state in which the mother lives." My original statement was, "Sometime during the process . . ."

To make the idea perfectly clear, I should have said, "At some time . . ." or "Always . . ." or "Sooner or later during the process . . ." My apologies to everyone involved.

The problem of finding just the right words to express an idea plagues all writers and editors daily. It's probably the main cause of our gray hair. I've got plenty! I expect Wesley Tracy does too!

I've already been told of someone who was excited about what she read in regard to private adoption and is acting on the information we presented. Praise the Lord! It confirms to us that our efforts aren't in vain.

Priscilla Raue
Merrillville, Ind.

Adoption

I especially want to commend you on your recent issue on adoption. We have a young friend that needs to make some decisions about her problem within the next few months. The article covered options for her and her family.

Marjorie Burch
Winchester, Va.

A Neglected Angle on Adoption

I read with great interest the August issue of the *Herald of Holiness*, which featured adoption. With media attention focusing on children being returned to birth families and the growing number of couples with infertility problems, this is a topic we have all considered recently.

However, I do not feel you gave an accurate description of the adoption problem, and certainly you focused primarily on the needs of only one side of the adoption triangle, the adoptive parents. While I recognize the despair of those attempting to build a family, they are not the reason we have adoption. Adoption is for children who need homes (even healthy white infants), not for those who are unable to conceive a child.

Our churches have a number of families who are living their lives in secrecy, shame, and guilt because they or perhaps their son or daughter placed a child for adoption. As an adoption professional and clinical social worker, I have witnessed the aftermath of losing a child to adoption. It is not as Steve Lovern stated a "ministry to young women." These individuals are



respected and held up as models by the pro-life movement for not aborting their child and then condemned by many Christians for "giving their child away." How many of us have whispered, "How could someone do that?"

As a church we should be committed to truth in adoption. We should love these women and men who have recognized their own circumstances and given their children in love. It is not necessary for adoptive parents to be frightened by birth families. Christians should regard openness in adoption as a privilege, not as a threat. Adoptive parents should not be deciding when a birth parent is "ready to get on with her life" but asking how will the birth parent feel, wondering every day if her child is dead or alive? Information and relationships are powerful tools of healing the pain of adoption.

Children of God, above all, should recognize that children are gifts from God, not possessions. Adoptees are given by birth families in love but also with tremendous pain and grief. Adoption is an institution based on loss, and for all involved, it is a second choice. Steve Lovern talked about his grief when he tells an adoptive couple that a birth mother has changed her mind. How does he feel knowing a child has been permanently separated from his mother, and a grandparent from her first grandchild? Birth families are our choir members, ushers, neighbors, and coworkers. Let us show them compassion, not continued punishment for the sins of their past.

*Karen J. Anderson
Cleveland Heights, Ohio*

Card Games

I think it was very appropriate that the *Herald* devoted the July issue to . . . gambling. We need this information, and we need to do what we can to keep gambling out of our communities.

Even though the issue was well done, I was disappointed that the use of playing cards was barely mentioned. It is appalling and frightening to me to see decks of playing cards in Nazarene homes. It seems that these playing cards are thought to be just another game. The danger they represent is not even considered. This is something that should be addressed.

*Sarah J. Kelly
Muncie, Ind.*

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Foundations of the Faith in Philippians

The Limits of Human Ability

ROGER L. HAHN



Roger L. Hahn is professor of New Testament at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

*I am strong enough for all these circumstances by means of the One who empowers me (Philippians 4:13).**

MEDICAL RESEARCHERS, sports record watchers, and science fiction authors devote considerable time and money to the fascinating subject of human limits. Most of us ordinary people are also interested in the subject, though our interest tends to be more pragmatic. "How little sleep can I survive on?" and "When will this meeting ever end?" are our down-to-earth expressions of interest in the limits of human ability.

Philippians 4:13 in the King James rendering, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me," has long been a favorite verse for many Christians. Unfortunately, the translation "I can do all things" can be taken as a literal and all-encompassing promise without regard to Paul's context as he first wrote the text. Properly understood, Philippians 4:13 provides a bright promise from God but does not encourage foolish decisions.

The traditional translation "I can do" emphasizes performance. Recent studies in the semantics of Greek words show that this was not the meaning of the word Paul used. His word speaks of being healthy enough or strong enough to face whatever came his way. He was not

suggesting that Christ gave him the ability to do anything that entered his mind. Rather, Paul was confident that whatever experiences came his way in life, he would be capable of facing them. The best translation would be, "I am strong enough for," or "I am capable of handling . . ."

The expression translated "all things" is also easily misunderstood, especially when combined with the "I can do" translation. Paul had no intention of teaching that he could draw square circles or walk on water. Verse 12 defines what he meant by "all things." There the apostle states, "I know both how to humble myself and how to have abundance. In each and every circumstance, I have mastered the secret of being satisfied and of being hungry, of having abundance and of experiencing need." Whether prosperity or poverty, whether in health or in harm's way, Paul was confident. He knew God would give him the ability to stay focused on the divine plan rather than on his personal circumstances.

However, Paul also understood that this ability to cope with any circumstance in life was not his ability. It would come at the moment of need as a grace gift from God himself. The Greek text of the final phrase of verse 13 offers several fascinating insights.

First, we must note that the modern versions do not include the word "Christ" as the old King James Version did. The discovery of thousands of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament in the years after the translation of the King James Version shows clearly that the earliest copies of Philippians do not contain the word "Christ" in verse 13. It was added by a scribe copying the text who wanted to make the meaning crystal clear. Paul wrote that he was

strong enough for any and every circumstance "through the One who strengthens" him. It is not clear whether he was thinking of Christ or of God the Father, but that difference does not change the way we experience God's grace as we live out this promise.

The Greek word translated "through" in the phrase "through the One who strengthens me" can be understood in two ways. Most interpreters take it to mean "by means of." The grace of God is the means by which we are made capable of facing any circumstance. However, the word can also mean "in." This, too, presents a beautiful truth. It is only as we abide in Christ and He in us that we are made strong enough for every circumstance of life. Christ is both the Agent who empowers us and the atmosphere in which we live as He strengthens us.

Philippians 4:13 is not a guarantee that I can live to be 150 years old nor a promise that I can accomplish foolish or impossible tasks. It is a promise that there is nothing in life that God and I cannot handle. What Paul had learned was to let God handle it rather than trying to accomplish matters in his own strength. We will do well when we learn the same.

For further study: (1) Study Mark 10:35-45. How appropriate was the re-

It is only as we abide in Christ and He in us that we are made strong enough for every circumstance of life.

sponse of James and John, "We are able," in verse 39? What criticism came their way because of their arrogance? (2) Study 2 Corinthians 11:23-29 for a list of circumstances Paul had already faced. What circumstances from your life would you add to his list? (3) Think of something—either pleasant or painful—that you know you will soon face. Ask the Lord to give you grace to respond to those circumstances according to His will.

*Scripture quotations are the author's own translation.

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OLIVIA'S STORY

by Marjorie Blake

In 1992, I was 22, unwed, unemployed, and pregnant. Both the baby's father and I were caught up in the non-sense of our times. We were from good Christian families, but we had learned from all our outside "teachers" to think and live for ourselves. So, talking with our "outmoded" families was out of the question.

Like many other young women today, I was, as the song says, "looking for love in all the wrong places." So when the baby's father, feeling the pressure of unwanted responsibility, urged abortion as our "out," I was alone in not wanting to do this. To make a long and oft-told story short, after weeks of pressure and tension and the aid of the local Planned Parenthood agency, I caved in. Somehow I convinced myself it couldn't be that bad. If having the abortion would keep my boyfriend in my life, I would do this awful thing.

On February 27, 1992, in the beginning of my fourth month, I had a suction aspiration abortion—alone. My boyfriend did not go with me.

The abortion experience was worse than I'd imagined, and the months that followed were dark and desperate as my boyfriend and I lived out our mortally wounded affair. Both of us were suffering from what is now referred to in professional circles as "post-abortion syndrome." Three months later, we separated.

Saddest of all, perhaps, is that at

the time of my abortion, my parents were active in the pro-life movement and would have had options filled with love and hope—but I shut them out. Reconciling with my family was one of the more important, yet painful, parts of the healing process. I was also fortunate because I found concern and support among pro-life Christian people. They cared enough about me to help me.

ABORTION HAS MANY VICTIMS

That, then, is the history of my abortion. But I really want to talk about hope, not history.

There is a great need to be whole again after abortion. A woman has cast aside her life-giving capacity and often has a hard time believing that her own life still has merit or purpose. I knew that part of feeling whole again meant returning to my church and rededicating my life to Christ. As the mystery of God's love unfolded, I recovered a special peace. That sense of peace has brought me real joy and new hope for the future.

Much is made today of abortion's second victim—the mother. But abortion has many victims. The child, the mother, the father, grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings—all are at a loss when abortion is chosen. For myself, there is

personal loss because I don't know my child. But the greater loss is that you don't know my child or any of the children we've lost through abortion.

Thousands upon thousands of women who have had abortions need help to be whole again. But it is even more important that efforts to counter pro-abortion sentiments and policies continue at all levels—local communities and state, local, and national governments—so that no woman will ever feel pressured to abort her child. Efforts to tell people about the humanity of the unborn and the evil of abortion must continue. Services for women experiencing crisis

pregnancies must be made readily available and expanded, and these must be well publicized so that women can find the help that is there. And our laws and public policies must be changed so that the lives of all—including our unborn children—will once again enjoy the full protection of the law.

Working together, we can solve the problem. There are no limits in life, only in death. Each child conceived is hope and joy and love asking only for a chance despite the odds.

We, also, must wait for marriage. We find "love in all the wrong places" if we date a person who is not committed to Christian values. Living by God's Word is the way.

Marjorie Blake is a pro-life counselor in Gaithersburg, Maryland.

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THE QUESTION THAT CHANGED HER LIFE FOREVER

The story of one woman's crusade to help the people of Estonia

by Gene Van Note

From the street, Oleviste (OH-luh-VIS-tuh) Church in Tallinn (TAH-lin), Estonia, doesn't look impressive. Which is no surprise when you know its history. The 750-year-old building clearly reveals the aches and pains of aging complicated by savage neglect during the 50 years the Soviets occupied Estonia.

Nor did the church seem busy that special Sunday morning in August 1994. There were none of the normal signs of activity we look for in a vigorous church. Six cars were parked out front. Just six.

But inside the Oleviste Church, more than 1,000 people stood as a 35-voice male choir sang and Pastor Ulo (OOH-loo) escorted a nurse from Concord, California, to the platform. Her name is Joyce Terry, and thereby hangs a tale of Christian adventure matched by few young people. And Joyce is 72 years of age.

During the service, the choir sang several hymns in Joyce's honor. At the close, to use her words, "Pastor Ulo called me up to the front and said all these nice things [about me]. Then he pointed to the edge of the platform." That was a signal for Pastor Ulo's mother to join them on the platform with a bouquet of mums she had grown in her garden. To get to worship that morning, she and her mums had to ride the train for more than 30 minutes and then walk from the train station to the church.

"When I saw her, I cried," Joyce said, "because I went to Estonia to help older people."

As the men's choir sang a farewell hymn to Joyce, the pastor said to her, "We don't sing farewell hymns very often; we save them for special people. We didn't even sing farewell to Billy Graham."

Why would the largest evangelical church in Tallinn, Estonia, sing farewell to a 72-year-old nurse when they didn't extend that honor to Billy Graham?

It all began in 1992 when Joyce

Terry, a retired geriatric nurse, asked to be included on a 200-member evangelistic team. Participants paid their own way for the privilege of spending one week passing out salvation tracts on the streets of the former Soviet Union. Joyce was one of five people selected to go to Estonia. Why? She doesn't know. At that time, she didn't even know where Estonia was on the map.



And so it was that in the providence of God, Joyce stood on the sidewalk in Tallinn, Estonia, handing out tracts.

On the second day, Joyce met a young lady who wanted to practice her English by talking with an American. Learning that Joyce is a nurse, she asked, "Would you like to see one of our hospitals?"

That question changed Joyce Terry's life forever.

Joyce's burden for Estonia began with a visit to a ward for old people. The Communists discarded everyone who was no longer productive. The elderly, of no value to the worker state, were warehoused in dreary conditions. Rarely did they leave their beds. They were bathed once every 10 days and never wore anything but gray pajamas and bathrobes. Only occasionally did the disinterested attendants wash the patients' drab clothing and change their bed linens.

Joyce went away from the hospital horrified by what she had seen. But what could one woman in her 70s do? A few days later, she returned to her home in California, nearly half a world away measured by distance, but light-years away in terms of privilege and opportunity.

Joyce Launches a Crusade

Joyce knew she would return to Estonia. And she would not go empty-handed. But first, she had to find out if she was welcome. A letter to Pastor Ulo, whom she had met on her short trip, answered that question. The Oleviste Church would be thrilled to help her when she returned. In fact, they had already arranged a place for her room and board.

You need to know a bit more about Joyce. As a single adult, she is totally responsible for herself, living on the retirement she earned as a nurse.



Before Joyce came, the elderly patients were all but abandoned. They seldom got out of bed, never exercised, and never socialized. Joyce soon had them up and exercising, singing, and playing games.

Joyce does not have any wealthy friends or know any influential people. Nor did she have contacts with hospital supply houses or pharmaceutical companies. So she began her crusade with her friends at the Concord Church of the Nazarene where she is a member. Her enthusiasm and burden invaded every conversation. She told them again and again about the tremendous opportunities and overwhelming needs in Estonia. They began to catch her enthusiasm and provided prayer support and financial assistance.

She took her passion for the elderly in Estonia with her everywhere she went. She begged her doctors to give all the damaged packages of nonprescription medicine they didn't plan to use. In turn, they talked with drug salesmen who visited them, who talked to their supervisors. Soon stacks of medical supplies were piling up in Joyce's mobile home.

Joyce began making the rounds of thrift stores, buying slightly used stuffed animals for 69 cents. She washed them, tied bright new bows around their necks, and added them to the growing pile in her home. Nerf balls, beach balls, cosmetics, cassettes of classical music, even men's ties were added to the stack.

Joyce Returns to Estonia

Loaded down with a few personal items, lots of medical supplies, and special "gifts" for the elderly, Joyce Terry returned to Estonia in August 1993. The airlines responded by allowing her to take far more boxes and bags than normally allotted.

Pastor Ulo met her at the airport and took her to the place where she would room and board. For \$5.50 a night, she could sleep on the couch in his brother-in-law's front room and share meals with the family.

Joyce attached herself to the Hooldushaigle (HOOL-doo-SHAY-gul) geriatric hospital in Tallinn. While teaching nurses about care for the elderly, she worked directly with the old people. She washed and combed the ladies' hair, tying it back with bright ribbons. Those men's ties made colorful belts for the drab gray robes. She insisted that barbers be brought in to cut the men's hair. And she got everybody out of bed, not only to change the bedclothes but also so they could listen to classical music.

Before long, the sparkle returned to their eyes. One of the ladies jumped up and began to dance one of the Estonian folk dances. Joyce threw a Nerf ball at

Nazarene nurse Joyce Terry brought new life, new love, and new toys to the children's hospital.

The Republic of Estonia

Estonia is located in northeastern Europe. Russia is up against its eastern border, with Latvia on the south. The Baltic Sea is on the west, with the Gulf of Finland forming the northern coast. The country is the smallest of the former Soviet Union republics, with an area of about 17,400 square miles. A recent visitor to Estonia remarked that it looked a lot like Indiana with a lot of lakes. Tallinn (TAH-lin), the capital and largest city, is the country's major port.

Approximately a million and a half people live in Estonia, of whom 62% are Estonians. Russians form the largest minority with 30% of the total population. Before the forced annexation in 1940, Russians comprised only

8½% of the population.

Estonian tribes, called Ests, were mentioned by the Roman historian Tacitus in the 1st century A.D. In modern times, Sweden ruled Estonia until 1721, when it was ceded to Russia. The Estonians gained their freedom in the revolution of 1917. The Soviets dropped all claims to Estonia in 1920.

Estonia was invaded by Germany in June 1941. The Soviets returned in September 1944 and remained until their departure on August 31, 1994.

Estonia declared its independence from the Soviet Union in the late 1980s and, along with its Baltic neighbors Latvia and Lithuania, was admitted into the United Nations in September 1991.

Estonians are a proud, patient people who

learned the hard way under Soviet occupation to be reserved and noncommittal. They face major problems rebuilding a country with limited natural resources complicated by considerable infla-

tion. Wages are low and opportunities limited. Lutheranism is the traditional Estonian religion, providing a solid base for Christianity in the post-Soviet era. □

Source: Encarta Multimedia Encyclopedia



one of the men, only to see it bounce off his chest. She threw the ball again. And again. Before long, the men were catching and throwing it around the circle. Soon they were using their canes to play hockey in the halls with Nerf balls.

The medical staff, captivated by what happened, said, "You're treating the patients as if they're your old friends."

Joyce planned to stay two months—but couldn't leave with so much left to be done. She added a month, then was forced to return home because she ran out of money.

Joyce's Second Crusade

No sooner was Joyce back in her mobile home than she longed to return to Estonia. So she launched a second crusade. Since she was experienced, things went more quickly this time.



Joyce convinced her dentist, Dr. Dan Howlett, to donate a term of service. Here Terry and Howlett (far right) are pictured with (left to right): Dr. Heljut Kapral, president, Estonian Christian Physicians; Dr. Erdel Sorok, director of dentists; and Dr. Lillian Edesi-Neub, dentist and translator.

John Moore, pastor of the Concord, California, Church of the Nazarene, said that Joyce Terry is a member of one of the "house churches" in their congregation. These house churches meet twice a month and are involved in lay ministry and pastoral care for each other. The house church Joyce is a part of adopted Estonia as their project.

"They have been so enthusiastic and involved," Pastor Moore said, "that it has encouraged other house churches to take on projects. Through the deep involvement of the house church, the entire church has contributed money, medical and dental supplies, and clothing. She has revitalized our church."

Joyce's dentist, Dr. Dan Howlett, also became a captive to her appeal. Dr. Dan, as he prefers to be called, later said, "Every time I took my hands out of her mouth, she told me about Estonia. And then she would ask, 'What are you going to do about it?'" He decided he had to become a part of this mission of caring. The impact of his trip to Estonia can be seen in the sidebar "To the Newspapers in the United States."

A few months later, Joyce Terry

returned to Tallinn. Back to the couch in the front room and the traditional Estonian food. But also back to the people she loved. Oh, by the way, she took money from her retirement account to pay all her expenses related to her trips to Estonia.

We've run out of time and space. There's no room to review how she trained Estonian doctors and nurses in elder care. We don't have opportunity to tell of her successful campaign to get morphine tablets for terminal cancer patients or medicines for dying children. Or the launching of a sex education program for the 300 young people that are a part of the youth group in the Oleviste Church. Or about Joyce's personal evangelism. A multicolored "gospel bracelet" served as a conversation starter, enabling her to tell people about the Jesus she loved and who wanted their love as well.

But we must take time to talk about the AIDS conference to be held soon in Tallinn. During her final weeks in Estonia, Joyce began working with some Russians who have AIDS. One of their last requests was for someone who

could help them find ways to face the future. Not long after returning home, Joyce was introduced to Ron Lema, who used to sing in gay bars in San Francisco. Ron was diagnosed as HIV-positive in 1988, a factor that led to his conversion. Ron's testimony has been translated into Russian and distributed throughout the former Soviet Union. Through Pastor Ulo, Ron will be given 90 minutes at this secular conference to talk about AIDS and the difference Christ has made in his life. Conferencees will come from Sweden, Norway, and the Baltic countries. Joyce opened that door too.

After six months in Estonia, Joyce turned her ministry of compassion over to a couple from Sweden who had come to Estonia as medical missionaries. "I had to come home and go back to work to earn some money," she said without complaint.

The next time you're tempted to ask, "What can one person do?" remember the Baltic nation of Estonia and a 72-year-old retired nurse named Joyce Terry. **H**

To the Newspapers in the United States

As Joyce Terry left the final service in the Oleviste Church in Tallinn, Estonia, Lillian Edesi-Neub, an Estonian dentist, pressed this note into her hand. At the top, she had written, "To the Newspapers in the United States." Here is the full text of Dr. Edesi-Neub's message, just as she wrote it to the people in America:

It was a real joy for many, many Estonians to meet Joyce Terry, her son, and Dr. Daniel Howlett. We favour what

they have done to many people and with it to Estonia as special. To come by oneself to the place, to love midst strange nation and culture, to accustom to a different way of living, and to give from oneself the best—this is kind of sacrifice that was a lesson to me from these people.

The medical system in Estonia was influenced for 50 years by the Soviet way of organizing and throwing away [people] that has led to a crisis. A human being was forgotten. Much needed to be

changed. First the minds of the people. This I was studying from Joyce and Dr. Howlett. I think that many people were touched by the love and sympathy of Joyce—how she cared for old people who are already thrown to the edge of society.

Dr. Howlett showed with his own example how to care for a patient, what to do in order the patient can feel himself confident and convenient. It was a great amount of knowledge he taught practically to Estonian dentists.

We want too say our sincere thanks too these people for their personal sacrifices for Estonia in word and deeds and to all the kind people in their homeland for the practical help you have sent us. We know it's a big contribution of very many people. I give over also the gratitude of the Society of Estonian Christian Physicians (including dentists).

May God bless you all and make you much good. **□**

—Lillian Edesi-Neub,
dentist

Cork to Coordinate General Assembly



Mark Cork has been named local arrangements coordinator for the 24th General Assembly in San Antonio, Tex., June 18-28, 1997, according to Jack Stone, general secretary. He will begin the assignment in early 1996.

Cork served in the same assignment for the 1993 General Assembly in Indianapolis. Currently, Cork owns Bally-

hoo Productions of Olathe, Kans. In addition to other projects, Cork's company has several production assignments with the Church Growth division, including PALCON, the most recent Evangelism Conference, and the Intermediate Church Initiative.

Prior to moving to the Kansas City area, Cork served as minister of music at Tempe, Ariz., New Hope Community Church. Cork also has held positions with Point Loma Nazarene College and NYI Ministries.

Weber Changes Posts



Steve Weber, 49, has been elected Stewardship/Planned Giving director, according to Jack Stone, general secretary. Weber was nominated by General Treasurer/Headquarters Financial Officer

Robert Foster, approved by the Finance Department of the General Board, and elected by the Board of General Superintendents in a ballot announced Oct. 5.

Weber, who had served as director of mission strategy for the World Mission Division, began the new assignment Oct. 15.

"Having Steve Weber working in areas of Stewardship and Planned Giving will bring a new dimension of coordination to our overall emphasis on the stewardship of living," said Foster. "We need to develop a coordinated strategy for the next century."

The Board of General Superintendents has approved a restructure of the Stewardship and Planned Giving responsibilities, according to Foster. These changes include: (1) the responsibilities of Stewardship and Planned Giving are combined; (2) the Stewardship/Planned Giving director is responsible for the development and administration of a strategic plan for facilitating the coordination and fulfillment of stewardship activities of the Church of the Nazarene and other specific approved supporting entities; and (3) the fund-raising responsibilities of Nazarene Compassionate Ministries are re-assigned from the Church Growth and World Mission divisions to Stewardship/Planned Giving under the supervision of the Stewardship/Planned Giving director.

Weber has served the World Mission Division for 25 years as both a missionary and in various staff positions with division directors, beginning with E. S. Phillips in 1969. Prior to being assigned to Haiti, Weber served as pastor of the San Pedro, Calif., Church from 1972 to 1975.

Holding a bachelor's degree in economics from California State University, Long Beach, Weber has graduate degrees from Nazarene Theological Seminary, California School of Theology, and Fuller Theological Seminary.

Spaulding Elected to Book Committee



Henry Spaulding, 43, has been elected to the Nazarene Book Committee, according to Jack Stone, general secretary. The action was taken by the General Board in a mail ballot announced Aug. 11.

Spaulding assumed his new assignment at the last book committee meeting, Sept. 28. He fills the position left by H. Ray Dunning, who retired in April.

Spaulding began a new assignment this fall as professor of theology and philosophy at Trevecca Nazarene College. He had served as senior pastor of Woodbridge, Va., Church since 1992.

Prior to going to Woodbridge, Spauld-

ing served at Eastern Nazarene College for 10 years. During this time, he was professor of religion, chairman of the division of religion and philosophy, and associate academic dean of graduate and professional studies.

Spaulding is an alumnus of Trevecca (B.A.), Nazarene Theological Seminary (M.Div.), and Florida State University (Ph.D.).

He served as chairman of the Doctrine of the Church Commission prior to the 1993 General Assembly and has delivered papers at a number of denominational conferences. He was one of the speakers at this summer's PALCONs and is the author of *Untangling the Sexual Revolution* (Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 1989).

Youth Challenged to Serve

Nazarene churches around the world recently challenged young people to consider a lifetime commitment to ministry as a part of Youth Mission Commitment Day Two. The denomination-wide event, cosponsored by Nazarene Youth International and Nazarene World Mission Society, was scheduled for Oct. 15.

"The theme, 'God's Call: Deal With It,' was chosen to challenge young people to give themselves away by working in His harvest field," said Kyle Poole, of NYI Ministries. "Youth Mission Commitment Day, which was first held four years ago, is designed to give youth leaders the opportunity to create a setting where teens can hear and obey God's challenge."

NYI Ministries provided a resource packet to local churches in the U.S. and Canada. Additional packets were sent to General NYI and NWMS council members, World Mission regional directors and coordinators, and English-speaking districts in World Mission areas.

Churches reported that hundreds of young people responded to a call to ministry and mission, according to Poole. NYI Ministries sent these responses to appropriate general church leaders for personal responses.

Get Ready, Get Set, Go! A Teen's Guide to the Great Commission, a follow-up resource tool by Chris Wiley, is available from Nazarene Publishing House.

General NYI Elects New President



Bruce Oldham, 39, director of admissions and recruitment at Mount Vernon Nazarene College, has been elected general NYI president by the General NYI Council.

He assumes the post immediately.

"Bruce Oldham brings to this assignment a wealth of knowledge about NYI and its mission, constitution, and youth ministry at all levels of the church," said Fred Fullerton, NYI Ministries director. "He will give outstanding leadership in these months leading to the 1997 General NYI Convention. He has the full support of the council and NYI Ministries staff."

Oldham has served at MVNC since 1992. Prior to this, he was youth and college pastor at Nashville, Tenn., First Church for four years. Other youth ministry assignments include: Winter Haven, Fla.; Birmingham,

Ala.; First; Gallatin, Tenn.; and Augusta, Ga.

Oldham had served as general NYI secretary since 1993. He was the southeastern U.S.A. regional representative to the General NYI Council from 1985 to 1991. He served as an NYI Ministries editor and program director from 1979 to 1983.

A 1978 graduate of Trevecca Nazarene College, Oldham earned an M.A. at TNC in 1989. He has done additional graduate work at Nazarene Theological Seminary and the University of Alabama, Birmingham.

Oldham has written numerous magazine articles, as well as the book *How to Organize and Lead NYI on Your District* (NPH, 1992). He and his wife, Peggy, have two children, Scott and Lyndsey.

Oldham succeeds Jim Williams, who resigned as general NYI president in September.

TNC to Become University

The Board of Trustees of Trevecca Nazarene College has voted to change the name of the institution to Trevecca Nazarene University, according to chairman Charles Davis. The action, which was announced in a chapel service Oct. 18, becomes effective at a convocation planned for Mar. 19, 1996.

The name change was prompted in a recommendation by the school's Strategic Planning Committee. The change is intended to establish a label that will more accurately and clearly reflect the institution's current programs, according to TNC spokesperson Jan Greathouse.

"'University' more accurately defines Trevecca in relationship with other schools in Nashville and middle Tennessee," said Steve Pusey, TNC vice president for academic affairs. "Belmont, David Lipscomb, Cumberland, and Fisk are all labeled 'universities.' While Trevecca ranks third in enrollment among these schools, TNC's graduate and adult programs are the largest."

Of the 482 degrees granted by TNC last year, 191 were masters'. This year, TNC had a 12.2 percent increase in total enrollment, with a 50 percent increase in freshmen enrollment.

In other business, the trustees voted to create a new entrance and perimeter enclosure to the campus. The project, with an estimated cost of \$1.1 million, is scheduled for completion by Nov. 1996.

The construction will create a campus entrance at 333 Murfreesboro Road. TNC already owns the properties affected by the plan.

The TNC Board of Trustees also elected new officers. D. Moody Gunter, North Florida District superintendent, was elected chairman. Wendell Nixon of Columbia, S.C., was elected vice chairman. Lois Hood of Columbus, Miss., was elected secretary.

Pastor Participates in Catholic Study



Randall Wells, senior pastor of Miami, Fla., Central Church of the Nazarene, was the only Protestant involved in the development of a major survey of Catholic colleges and universities. The 14-month survey, "Diversity Within America's Catholic Colleges and Universities: Efforts and Linkages to Catholic Identity, Institutional Mission, and Leadership," was funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation. The findings were presented in St. Paul, Minn., in August at a symposium that was attended by the presidents and deans of more than 200 U.S. Catholic institutions of higher education.

"It may seem unusual to have a Nazarene (Protestant, Evangelical, Holiness) pastor as a member of a group studying Catholic higher education," said Wells. He said he was asked to participate for several reasons. "I am completing my Ph.D. dissertation at a Catholic university; as a pastor of a Nazarene church, I bring a different set

of 'eyes' to evaluate the Catholic influence on higher education; I pastor a church that is 70 percent non-Caucasian."

Wells said the survey found that the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) is 22 percent diverse in its student population—the highest of any other consortium of colleges and universities. The study sought to provide a biblical foundation for diversity, acceptance, justice, and equality.

Findings indicated that Catholic identity does help foster diversity in student groups; however, there is little diversity within faculty, staff, and administrative roles. The ethnic parity, therefore, is lopsided. Findings also revealed that the ownership of diversity initiatives by the college or university president is crucial for expedient and long-term effectiveness. Without the support of presidents, diversity efforts occur at an insignificant pace, if at all.

Wells is a graduate of Mount Vernon Nazarene College and holds an M.Div. from Nazarene Theological Seminary. He is a Ph.D. candidate at Barry University in Miami.

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Alaska—Leader in Missions



Spicer

The Alaska District has paid its General Budget in full for 44 consecutive years, according to Kenneth Spicer, district superintendent. This represents payment in full every year the district has existed, according to Nazarene Archives and the general treasurer's office.

The district has also paid its Pensions and Benefits Budget in full since it began, according to Spicer. There are only two years that the Alaska District has not paid its educational budget in full.

"We are quite excited and pleased by the level of commitment on the part of our people," said Spicer. "It is more than just tradition. It reflects the deep level of commitment across our district for World Missions."

The district sponsors two month-long mission tours each year, according to Spicer. Each organized church is visited by a missionary in both the fall and the spring. It is a program that was well established before Spicer began his tenure in 1990.

"Information and personal contact are always important in generating and maintaining interest," said Spicer. "I am sure the tours make a difference."

In addition, the district sponsors a Work and Witness team of 15 to 20 members each year. Recent missions included trips to Samoa and New Zealand. The district is already making plans for a trip in 1996 to Belize. "This also helps to generate and keep interest up," said the superintendent.

Spicer also gives credit for the district's giving record to the District NWMS Council, led by former missionary Chris Grube, who now pastors the church in Juneau.

"If we came to missionary convention and were even 25 percent short [on General Budget], I don't think they would go home without it being paid in full," said Spicer. "The people are very interested in missions and General Budget."

PI and NWMS Launch Literature Program

In an effort to meet the growing needs of Nazarene ministries around the globe, the World Mission Literature program has been launched, according to Ray Hendrix, Publications International (PI) director. The new ministry is a collaborative project of PI and the Nazarene World Mission Society (NWMS).

"This added emphasis of ministry through the printed page will assist missionaries and national leaders in advancing the work of the church," said Hendrix. "Resources will provide for the follow-up of new converts as well as training for pastors and laity in the distinctive holiness gospel message."

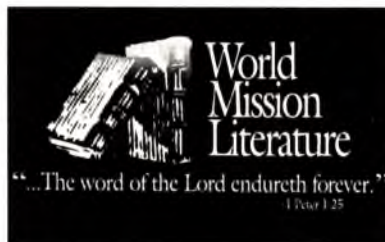
World Mission Literature was inaugurated with three initial projects: the Literature Development Fund, the Special Projects Fund, and the Books in

Mission program. The Literature Development Fund produces and distributes books and periodicals. The Special Projects Fund provides a means for persons or organizations to underwrite the cost of specific books or materials. Books

in Mission redirects used English-language books in good condition to Nazarene Bible schools and colleges in world mission areas.

"Requests for Holiness books come daily to the Church of the Nazarene," said Hendrix. "The demand for this type of material, however, far exceeds the current resources."

Publications International currently serves 65 language groups within the 110 world areas where the Church of the Nazarene is located. World Mission Literature is an approved Ten Percent Special program.



Evangelism Spotlighted



Shaver

The 38th Evangelism Banquet, representing 19 churches and 4 denominations, attracted 162 persons to Kansas City, Mo., First Church Aug. 31. The gathering was cosponsored by Nazarene Theological Seminary, cooperating

churches, and the Chic Shaver Center for Evangelism.



Carriker

During the evening, 15 persons shared about their decisions to follow Christ. Among those listening were students, pastors, and laypersons about to begin a 14-week evangelism training class.

"I realized that I was still clinging to the throne of my life," said Bruce Carriker, a major in the National Guard, who was raised as a Nazarene. "Surrender is such a repugnant word to a military man. Christ is not the dictator of my life, He's my Commander in Chief."

Evangelists Remember Retired Ministers



Career evangelists Boyce and Catherine Pierce of Danville, Ill., left a testamentary gift of more than \$125,000 to support retired ministers, according to Roger Alexander, Planned

Giving trust adviser. The recently settled estate named Pensions and Benefits USA as the sole beneficiary.

"Gifts like this are greatly appreciated in today's difficult economic environment," said Don Walter, Pensions and Benefits director.

The Pierces' wills were established 11 years ago, according to Alexander. The documents designated the proceeds from the sale of their retirement home and all other assets to be used by Pensions and Benefits USA.

As itinerant evangelists, the Pierces had never owned a home until they retired in 1980, according to their surviving granddaughter, Joy Perry. Rev. Pierce died in 1988. Mrs. Pierce passed away last October.

New "Single" Pension Plan Goes into Effect Jan. 1, 1996

The Nazarene Single Defined Contribution Pension Plan for U.S. Nazarene ministers serving local congregations and districts, and for general headquarters employees, will go into effect on January 1, 1996.

The Board of Pensions and Benefits USA took action to approve implementing legislation for the defined contribution plan in their October meeting. Concurring action had been taken previously by the USA National Board, the Board of General Superintendents, and the executive committee of the General Board.

The Nazarene Single Defined Contribution Pension Plan will replace the "Basic" Pension Plan and the General Church Pension Plan. It will utilize the existing Nazarene TSA Plan with its "Option B" accounts.

DURING 1995, an individual TSA "Option B" account was funded from Pensions and Benefits Fund income for every U.S. pastor, eligible associate, full-time evangelist, and district superintendent. That is, \$150 was placed in individual TSA Option B accounts for every person earning a year of service credit under the "Basic" Pension Plan. In addition, up to \$200 per account was available to match dollar-for-dollar any such participant's own or church contribution for 1995.

BEGINNING IN 1996, an amount equal to 3 percent of the Average Pastor's (cash) Salary (APS) reported for all U.S. Nazarene pastors will be contributed to "Option B" accounts for all active, eligible participants from P&B Fund receipts or from agency funds, depending upon the participant's employer. The new plan is a defined contribution plan in which the level of retirement income is determined by the amount accrued in the individual's account at the time of retirement.

IN ADDITION to the base contribution from P&B Fund receipts for local church and district-employed ministers, individual employees will be encouraged to make additional contributions to their retirement accounts through salary reduction agreements with their employers. Employers in turn will be encouraged to match the employee's contribution. For example, the base 3 percent of APS from the P&B Fund, a

3 percent of salary contribution from the employee, and a 3 percent matching contribution from the employer could yield an annual contribution approximating 9 percent of salary.

Under IRS guidelines, all salary reduction and salary addition contributions must be submitted by the employer on the employee's behalf. The 3 percent APS contribution from the P&B Fund will be directed to "Option B" accounts. However, the employee and employer contributions may be directed to the "Option B" account or to other Nazarene TSA investment options according to local agreements between the employee and employer. Appropriate forms for these transactions are available from the pensions office.

"Basic" Pension Base Formula to Increase

TRANSITION from the old plans to the new Single Defined Contribution Pension Plan will affect different participants in various ways. Here is an overview of three possibilities:

1. Those whose qualifying service for pension credit started accruing before January 1, 1996, are assured that the retirement benefit they receive under the new plan will not be less than it would have been under the "Basic" Pension Plan or General Church Pension Plan in which they previously participated. If the new plan has not yet produced sufficient income to match the retirement promised under the former pension plan, the retiree will receive enough from the previous plan to make up the difference. In time, the new plan has the potential to produce a greater retirement income than the "Basic" Pension Plan or the General Church Pension Plan would have provided.

2. Those persons who are retired already, or who will retire before January 1, 1996, will continue to receive benefits under the current "Basic" Pension

Plan or General Church Pension Plan provisions. However, for participants under the "Basic" Pension Plan, the amount of the monthly pension check will be higher because of an increase in the base formula from \$7.50 to \$9.00 per month per year of service. This increase will be reflected in January 1996 pension checks. A modified consumer price index (CPI) factor was also used to calculate a benefit increase for some General Church Pension Plan retirees who retired prior to 1994.

3. Those who expect to begin qualifying service for pension credit on or after January 1, 1996, will be solely under the provisions of the new Nazarene Single Defined Contribution Pension Plan. They will have the potential to build a greater retirement fund based upon more control over and more responsibility for their own retirement account.

AT THE BEGINNING of the new plan, and for some time to come, there will be persons who began their qualifying service for pension credit under one of the old plans but on January 1, 1996, will switch over automatically to the new plan.

Starting then, annual contributions equal to 3 percent APS will be made to individual TSA "Option B" accounts, funded either by the P&B Fund, as in the case of pastors, or agency operational funds, as in the case of Headquarters employees.

THE P&B FUND will remain vital. It will be a key source of retirement funding, since it will be the source of the 3 percent APS funding for all eligible ministers' accounts. It will continue to pay for any benefits already promised under the former "Basic" Pension Plan. The P&B Fund also will continue to be the only funding source for such benefits as Basic Group Term Life Insurance and Benevolence payments to qualifying ministers.

The P&B Fund is so important for these benefit plans that the 3 percent APS contribution from the fund will be increased by 10 percent for ministers on those districts that pay 100 percent of their P&B Fund the previous year. All local churches and districts should still strive to pay 100 percent of their assigned P&B Fund amount each year.

PLNC Organizing Compassionate Ministry Center

Point Loma Nazarene College is in the process of establishing the first college-sponsored compassionate ministry center and institute, according to Rosco Williamson, director of LoveWorks Center for Compassionate Ministry in San Diego. The center plans to join the Nazarene network of church-sponsored nonprofit organizations supported and organized by NCM, U.S./Canada.

"The world is longing for a new generation of men and women committed to serving the Lord by meeting people's total needs, both physical and spiritual," said Williamson. "This center is a small but important step in that direction."

The purpose of the LoveWorks Center is to increase opportunities for service, provide resources, and intentionally equip people to be involved in compassionate care experiences, according to Williamson. The center is the culmination of compassionate ministry programs that have developed on the campus over the past decade.

Nearly 300 PLNC students participated in one of the 23 different compassionate ministry opportunities during the past school year. In addition, international ministry teams used winter and summer breaks to extend compassion to Albania, Brazil, Israel/Jordan, Russia, Sicily, South Africa, and Venezuela.

LoveWorks is in the process of locating a site for the center in an underprivileged neighborhood near the campus. The site will be used for staff offices, community courses, and an educational resource center.

A health clinic to operate in cooperation with the PLNC nursing program is also being considered.

The center is also seeking to establish the LoveWorks Institute to facilitate short-term group mission projects to San Diego, Mexico, Native American sites, and other areas.

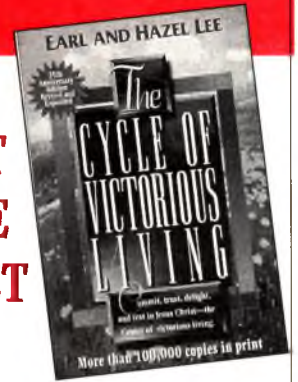
"We believe this type of ministry changes lives," said Williamson, "not only in the people we minister to but also in the lives of those who give."



PLNC students, who volunteered their winter break, join in leading worship with peers in São Paulo, Brazil.

CONTINUING LAY TRAINING DENOMINATIONAL STUDY

February—March 1996



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—1993-97 Nazarene Manual

The International Board of Education invites those who are preparing to teach in a Nazarene college, university, or seminary to submit a current vita, which will be made available to the undergraduate and graduate institutions of the church. Listed below are known needs for the 1996-97 academic year. Since all needs cannot be anticipated, other openings may occur in teaching, administrative, or staff roles. Nazarene colleges are equal opportunity employers.

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FALL 1996 NIROGAS

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For detailed informational brochures about our spring NIROGAs, check the appropriate box(es), clip this ad, and mail to:

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Trying to find the right gift for people on our list can be a hectic affair. We don't want to offend friends and relatives who have been generous to us, so we trek from store to store at the mall. But somewhere in our search for the perfect present, we lose the meaning of Christmas.

God redefined generosity that first Christmas by His gift to us. Jesus came for those without means to pay.

Remembering God's charity toward us, perhaps it's time to adjust our own gift lists. Though we needn't ignore special friends and family members, we can look beyond our own circle to include those who could especially benefit from kindness this Christmas. Here are some possibilities:

1. Invite a foreign student or refugee family for dinner. Most foreigners would cherish an invitation to an American home. If you don't know any internationals, contact a community program offering English as a second language or the foreign student office of your local university or college. Some churches also have outreach programs to internationals.

Howard and Daphne have opened their home to international students for many years. "We enjoy it and think it's a good way to show hospitality to strangers," they say. "The friendships we have made with foreign students broaden our horizons and help our children understand other cultures."

2. Purchase a gift for a child in a needy family. Some communities sponsor "Trees of Joy" where Christmas trees are adorned with tags requesting a gift for a needy child. Those taking a tag purchase and wrap a gift for the child described. This might be that child's only Christmas present. Prison Fellowship sponsors a similar "Angel Tree" program for the local children of prisoners.

Because her own children are still pursuing studies or building their careers, Mildred doesn't have any grandchildren to pamper. Instead, she participates in the "Tree of Joy" program. "I get so much pleasure buying clothes and toys for little people," she says.

3. Offer your services to an elderly person. Older people often don't need "things" as much as they could use some practical help.

Ida can't eat Christmas sweets and believes knickknacks only serve as "dust catchers." With her failing health, however, she could use some help around the house. Her walks need shoveling in the winter. She would appreciate a coupon good for summer lawn mowing or other yard work.

4. Show God's love to an expectant mother. Homes for unwed mothers offer accommodations and support to girls who choose against the easier route of abortion. Make an expectant mother feel special with jewelry, a Christian music tape, or maternity clothes. Girls planning

A Different Kind of Gift List

by Janice Lemke

to keep their babies need baby clothes and other items for the little one.

Sara lost the support of her family and her boyfriend after she got pregnant and decided not to have an abortion. With no other place to live, she found acceptance at a home for expectant mothers. This Christmas, she misses her family but wants to give her baby the chance to grow up.

5. Spread some cheer at a nursing home or hospital. Christmas can be an especially lonely time for those confined to nursing home or hospital care. Organize a group from your church to sing some carols, or enlist the help of a friend to give out nonbreakable ornaments and smiles from room to room.

After three years, Edna has adjusted to life at the nursing home. Though family members visit occasionally, she

misses being able to attend church and community activities. "It's so nice when young people come and sing at Christmastime," she says. "The songs bring back good memories of Christmas long ago. It breaks the monotony—gives me something new to think about."

6. Contribute food or gifts to the local rescue mission. The mission can use extra food items for a Christmas dinner to serve the homeless. Buy a turkey or ham or bake some pies to share. You may instead wish to give some practical gifts such as work gloves, socks, toothpaste, toothbrushes, or disposable razors.

One church provides a box every December where people can contribute canned food or gift items for the mission. Some years, the women's group has made quilts out of scrap cloth for bunk beds at the mission.

7. Support an underprivileged child. While most

**WE CAN LOOK BEYOND OUR OWN CIRCLE
TO INCLUDE THOSE WHO COULD ESPECIALLY
BENEFIT FROM KINDNESS THIS CHRISTMAS.**



MRC

American children have an abundance of toys, children in many countries go without basic necessities. Compassion International, World Vision, and other organizations give you and your family the opportunity to provide monthly support to a child living in poverty. They will send you a photo and information about the child.

The Nelson family now supports two children throughout the year. Their own two kids look forward to getting letters from their overseas pen pals and enjoy assembling Christmas care packages.

8. Help fill or deliver food baskets for needy families. Many churches and some community agencies such as the Salvation Army or St. Vincent de Paul put together food baskets containing chicken or turkey, along with canned food and other nonperishable food items. You can share your holiday bounty with a family that can't afford any extras. If your church doesn't have a food basket program, consider starting one!

When Carl volunteered to help deliver food baskets to needy families, he didn't expect to gain so much in return. "People were so appreciative," he said. He treasures the experience as the highlight of his Christmas.

9. Offer to baby-sit or deliver a meal to a family with young children.

Many young mothers could use extra help during the busy Christmas season. Shopping for Christmas gifts is nearly impossible when accompanied by young children. Your offer to baby-sit for the evening would ease the load.

As a single mom with three young children, Darlene struggles to meet financial needs on a low-paying job. She feels guilty she can't spend more time with her children, but also needs time for her own errands. She says one of the nicest gifts she received was a dinner invitation by the cou-

ple next door. "While they cooked, I just sat and read to the kids. Then they baby-sat so I could get some shopping done."

10. Adopt a family in a homeless shelter. When families have little or no income, there's simply not enough money for gifts for the children. Extra food or items such as hats, gloves, and simple toys can bring a lot of joy to a family. Or you may wish to consider residents in shelter homes for youth, battered women, or the handicapped.

Beth, now a caseworker at an emergency shelter, says she was once on the receiving end and knows how special it is to be remembered at Christmastime. "Just knowing that people care matters a whole lot."

These suggestions may inspire some ideas of your own. Or, after glancing through the list above, perhaps you can only gasp, "How in the world am I supposed to take care of all the poor and needy and all my relatives too?" You find the list only adds to the pressure of the season.

God knows the limitations on your time and resources. Even Jesus couldn't go everywhere, didn't help everyone. If Christmas brings you more headaches than serenity, perhaps it's time to reevaluate. Think about whose birthday it is. Ask Him how you should celebrate this year. **H**

There are many worthy organizations that can help you to reach out to those who are in need. We especially recommend Nazarene Child Sponsorship or Nazarene Compassionate Ministries. For more information, write them at 6401 The Paseo, Kansas City, MO 64131, or phone 816-333-7000.

The Dark Side of the Nativity

by Ryan Ahlgrim

Every Nativity scene I know leaves out part of the Christmas story. Sure, they all have Mary and Joseph, and it wouldn't be a Nativity scene without Baby Jesus lying in a manger. And most manger scenes include a stable, some animals, shepherds, and three wise men. A few even have an angel and a star.

But there is still something missing from all these Nativity scenes. Soldiers. Soldiers on their way to Bethlehem to kill every baby boy two years of age and under.

Why are they not included in our Nativity scenes? Why is this important part of the story always left out?

We want a Christmas story that includes only the pretty, the warm, the joyous, and the charming. But the Gospel of Matthew insists that we include in the Christmas story something we would prefer to forget—that Jesus' birth is also the occasion of the death of innocent children.

This is the dark side of the Christmas story, and it is hard for



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us to accept. The slaughter of the innocents is a piece that does not fit, a part of the story that Matthew should not have recorded. We naturally recoil at the thought of the joyous good news being marred by bloodshed and brutal paranoia.

One is tempted to ask, "Why didn't God save the innocent children? God protected Jesus by warning Joseph in a dream to escape. Why not the other children? Did they have to die so Jesus could live?" Such questions cannot be answered. They will forever twist in our conscience.

But Matthew tells us about the soldiers, not to blame God, but to reveal a crucial truth. The Christmas story cannot be the Christmas story without bloodshed. For Matthew, a Nativity scene *should* have soldiers in it, with swords drawn.

Matthew knows anything powerful enough to do tremendous good in this world is going to provoke tremendous evil. Goodness, truth, and healing change things profoundly. But that which is selfish, that which gains from

the sick status quo, does not want change and will do nearly anything to stop it.

The irony is, goodness sometimes brings out the worst in us. Good news is always a threat to someone or some part of

CHRISTMAS IS NOT JUST JOYFUL NEWS.

us, and self-serving sickness will do its utmost to stop what is good.

The slaughter of innocent children at the birth of a Savior is not unique. It also happened long before to the Hebrew slaves in Egypt. As their numbers increased, the pharaoh feared the Hebrews might change the status quo of slavery. So he eventually ordered that every male Hebrew baby be drowned in the Nile. One baby escaped—Moses, who would later lead the Hebrews out of Egypt.

Just as Moses freed the Hebrews from the pharaohs, so Jesus frees us from the Herods of this world. Jesus is pitted against all those forces of fear and immaturity that want to hold on to an unjust and painful system. Jesus is pitted against all those Herods who are paranoid and abuse their power. In fact, Jesus came to save even the Herods. He came to save us from ourselves.

The problem is, Herod can be quite difficult to identify—especially the Herod that resides in ourselves. One might think Herod's presence would be obvious—just look for brutality, hatred, lying, and murder. But sometimes Herod looks very reasonable.

Take, for instance, the historical Herod, Herod the Great. Yes, he was cruel and brutal, even murdering members of his own fami-

ly. But, from another perspective, Herod appears quite reasonable.

When Herod became king of Judea, the country was suffering from crop failure, heavy taxation, and a devastating civil war. Herod changed all that. Through the skillful use of political power, he imposed order. He brought an end to the civil war, he provided jobs for the people, he rebuilt the country, and he provided food to the starving. Because of his political ties to the Romans, he was able to win special privileges for Judea—such as tax relief and military exemption.

And Herod's crowning achievement was to build (with expenditures coming out of his own pocket) the most magnificent Temple to the God of Israel that the world had ever seen.

Put yourself in Herod's shoes. You have worked very long and very hard to bring a measure of peace and prosperity to your country. Then one day, while you are sitting on your throne, you hear that a rival king has recently been born in Bethlehem.

A rival king? That is very bad news. In all likelihood, that means another civil war and an end to peace and prosperity.

A thought comes into your mind: "Would it not be more reasonable to kill one baby king than to have all that upheaval and suffering? Bethlehem is small, with a total of perhaps a mere dozen baby boys. Is it not better for a dozen to die rather than thousands in a civil war?"

And so we see a chilling fact—brutal, self-serving evil can wear a reasonable face and respectable robes. This is what Matthew wants us to know. Christmas is not just joyful news. It announces the beginning of a tremendous struggle between light and darkness, risky goodness and reasonable evil. The soldiers are coming toward the town, and their swords are drawn.

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HH



PROFILE



NAME:

Don W. Dunnington

EDUCATION:

B.A., Olivet Nazarene University
M.Div., Nazarene Theological Seminary
D.Min., Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
Postgraduate studies, Vanderbilt University

CURRENT MINISTRY ASSIGNMENT:

Vice President for Academic Affairs, Southern Nazarene University

PREVIOUS MINISTRY ASSIGNMENTS:

Pastor, Chicago and Indianapolis Chaplain; Professor of Preaching Ministry; Chair, Department of Religion and Philosophy, Trevecca Nazarene College

ON MINISTRY:

My sense of calling to full-time Christian service emerged during my college years. NTS helped me to see the scope and breadth of that calling and cultivated in me a love for learning and service, along with a strong desire for continued growth as a follower of Christ. The influence of faculty and colleagues from NTS has played a positive role in my efforts to serve Christ and the church.

To invest in the lives of those called into ministry in the Church of the Nazarene, please contact: Development Office, 1700 E. Meyer Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64131 (816-333-6254; FAX: 816-333-6271).

NAZARENE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

The Christmas Gift

Everywhere is He
whose eyes are candles:
I discern Him
clearly this season—

His presence
permeates the cold,
drawing me close to Him.

bestowing joy
to the bell
I ring in front of the market
for people whose hunger pierces their lives.

I have known Him
almost three years now;
His patience blooms
inside of me,
turning to charity;

Warm banks of fire
part my lips
as I say “God bless you”
to all who pass by,

believing that He will,
whether they say
“Amen” or not.

—Marilyn Hochheiser

I'll Make Room

This Christmas, Lord, I promise You win.
There'll be room for You in the heart of my inn.

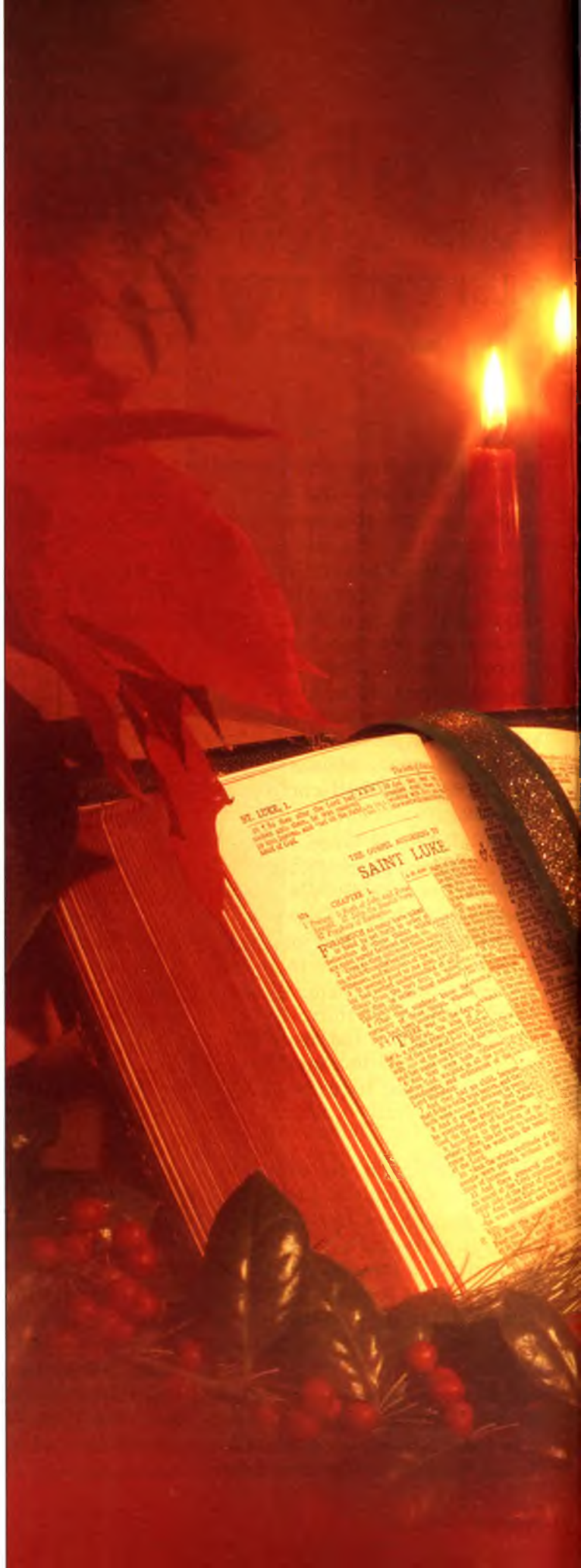
First, let me finish this Christmas baking;
Our choir's cantata is still in the making.

Then I'll have to complete all my shopping,
Clean the house, do all the mopping.

After the kids and I have trimmed the tree,
Somehow I know there'll be time for me.

I'm sure then I'll be able to fit You in.
I'll find room for You in the heart of my inn.

—Jacquelin D. Holland



Come, O Christmas Star

Come back again, bright holy Star,
And show our seeking world the Way.
Shine, shine on us, not from afar
But in the little things of day:
On marketplace or city street,
Send out the splendor of God's love,
And where His faithful children meet
Rain down His glory from above.
O Star divine and heaven-bright,
Reveal the sacred manger Birth,
And lead us to the Christ child's light
To fill with joy all hearts on earth.

—Jean Hogan Dudley

The Coming

God promised the Messiah.
And people waited
And people doubted.
They thought God had forgotten
Or they had misunderstood.

Then Joy burst forth
In the birth of a boy
Born of Love, of God.
And Jesus walked
And taught and healed
And loved—then died
for all.

God promised Love's return.
And people wait
And people doubt.
They think God has forgotten
Or they have misunderstood.

But Joy will burst forth!
Messiah will return!
And the Promise birthed
That Christmas Day
Will reign Immanuel
for all!
—Joanne Long

Room to Celebrate

Nothing, Lord, is right, it seems.
"He is missing." "They have gone."
Death, relocation has hacked
A gaping wound in celebration.
Past tradition crumbled,
We gather in a strange home
And receive gifts from those we barely know.

"So in that first Christmas, child,
Family was left behind,
No kind smiles of recognition—
Victims, it might seem, of ill-timed fate.
Their Son's birth acknowledged by strangers,
No home, no loved ones, no table—
Do not fret.

You celebrate in the circumstance
Of the first Christmas.
Ponder it in your heart,
And give Him room."

—Sandy Mayle

Who of Us Dare Join

by Edwin

Someone once said that in the old days on the farm, babies were born and welcomed much like newborn animals: another addition to the flock for the benefit of the enterprise. Today, however, parents welcome each child almost as if he or she were the Messiah. At least we grandparents do! Children or grandchildren represent hope and the prospect of continuity and blessing.

Mary, pregnant with Spirit-generated life, received direct word from the angel Gabriel that her child would be “the Son of the Most High” (Luke 1:32, NRSV). Her Child would bring blessing to herself and a transformed social order for her people. The Child within her was a sign that God was “waking up” to remember mercy.

So her soul magnified the Lord with joyful and disturbing song. Her song was not the gentle “Silent Night”; it was, rather, a prophetic declaration of revolution.

What do you hear in her song? Do you hear what I hear? Who sings this song, and why? Who does not sing it? Where did she learn it, and what does it have to do with us?

The women’s song. Mary’s song is a women’s song. We first hear its central theme when the prophet Miriam took tambourine in hand and, together with the other Israelite women, danced and sang: “Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; horse and rider he has thrown into the sea” (Exodus 15:21, NRSV).

The riders of the horses and their leader, Pharaoh, did not sing—unless perhaps they moaned a mournful lament. Miriam knew God had remembered to be merciful. Pharaoh knew he had been judged.

A more vicious version of the women’s song burst forth from the lips of prophetess Deborah when, together with Barak, she celebrated the violent death of Sisera, an enemy army general: “Hear, O kings; give ear, O princes; to the LORD I will sing . . . So perish all your enemies, O LORD! But may your friends be like the sun as it rises in its might” (Judges 5:3, 31, NRSV).

Again, the women’s song was that of an underdog who had suddenly been delivered from fearful oppression. Sisera’s soldiers did not sing. Deborah sang

because she knew that God had remembered to be merciful.

The women’s song lives on in a more personal version sung by the infertile Hannah, whose life had turned into a daily ordeal of taunting and ridicule from the rival wife, Peninnah. What do you do when your worst enemy is in your own household?

A word of reassurance and blessing from the priest Eli lifts Hannah’s shroud of misery, and she sings: “My heart exults in the LORD . . . My mouth derides my enemies . . . Talk no more so very proudly . . . The

bows of the mighty are broken . . . Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread . . . He raises up the poor from the dust” (1 Samuel 2:1, 3-5, 8, NRSV).

It was the lowly, distressed one who sang this song, while Peninnah’s taunting voice was silenced. God had remembered to be merciful. Hannah was blessed; Peninnah was judged.

The ancient theme of the women’s song again burst from the heart of humble Mary, who carried within her womb the Hope of all the oppressed and insignificant people of the world: “For he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant. . . . From now on all generations will call me blessed . . . *The*

Mighty One has done great things for me . . . His mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. . . . He has scattered the proud . . . brought down the powerful . . . lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty” (Luke 1:48-53, NRSV, italics added).

We know Herod and the religious leaders did not join in this song with Mary. Instead, with fearful hearts, they plotted the death of this One about whom Mary sang. But for Mary, God had remembered mercy. It was time to sing.

Who sings this song? Someone has said that there is no single passage of Scripture more frequently set to music than Mary’s song. Yet only a few of us have ever sung it. We teach our children to sing the peaceful lullaby “Away in a Manger,” while they seldom, if ever, hear the disturbing song of Mary.

MARY'S IS A SONG
OF THE OPPRESSED,
THE SUFFERING, THE ABUSED.
BUT IT CAN ALSO BE
A SONG FOR THE PROUD,
THE POWERFUL, AND
THE RICH. GOD'S MERCY IS
WIDE ENOUGH FOR BOTH.

in Mary's Song?

Rempel

Perhaps we don't sing it because we know the biting edge of the lyrics applies to us—self-promoting, powerful, and rich. Why would we sing about our own demise?

Who, then, would want to sing this song? Could it be our song as well?

It is a song for the Zairean woman who every morning travels by bus to the wholesale vegetable market. To get there, she must first pay the conductor, then bribe the driver, and then pay soldiers who stop the bus and demand money from the passengers, sometimes as often as 10 times in one trip.

The Zairean woman longs for the day when her soul could magnify the Lord for mercy remembered. And so it is for all the women and children in her circumstances around the world.

The song is sung by all those women and children who have been abused by their husbands, fathers, uncles, and grandfathers. Only in recent years has the pain of these women found voice in Mary's song. Many men are not singing Mary's song. Some are moaning laments of confusion and distress. Has the day come when God has remembered mercy for the abused ones, and the dominant ones feel the biting edge of judgment?

In *invitation to sing*. Today, the Spirit of the Lord invites women to sing Mary's song with freedom and hope. Join with Mary, Hannah, Deborah, and Miriam in singing about the Lord's liberation from oppression and suffering. Feel with Mary the joy of being favored by the Lord and being called blessed.

Join with all the "lowly ones" of the world in a mighty chorus celebrating the hope that, because of the birth of Jesus, they need be victims no longer. Sing with Mary, "My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked with favor on the lowliness of his servant" (Luke 1:47-48, NRSV).

Today, God's mercy is wide enough to invite the proud, powerful, and rich to sing this song as well. How? When the Spirit of Christ touches our souls as Jesus touched the soul of Zacchaeus, we find our-

selves gently brought down from the precarious perches of our over-extended egos, our love of power, and our pursuit of riches.

When transformed by the presence of Jesus, Zacchaeus offered to turn his own world upside down and return his ill-gotten gain to those

whom he defrauded. Now Zacchaeus, too, is free to sing Mary's song, for salvation has come to his house as well. He, too, is now blessed and favored as a "son of Abraham" (Luke 19:9, NRSV).

I can hear him singing all the way to the Temple, "My soul magnifies the Lord, for He has released me from the prison of my own making—from the bondage of self-seeking promotion, from needing to dominate, and from the deceptive allure of wealth. My spirit rejoices in God my Savior."

Is the Spirit nudging you to sing with Zacchaeus and Mary? Has God remembered His mercy for you? What needs to happen in your life so this can become your song?

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Jim Kersten, Media International

Straw in the Crib

by Niki Anderson

We used the crèche to teach the children the meaning of serving Christ through serving one another.

Look, Mom, a little lamb," exclaimed my son after unpacking the small figure from our Nativity set. "I hope I find Baby Jesus next."

"Mom, I found Joseph," announced my daughter as she unfolded the crumpled tissue encasing the figure of the humble man. Last Christmas I began a tradition, using the crèche to teach the children the meaning of serving Christ through serving one another.

"Let's wait until Christmas Eve to put Jesus in the manger," I suggested. "We'll pretend we're waiting for Jesus to be born," I explained.

"That's a good idea, Mom. Let's put Him in the manger right before we open the presents," said my daughter.

We took a handful of straw from the Nativity crib and placed it outside the crèche. "While we're waiting for Jesus' birth, we'll prepare the manger for Him by doing good deeds. Anyone who does a kind deed for someone in the family will be given the privilege of putting a piece of straw in Jesus' crib," I told the children.

The idea caught on with enthusiasm. I noticed the children helping each other without the usual grumbling.

Before supper one evening, I called Jodie to set the table. Moments later, my son was busy doing his sister's chore. "J. J., isn't it Jodie's turn to set the table?"



Fine Image

"Yeah, Mom, but I'm doing it so I can put straw in the crib."

One day when I asked J. J. to carry his backpack to his bedroom, Jodie quickly offered to take it for him. Afterward, she ran to the crèche and laid a piece of straw in the crib.

J. J. objected the day I called his sister to help him clean the toy room. "No, Mom, I'm picking up by myself so I can put straw in the crib."

One night Jodie voluntarily turned off the lights I left on in my writing room. Pleased with herself, she said, "Now I can put straw in Jesus' crib."

Preparing the bed of the Christ child brought lots of goodwill to our household. The children began to understand that their kindness to one another was an expression of their love for Jesus.

On Christmas Eve, we placed the figure of infant Jesus in a well-prepared manger. Though the crèche now lies concealed in its box on a shelf until next Christmas, the children are still serving one another. A few days ago, J. J. proudly told me that he put his sister's scooter in the shed. "I put straw in the crib, didn't I, Mom?" he asked.

Indeed, what we do for one another, we are doing for the Lord.

H

A Response to Waiting

E. DEE FREEBORN



E. Dee Freeborn teaches spiritual formation at Nazarene Theological Seminary.

PREVIOUSLY, I INVITED readers to share their experiences with waiting before God 21 minutes a day for 21 days. The following is one such letter from a woman in Washington:

* * * * *

Dear Dr. Freeborn:

Thank you for the recommendation that I spend 21 minutes in silence for 21 days. The idea came to me at just the right time.

In recent months, I have been scurrying around, trying to keep up with a demanding job, my husband and two teenagers, and volunteer duties as children's ministries director in my church. I had grown increasingly discouraged with leading children's ministries. It seems there are lots of kids, but few volunteers to teach them. Spending most of my discretionary time in phone calls, lesson preparation, and committee meetings appeared to be getting me nowhere. I didn't know what to do next.

Then came the *Herald of Holiness*, and your suggestion to "do nothing." It seemed radical. Even lazy. But the phrase "Don't just do something, stand there" caught my heart. I decided to try it.

I found it hard to take the 21 min-

utes. Frequently, those minutes came at the cost of making a phone call, cleaning house, or planning a lesson. And I have to admit that I was not successful in finding the time every day. Sometimes I took time on my lunch hour, sometimes early in the morning, sometimes late at night, but most days yielded up their 21 minutes. Once I had a little practice, the time passed quickly, and when the occasion allowed, my 21 minutes stretched longer. Several times, the "interruption" of silence changed my course, and I never returned to the pressing activity that had seemed so essential before.

Many of my phone calls were left unmade until what should have been too late. There were unfilled Sunday School classes for the fall quarter. This is August. It's not wise to recruit teachers a week before classes start. Instead of calling, I spent 21 minutes, 45 minutes, an hour in silence.

My soul rested. Some of that time I spent in conversation with the Lord. "Father, we need people to minister to our children." But I left the matter there. These were supposed to be 21 minutes of silence, not 21 minutes of fussing.

Still, the need continued, and many of my efforts to find volunteers failed. I grew fearful and one day told the Lord, "It seems like You have called me to service but are not faithful to support me in the call."

Most days, the Lord's word to me came slowly into focus. "You can't lead by talent or discipline. These things are valuable as tools in My hands. I will lead you."

And so I waited and rested. I took slow, steady steps to fulfill my min-

istry duties, but my pace seemed incompatible with the need.

In the middle of my 21 days, I received a call from a discouraged friend. God seemed far away, and life's pressures were more than my friend could handle. We talked about spending time in silence. It's odd that even though I had no "answers" for the moment, both of us recognized the value of silence. We ended our conversation with hope.

On the 21st day, I knelt quietly by my bed. I had begun to focus on the character of God. "What is God like?" I asked myself.

Spontaneously, I found myself saying, "Lord, You are faithful."

The needs of our children's ministry are not all met. But the last two weeks have brought steady progress. Between a combination of regulars and substitutes, it looks like we will be staffed for children's Sunday School as the fall quarter begins next week.

Best of all, I feel more rested. There's less panic to my pace. I learned to trust less in my abilities and to leave time and place for the Lordship of Christ in my life. But of course the real challenge lies ahead. Will I make the discipline of silence

The "interruption" of silence changed my course, and I never returned.

an ongoing pattern of my life? I pray for the grace to make it so.

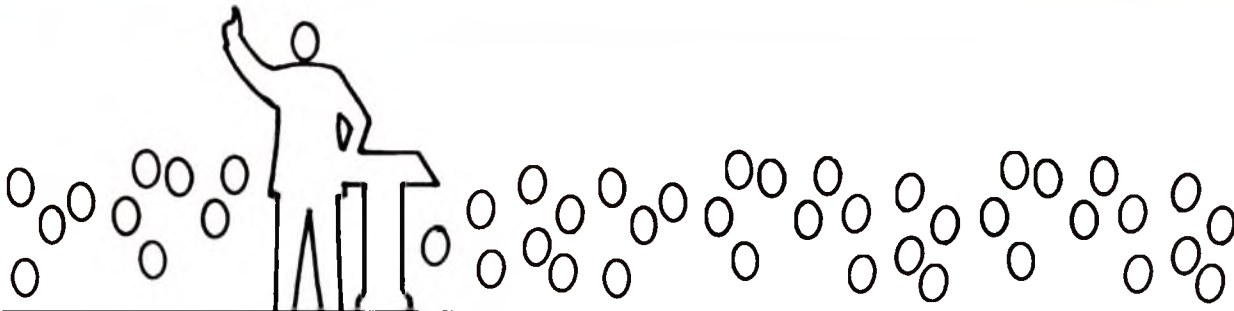
With gratitude,

* * * * *

This is just one of many wonderful responses I have received from persons completing the 21 days of waiting. As more of you complete this exercise, please continue writing to me to report your experience. I'll be waiting!

HH

EVANGELISTS' SLATES



ABBOTT, DAN: Myrtle Point, OR, Dec. 8-10

BOOMER, ERIC J.: Clyde, OH, Dec. 3-8

BOQUIST, DOUG AND DEBBIE: Bethany, OK (First), Dec. 1-3

BRISCOE, JOHN: Concerts in Oklahoma, Missouri, and Illinois. Dec. 3-10; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13

BROWN, ROGER N.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-13; Hernando, FL, 31; Lakeland, FL (Fort Meade), Jan. 16-21; Lakeland, FL (Central), 23-28; Plant City, FL (Wagoner Memorial), 30—Feb. 4

BURKHALTER, PAT AND DONNA: Post, TX, Dec. 1-10

CANFIELD, DAVE—EVANGELISTIC MINISTRIES: Irvine, KY (Waco), Dec. 3-6

COVINGTON, NATHAN: Oakes, ND, Dec. 6-10; Albertville, AL (First), Jan. 10-14; Shreveport, LA (First), 17-21

DALE, TOM: Payette, ID, Dec. 17 A; Boise, ID (Five Mile), 17 P; Coolidge, AZ (Valley Community), 31

DIEHL, ROBBIE AND DEBORAH: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-13; West Palm Beach, FL, Jan. 18-28*

FADER, WES AND MARY: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-13; Grand Junction, CO (First), 16-20; Tipp City, OH, Jan. 6-10; Park Hills, KY (Covington First), Indoor Camp, 16-21; West Memphis, AR, 27-31

HANCOCK, TIM: Garden City, KS, Dec. 3-6

HILL, BEN E.: Northwestern Illinois District Pulpit Supply, Dec. 1-31

JUNEMAN, JOHN AND TRINA: Albuquerque, NM, Nazarene Bible College, Dec. 4-5 and 11-12 and 18-19; Nashville, TN, Jan. 3-7; Albuquerque, NM, 8-9 and 15; Caldwell, ID (Canyon Hill), 17-21; Albuquerque, NM, Nazarene Bible College, 22-23 and 29; Coal Valley, IL, Quad City Zone Revival, 30—Feb. 4

KEENA, EARL E.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-14

LAXSON, WALLY AND GINGER: Joplin, MO (First), Dec. 6-10; Apache Junction, AZ (East Valley), 13-17

LECKRONE, LARRY AND TAMLA: St. Croix Falls, WI (Calvary), Dec. 11-13; Monroeville, IN, 13 P

LEE, BRAD AND LORI: Collinsville, IL (First), Dec. 3 A; Granite City, IL (First), 3 P; Springfield, IL (First), 6; Decatur, IL, 7*; Freeport, IL, 9-10; Bethalto, IL, 16-17; Peoria, IL (Golden Acres), 17; Bedford, IN (Davis Memorial), Jan. 6-9; Canton, IL (Maples Mill), 14-17; Huntington, IN, 26-28

LEIDY, ARNOLD: El Paso, TX (Montwood), Dec. 10 A; Terrell, TX, Jan. 10; Florien, LA (Cenchrea), 11; Fort Oglethorpe, GA (Battlefield Parkway), 14 P; Bloomingdale, GA, 19; Kingsland, GA (Kings Bay), 21 A; Jacksonville, FL (North), 21 P; Merritt Island, FL (Community), 25; Live Oak, FL, 28 A; White Springs, FL (Suwanee River), 28 P

LEWIS, JOHN—WHITE DOVE MINISTRIES: Ponca City, OK (First), Dec. 3 A; Blackwell, OK (First), 3 P; Greenville, TX (Peniel), 7 P; Greenville, TX (First), 17 A; Kenneth City, FL (St. Petersburg), 31 A; Lakeland, FL (Lake Gibson), 31 P; Orlando, FL (Colonial), Jan. 7; Clearwater, FL (First), 7 P; Orlando, FL (Union Park), 14; McComb, MS (First), 17; Vicksburg, MS

(First), 18; El Dorado, AR, 19; Tyler, TX (First), 21; Nobel, OK, 28-31

LOMAN, LANE: Crowley, LA (First), Dec. 3-6; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; Bedford, IN, Jan. 7-10*; Okemuchee, FL, 14-17; Huntington, WV (First), 21-24; Lakeland, FL 28-31*

McMAHON, MICK AND HELEN—VICTORY MINISTRIES: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; Port Arthur, TX (Grace), Jan. 5-7; Port Arthur, TX (First), 10-14; Texas City, TX, 19-21; Conroe, TX, 28

MANLEY, STEPHEN: Salem, OR (South), Dec. 6-10

MILLHUFF, CHUCK: Fremont, NE, Dec. 6-10; Vienna, VA, 31*; Jacksonville, FL (University Boulevard), Jan. 7-9; North Florida District Zone Indoor Camp, 10-14; Lincoln, NE (First), 28; Junction City, KS (First), 31—Feb. 4

MILLS, CARLTON—SECOND TOUCH EVANGELISM MINISTRIES: Fort Walton Beach, FL, Dec. 1-3; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-14; Charleston, WV (Elk River), Jan. 7-10; Charleston, WV (Calvary), 11-14; Apple Valley, CA, 17-21; Bonifay, FL, 24-28

MONCK, JIM: Corning, CA, Dec. 1-3; Barbados, Jan. 6-14

OYLER, CALVIN AND VIRGINIA: Laketon, IN, Dec. 5-10*

PALMER, MIKE G.: Cape Girardeau, MO, Dec. 3-6; Florissant, MO (St. Louis Trinity), 10; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; New Castle, IN (First), Zone Indoor Camp, Jan. 16-21; Burlington, IA (First), 28-31

PARK, TOM AND BECKY: Taylorville, IL (First), Dec. 3 P; Eureka, IL, 3 A; Watseka, IL (First), 10 A; Kankakee, IL (Eastridge), 10 P; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; Marshall, IL, 17 A; Champaign, IL (Westside), 17 P; Carl Junction, MO, 24 A; Topeka, KS (Oakland), 31 A; Topeka, KS (First), 31 P; Olathe, KS (Westside), Jan. 7 A; Lawrence, KS (First), 7 P; Chickasha, OK (First), 14-17; Lawton, OK (First), 19-21; Jonesboro, AR (Forest Home), 28-31

PERDUE, NELSON S.: Harrison, OH, Dec. 6-10; Midwest City, OK (First), Jan. 2-7; West Chester, PA, 10-14; Sanford, FL (First), 17-21; Tyler, TX (Lakeview), 24-28

PETTIT, ELAINE C.: Texarkana, TX (Cathedral Heights), Dec. 3-10; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; Corunna, MI, 14-17; Lansing, MI (First), Jan. 7-10; Vicksburg, MI, Prayer Seminar, 13-14; Conneaut, OK (Kellogsville), 21-24; Little Rock, AR (Rose Hill), 28-31

POWERS, E. CARL—PROCLAMATION MINISTRIES, INC.: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-13; Durant, OK (First), Jan. 12-16

ROSE, WAYNE: Globe, AZ, Dec. 5-10; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; Ridgefield, WA, Jan. 30—Feb. 4

RUNYAN, DAVID: Albania, Dec. 4-10.

SHERWOOD, SCOTT: Hastings, NE, Dec. 1-3; Lake Jackson, TX, Jan. 12-14; Oskaloosa, IA, Capital City Zone Youth Revival, 23-28; Chariton, IA, 31—Feb. 4

SMITH, MICKY G.: North Vernon, IN, Jan. 10-14; Orangeburg, SC (First), 21-24

SMITH, DUANE: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-13; Macon, GA (Trinity), 17-21; Lakeland, FL (Lake Gibson),

24-28; Jacksonville, FL (North), 31—Feb. 4

STRICKLAND, DICK: Baytown, TX (First), Dec. 6-10; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; Medway, OH (Bethel Community), 14-17; Homestead, FL, 14-17; Newport, OR, 21-24

STROUD, GLENDON D.: Pahokee, FL, Jan. 2-7

ULMET, BILL: Simpsonville, SC (Cornerstone), Dec. 3-6; Manteno, IL, 27-29

WELLS, LINARD: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-13

WOMACK, PAUL W.: Belton, MO, Jan. 14-18; Fulton, MO (Heartland), 21-24; Lebanon, MO, 24—Feb. 4

WRIGHT, E. GUY AND LIL: Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, Dec. 11-13; Brunswick, GA (Bethel), Jan. 5-14

YOUNG, TIM: Munster, IN (Fairmeadow Community), Dec. 3-6; Indianapolis, IN, Evangelist Gathering, 11-13; Lincoln, CA, Jan. 7-10; Davis, CA, 12-14; Vacaville, CA, 16-21; Creswell, OR, 28—Feb. 1

*Denotes Non-Nazarene Church

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. . . feeding a hungry child
. . . wrapping a blanket
around a hurricane victim
. . . giving hope to a
homeless family!
So what are you waiting for . . .



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Nazarene Compassionate Ministries
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Yes, Virgil, There Is a Savior

C. ELLEN WATTS



C. Ellen Watts is a freelance writer living in Nampa, Idaho.

Dear Editor:

I am 60 years old. Some of my retired friends tell me that Christmas is a crock of ancient Palestinian baloney, that while Jesus may well have been born in a cow stable, a God who can change lives does not exist. My old Christian daddy says, "If you see it in the Herald of Holiness, it's so." Please, sir, deliver me no guff; is there a Savior?

*Virgil O'Hankerin
In Sun City Somewhere*

VIRGIL, YOUR CRONIES are wrong. They have been brainwashed by the selfishness of a me-centered age. They only believe what they see on the evening news. They think that nothing exists save that which they've dreamed up on their own. Closed minds, Virgil, be they sheltered by hair or mere skin, tend to shrink. In this mixed-up world, such people are but monkeys in their intellect as compared with all God has planned for them, as measured by the minds of those who are quick to seek Truth.

Yes, Virgil, there is a Savior named Jesus. Because He lives, we can know the certainty of peace and joy and unconditional love and can live productive lives filled with goodness and purpose and beauty. Minus a Savior, our world would be a sorry place in which to live. Worse even than having no Virgils. There would be no one in whom to have faith, no songs in the night, no reason to pray, no hope. The Christmas season might still be filled with trees and tinsel, but there would be no sense of wonder or of awe. The Light of the World would be extinguished.

Not believe in the Savior! You might as well not believe in the Internet. You might hire private detectives to infiltrate churches and shadow all those who call themselves Christians, but even if you never once caught a single glimpse of the Savior, what would that prove? Nobody sees our Savior in a body these days, but that is no sign there is no Savior. His presence in a life is the most real thing in the world, and that is something neither you nor I can see. Did you ever see your voice float over a thousand miles as you talked with a friend on your phone? Of course not, but that's no proof that your voice was not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders God has wrought in this world and through the lives of committed men and women.

You tear apart a car's motor and see what makes a knocking sound, but there is a mystery covering spiritual matters that not the best mechanic, nor even the combined efforts of all the most learned psychologists, psychiatrists, and false teachers who ever lived, can rip asunder. Only through childlike faith in the only begotten Son of God, who came to us as a Babe in a manger, can we see beyond the veil that was torn in two when He died on the Cross so that you, Virgil, and I might glimpse the awesome miracle of His resurrection and one day be recipient to all the glory He has stored in heaven for us. Ah, Virgil, in all the world there is nothing else that is real and abiding.

No Savior? Thank God! He lives, and He lives forever. A billion years from now, Virgil, yes, ten thousand times ten trillion years from now, though this world pass away, He will reign forever and continue to make human hearts glad.*

**Not believe in the Savior!
You might as well not
believe in the Internet.**

A note to readers: Since it is highly unlikely that either the Virgil you know or his cronies subscribe to the Herald, why not pass this issue along or give a gift subscription for Christmas?

Better yet, tell them the Good News yourself.

*Thanks to Francis P. Church and his "most famous editorial ever written" in response to a question asked in 1897 by a little girl named Virginia.

January through December 1995

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Chaplain to South Africa



Frans Hendrik Koekemoer has been appointed as the first Nazarene chaplain to the South Africa Police (SAP). In the position, he also will serve as a liaison between the SAP and the Church of the Nazarene.

The SAP began appointing chaplains in 1952, but the program has been dominated by ministers from Reformed churches, according to Koekemoer.

"Having served in the SAP previously for 12 years, I had tried since 1988 to get an open door for the appointment of a Nazarene minister as chaplain," said Koekemoer. "Success only came in 1994 with my own appointment."

Koekemoer currently serves as chaplain to Central Johannesburg.

20 Years in Charleston



Earlier this year, **Charles and Lou Ann Ellis** (*above*) celebrated their 20th year in the pastorate of Charleston, W.Va., Calvary Church. A special day of celebration ended a year of special recognition of the achievement in ministry and service.

Among the symbols of appreciation was a love gift of \$3,500 to help fund a 10-day trip to the Holy Land. The Ellises are alumni of ONU and NTS.

Teacher on Call in P.R.



Myrna Ortiz, Sunday School superintendent at Río Piedras, Puerto Rico, Calvary Church, was recently honored for outstanding service. Recognition was given by Regional Director John Smee (*far left*) and General Superintendent James H. Diehl.

While on vacation, Ortiz learned

that there was no substitute teacher to cover her primary class. She was attending a family reunion.

Ortiz left her family early Sunday morning to make the two-hour drive back to Río Piedras. After the services, she returned to her family to finish vacation.



The 1995 New England District ordinand class (*l. to r.*): District Superintendent Kenneth Mills, Rev. G. Robert Wells, Rev. Michael and Mary Ann Rolan, Rev. Paul and Elaine Prince, Rev. Raymond and Susan Grezel, Rev. Matthew and Margaret Kettler, Rev. Thomas and Kristen Long, Rev. John and Gail Cocio, Rev. Lisa Morrison, Rev. Donald and Rachel Silva, Rev. Telford Drigo, and General Superintendent William J. Prince.



The 1995 Chicago Central District ordinand class (*l. to r., front*): General Superintendent William J. Prince, Rev. and Mrs. Rickey Burgard, Rev. and Mrs. Kenneth Osborn, and District Superintendent E. Keith Bottles; (*back*) Rev. and Mrs. Richard Wright and Rev. and Mrs. Craig S. Keen.

Students Behind Walls



Students from the **Oklahoma State University Nazarene Student Center** (above) joined forces with Southern Nazarene University students for an evangelistic outreach to Joseph Harp Correctional Facility, Lexington, Okla. Students met inmates on the prison yard, passing out tracts and inviting people to the evening chapel service.

The inmates responded with a standing-room-only crowd. Ten persons responded to the invitation to accept Christ.

The OSU Nazarene Student Center holds monthly services at the facility. They also maintain a pen pal program to inmates and purchase Christmas gifts for inmates' children.

Last year, SNU students began supporting the prison ministry. More than 100 students from OSU and SNU have participated in the joint project.

Growth Minister Appointed



Sergio Franco has been appointed facilitator of growth ministries on the Los Angeles District, according to District Superintendent Roger Bowman. The position is an expansion of the former Hispanic ministries assignment recently vacated by Carlos Sol after eight years of service.

Franco recently served for five years as senior pastor of Templo Cristiano De Tuxtla on the Mexico South District. During that time, the church led the region by receiving 327 new members, according to Bowman. Franco is the author of several books and holds the Ph.D. degree.

Nazarene on State Board



Nazarene Deacon **C. Joe Saunders** was recently appointed to a three-year term on the Ohio Counselor and Social Workers Board by Governor George Voinovich. He will

serve on the Counseling Professional Standards Committee of the board, which regulates the practice of counseling statewide.

Saunders is administrative consultant to the Ohio Counseling Association. He teaches part time at Ohio University and has operated a private practice since 1982. He also serves as worship leader at **Logan, Ohio, Church of the Nazarene**.

Lanman Library Dedicated

The Walter E. Lanman Library was recently dedicated at Pinelaw Park on the Northwest District. The library will be a place for pastors to study while on retreat at the district center.

The library includes Lanman's books, desk, and several personal mementos. Several members of Lanman's family (right) were on hand for the dedication.



Lanman served as superintendent of the Northwest District for 11 years. He died at the age of 66 in 1990.



The 1995 Los Angeles District ordinand class (l. to r.): District Superintendent Roger E. Bowman, Rev. Ron and Rhonda Johnson, Rev. Daniel and Elizabeth Elliott, Rev. Charles and Lenora Grooms, Rev. Monique St. Aimie, Rev. Charles and Lily Lin, Rev. James and Julie Morwood, Rev. Augustine and Esther Koh, and General Superintendent James H. Diehl.



The 1995 Northwestern Ohio District ordinand class (l. to r.): General Superintendent and Mrs. William J. Prince, Rev. and Mrs. Randall J. Kiger, Rev. and Mrs. Darrell L. Dunigan, District Superintendent and Mrs. J. E. Shankel.

? THE QUESTION BOX

CONDUCTED BY WESLEY D. TRACY, *Editor*

Q. A loved one of mine took his own life. Since suicide is a sin, does this mean that he is eternally lost?

A. In the end, only God can answer your question. Every suicide is tragic, and every case has its own unique details. Theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "Since suicide is an act of solitude, the ultimate decisive motives almost always remain hidden" (*Ethics*, 170). Even when we think the reason is obvious, the real reason may still be concealed.

Persons exercise their God-given freedom to end their lives for various reasons. What Bonhoeffer calls *purely personal* reasons include wounded honor, lost love, financial ruin, and gambling debts. Another example is the case of a man who, when the National Lottery recently started up in England, bought a ticket with the same numbers every day for the first 19 days. On the 20th day, he forgot to buy his ticket. His numbers came in, and he killed himself in grief.

Bonhoeffer sees a difference between that kind of suicide and when a person who has an incurable disease takes his own life to save his family from the financial and psychological ruin that his care would bring, or one in which a prisoner commits suicide because he

fears that under torture he will betray his country.

But whatever the circumstances, "Suicide is a man's [person's] attempt to give a final human meaning to a life which has become humanly meaningless" (*Ethics*, 167).

One of the reasons that the Christian faith regards suicide as wrong is because it has the taint of self-justification to it. Often the suicide victim is "offering" his life as a sort of sacrifice for his failures, mistakes, and sins. That is an effort to save oneself. Bonhoeffer calls it the "expiation for a life that has failed" (*Ethics*, 167). He adds, "A man who takes his own life incurs guilt solely towards God, the . . . Master of his life. It is because there is a living God that suicide is wrongful as a sin of lack of faith" (168).

When the cares, failures, tragedies, and griefs of life assail a person, anyone may very well begin to doubt that life has meaning. At that time of temptation, only the grace of God that continues to enable one to live in the consciousness of His redemptive love sustains us.

The Stoics and Epicureans thought suicide a noble exit from life. Hinduism and Buddhism tolerate suicide as a cog in the wheel of Karma and reincarnation (*Beacon Dictionary of Theology*, 505). For a time, the Early Church fathers deemed suicide honorable in certain situations. For example, if an invading

army was going to rape captive women, suicide was a "chaste" response.

Our *Manual* contains no specific teaching on suicide, nor does the Bible have a specific rule against suicide. However, "Thou shalt not kill" surely includes self-murder. The Bible records six suicides, each one quite different from the others. The only New Testament suicide was Judas. The Old Testament records the self-inflicted deaths of King Saul and his armor bearer, Zimri, Ahithophel, and some label Samson's death as suicide.

So what about the eternal destiny of the person who takes his own life? Bonhoeffer raises a question that is particularly interesting if the victim was a believer: "But who would venture to say that God's grace and mercy cannot embrace and sustain even a man's failure to resist this hardest of all temptations?" (172).

The *Beacon Dictionary of Theology* offers this counsel: "Judgment upon the suicide must be left entirely with God. He alone sees the motivation and intentions. He alone sees the degree of sanity possessed at the time of the action, therefore the moral responsibility" (505).

Who can know the terror, the loneliness, the despair of a person who takes his or her own life? Only God. One thing you do know about your loved one who took his own life—that is that he is in the hands of a God who loved him enough to die for him.



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THE EROSION OF HETEROSEXUALITY

Psychiatry Falters, America Sleeps

by Charles W. Socarides

A significant portion of society holds the belief that homosexuality is a normal form of sexual behavior different from, but equal to, that of heterosexuality. Many religious leaders, public officials, educators, social and mental health agencies—including those at the highest level of government, departments of psychiatry and psychology, and mental health clinics—have been taken in by a widespread sexual egalitarianism and by accusations of being undemocratic or prejudiced if they do not accept certain assertions that are thrust upon them, as if they were deprived of all intellectual capacity to judge and reason.

This revolutionary change in our sexual mores and customs has been ushered in by a single act of considerable consequence: the removal of homosexuality from the category of aberrancy by the American Psychiatric Association in 1973. It is, furthermore, a fateful consequence of our disregard for established psychoanalytic knowledge of human sexual behavior.

This act was naively perceived by many psychiatrists as the “simple” elimination of a scientific diagnosis in order to correct injus-

tics. In reality, it created injustices for the homosexual and his family, as it belied the truth and prevented the homosexual from seeking and receiving help. At the

stitution—alongside heterosexuality as a prevailing norm of behavior. The motivating force behind this movement was the wish to protect the homosexual against injustices and persecution. This could have been legitimately effected by the de-



Superstock

social, group, and community level, it proved to be the opening phase of a two-phase sexual radicalization, the second phase being the raising of homosexuality to the level of an alternative lifestyle—an acceptable psychosexual in-

mand for equal rights for the homosexual, a demand arising from the humanitarian philosophy so deeply embedded in our humanistic science. Instead, the false step of removing homosexuality from our manual was substituted. This amounted to a full approval of homosexuality

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and an encouragement to aberrancy by those who should have known better, both in the scientific sense and in the sense of the social consequences of such removal. To many American psychiatrists, this action remains a chilling reminder that if scientific principles are not fought for, they can be lost—a disillusioning warning that unless we make no exceptions to science, we are subject to the snares of political factionalism and to the propagation of untruths to an unsuspecting and uninformed public, to the rest of the medical profession, and to the behavioral sciences.

The devastating *clinical* fallout from this decision was yet to follow. Those who would prefer to retain homosexuality as a valid diagnosis have been essentially silenced in lectures, meetings, and publications; a silencing that originates both within our association and from other sources as well. Political parties and religious leaders have been utilized to reinforce this silence. The press has been influenced in addition to the electronic media. Television and movies promote homosexuality as an alternative lifestyle and censor movies that might show homosexuality as a disorder. Homosexual sex education has entered our schools and colleges. Pro-gay activists—homosexual or otherwise—portray their way of life as normal and as “American as apple pie,” while intimidating those with different views. In essence, this movement has accomplished what every other society, with rare exceptions, would have trembled to tamper with: a revision of the basic code and concept of life and biology, that men and women normally mate with those of the opposite sex and not with each other.

The psychiatric nonsense and social recklessness bring with it many individual tragedies, as men and women who no longer appreciate their own appropriate sexual roles create confusion in the very young for generations to come. Gender-

identity disturbance is bound to increase, and more true homosexual deviations result as parents distort the maleness or femaleness of their infants and children.

Currently, homosexuals who are in therapy have developed tremendous resistance, which retards their progress, while others are dissuaded even from seeking appropriate help. Other medical specialists, such as pediatricians and internists, are baffled by psychiatry’s folly. Residents in psychiatry have very little interest in going



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into an area of psychiatric research where they will be attacked, belittled, demeaned, and where their knowledge of sexual development will cease to grow. Above all, however, it is the individual homosexual wishing to change who suffers the most.

Young men and women with relatively minor sexual fears are led with equanimity by some psychiatrists and nonmedical counselors into a self-despising pattern and lifestyle. Adolescents, nearly all of whom experience some degree of uncertainty as to sexual identity, are discouraged from assuming that one form of gender

identity is preferable to another. Those persons who already have a homosexual problem are discouraged from finding their way out of self-destructive fantasy—discouraged from learning to accept themselves as male or female, discouraged from following those often painful but necessary courses that allow people to function as reasonable and participating individuals in a cooperating society.

After all, homosexuality cannot create a society or keep one going for very long. It operates against the cohesive elements of society. The sexes are driven in opposite directions, and no

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society can long endure when either the child is neglected or the sexes war with each other.

Those who reinforce the disintegrating elements in our society will get no thanks from future generations.

Individuals who adamantly insist that homosexuality is an alternative lifestyle have not been stopped by appeals to tradition, enlightened self-interest, or even the established findings of psychoanalysis. Threats about what would happen to society do not have much effect—no one considers himself society’s guardian. Average citizens say they don’t quite know what these social interests are, and after all, aren’t personal decisions about sex a private mat-

ter? The answer to that question, contrary to popular opinion, is no.

Psychoanalysis reveals that sexual behavior is not an arbitrary set of rules set down by no-one-knows-who, for purposes that no one understands. Our sexual patterns are a product of our biological past, a result of humanity's collective experience in its long biological and social development. They make possible the cooperative coexistence of human beings with one another. At the individual level, these patterns create a balance between the demands of sexual instinct and the external realities surrounding each of us. Not all cultures survive—the majority have not—and anthropologists tell us that serious flaws in sexual codes and institutions have undoubtedly played a significant role in many a culture's demise. When masses of people think similarly about long-standing customs, their collective behavior will, in the last analysis, have a profound impact on the whole of society.

Scientists, psychologists, psychiatrists, political leaders, public officials, and others with vested interests ransack literature for bits of fact and theory that can be pieced together into a prohomosexual or bisexual concept of nature, humanity, and society. Some individuals say that homosexuals are healthy, society is sick, and that science should cure society. Others raise false or outdated scientific issues to do battle with traditional values.

Many of our values could use some change, but polemical pseudoscience and genetics without corroboration is not the way. No society has accepted preferential homosexuality. Nowhere is homosexuality, or so-called bisexuality, a desired end in itself. Nowhere do parents say, "It's all the same to me if my child is heterosexual or homosexual." Nowhere are homosexuals more than a small minority at the present time. Nowhere does homosexuality per-

se place one in an enviable position.

Some prohomosexual proponents within the behavioral sciences state that mental illness is simply a product of social definition, and that sexual behavior considered normal in one society may be deviant in another. Examination of the facts shows that this is not true of all illness and all behavior. Some behaviors are universally deviant and every society considers them destructive. Incest, rape, and psychopathic (apparently unmotivated) violence are considered taboo in all societies. So is predominant or exclusive homo-



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sexuality or even bisexuality. While homosexuals can and should be protected by all the laws of society, homosexuality should not be encouraged.

The forces allied against heterosexuality are formidable and unrelenting. Charges of being "undemocratic," "cruel and inhuman," or "irresponsible, homophobic, and prejudiced," are leveled at those who would question the normality of homosexuality. These accusations are then reinforced by the media and motion pictures, and render the ordinary citizen who disapproves of such practices (as well as faint-hearted members of the psychiatric and psychological professions) mute before their onslaught.

The counteraction for such

forces is the knowledge that heterosexuality has self-evident, adaptive value. The human person is not only a sexual animal but also a care-bonding, group-bonding, and child-rearing animal. The male-female design is taught to the child from birth and culturally ingrained through the marital order. The male-female design is thus perpetually maintained, and it is only overwhelming fear or false pride and misdirected individual enterprise that can disturb or divert it.

All of this is enough to "make the angels weep." I borrow the phrase from one of William Shakespeare's bitter comedies, *Measure for Measure*. One of my patients brought the quote to my

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attention some time ago, as he himself mused about his condition. (He is a homosexual and a distinguished scholar, but he is learning about the dynamic forces behind his homosexuality and how to gain control of them.) Here's the entire quote:

*But man, proud man,
Dress'd in a little brief authority,
Most ignorant of what he's most
assur'd,
His glassy essence, like an angry
ape,
Plays such fantastic tricks be-
fore high heaven
As make the angels weep.*

Charles W. Socarides, M.D., is clinical professor of psychiatry at Albert Einstein College of Medicine/Montefiore Medical Center in New York. He is president of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality. This article first appeared in the Washington Times.

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GUILTY—WITH AN EXPLANATION

by John W. Dally, *pastor*
Faith Church of the Nazarene
Burbank, California

We were late. My son's soccer game started at 8 A.M. We had 10 minutes to get there, and the playing field was across town. As we arrived, we were faced with the common problem of finding parking. I went by a back parking lot where I saw a number of cars. "Could there be room for one more at the end?" I thought. I pulled in, and sure enough, way at the end,

there was just enough room for our tiny station wagon. We pulled in, jumped out, and ran across the field, arriving just in time.

After the game was over, we slowly strolled back to the car. As I looked up, I could see something on the windshield. It was a parking ticket. I looked it over and read that I was cited for two infractions. The first was parking in a no parking zone. I looked around, and sure enough, at the end of the parking lot

was a sign prohibiting parking on my side of the lot. The second infraction was for parking in a red zone. I walked around to the front of the car, and lo and behold, there was enough red sticking out from the car I'd parked next to to extend halfway under my car. I was busted. The worst part of the ticket was the fine. As I added them up, they came to \$40! Then and there, I decided to see if I could get it reduced. I would go to traffic court.

Traffic court was a real experience. As I stood outside at 6 A.M., people began to gather. They talked about why they were there. Some had parking fines like mine; others had moving violations, but the most interesting thing was the attitudes of the people. One particularly bitter girl was convinced the "cops" gave out tickets just to pay for their pensions. She told us all that if the police had their way, they would be the only ones with guns so they could harass poor, innocent people like herself.

As the conversations continued, she turned to me and asked why I was there. I told her about the parking ticket and how I hoped to get it reduced if not forgiven. "Were you parked illegally?" she asked. "Yes, I guess I was." "Then why are you here? You were wrong, weren't you? Just pay the fine and forget it. You won't find any mercy here."

Finally the doors opened, and we went in to our assigned courtrooms. The judge gave instructions, explaining that if we were found guilty, we might have to pay even more than the ticket called for. I began to wonder if I had made a big mistake.

Case after case went by. Traffic school, fines, and suspended licenses seemed to be the order of the day. Finally, my name was called. I got up, walked down the aisle, and stopped in front of the bench. I had never stood before a judge before, and I was frightened. The judge asked, "How do you plead?" "Guilty with an explanation," I replied. "What's your explanation?" he replied. "To tell you the truth, Your Honor, when I entered the lot, there were so many cars I didn't notice the signs, and the curb was obscured by the car." The judge looked at the day and time of the ticket. "A Saturday, at 8 A.M.? What were you doing there?" "I was taking my son to his soccer game." "That's chicken," said the judge. "I waive the fine. Keep a better lookout for those curbs." With a pounding of his gavel, I turned away, free of any penalties.

As I walked up the aisle, I looked across the courtroom to see the reaction of the girl who told me I was wasting my time. Her mouth was hanging open with a look of astonishment on her face. As I was leaving the courtroom, I recalled a statement of Jesus' I had read so many times. "Your sins are forgiven. Go and sin no more."

I learned an important lesson that day about forgiveness. First, you cannot receive forgiveness unless you ask. Had I not gone to stand before the judge, I would have paid \$40 not knowing that forgiveness was available. How many times do we fail to receive the forgiveness that God has for us because we do not believe that He will forgive us?

Second, I learned that to be forgiven, we must confess. This was something I had preached and taught, but it became real to me when I stood before that

judge. It was senseless to lie about it. I was parked illegally. After I confessed my guilt, the judge was then free to forgive. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (RSV).

Finally, I learned something about forgiving. No one stood up and offered to pay my fine. No one stepped in and said, "I'll pay that." If that had happened, there would have been no forgiveness, and the fine would have stood. This is the misunderstanding we often have concerning the work of Jesus Christ. If He died to pay our penalty, then there was no forgiveness, and God was only paid off. But we can see from the Old Testament that the Lamb that represented Jesus

was not there to be punished for the nation, it was a sacrificial offering. It was a covenant act, as was the sacrifice when Abraham was brought into covenant relationship with God. We find real forgiveness when we come to God in confession because Jesus, by His sacrificial gift, brought us into a new covenant where forgiveness flows like the waters of the Mississippi.

I never knew on that day when I was running late for soccer that I was about to learn a lesson with an eternal application. It is a lesson I will share with others when they ask me how God can forgive us when we are guilty of transgressing His law. I wonder whatever became of that girl who was so bitter. Did she ever find peace? As long as she is convinced that there is no mercy, she will never find it. As for me, I live . . . forgiven.

JUST PAY THE FINE
AND FORGET IT. YOU
WON'T FIND ANY
MERCY HERE."

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Correction

The photo caption of the Kentucky District ordinand class in the October issue should have included identification of Rev. Don and Delana Garrett and Rev. Jerry and Larra Clonch.

We regret the error.



Education Commissioner Jerry Lambert (far left) poses with members of the Nazarene Student Leadership Conference during their meeting earlier this year.



Nazarene Bible College dedicated the Strickland Chapel/Conference Center during a special service Sept. 17. The building, which includes six classrooms, seats 700 persons.

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Clinton Seeks Evangelical Support

In his first meeting at the White House since becoming president of the National Association of Evangelicals, Don Argue told U.S. President Bill Clinton that Evangelicals are seeking a nonpartisan voice to speak to issues of biblical importance. Argue was invited to pray and deliver opening remarks at a breakfast meeting for religious leaders hosted by the president and vice president.



President Bill Clinton (left) engages NAE President Don Argue in dialogue about biblical issues.

While seated at the president's table, Argue had several opportunities to en-

gage Clinton in direct dialogue.

"I shared without compromise NAE's concern over the Clinton administration's positions on homosexuality and abortion," said Argue. "I sensed the president's genuine interest in the agenda of the Evangelical community.

"I see this meeting as a bridge to future dialogue. We have no delusions, however. The Evangelical vote is being sought for the coming election."

Wesleyan Church Responds to "Men Only" Policy

The Task Force on Women in Ministry of The Wesleyan Church has scheduled a meeting for women ministers preceding the "National Clergy Conference" sponsored by Promise Keepers Feb. 13-15, 1996. The Atlanta, Ga., meeting was prompted by the revelation that Promise Keepers was openly discouraging female clergy from registering for the national conference.

"At this point, Promise Keepers is aware that they may not legally exclude female clergy members," said the task force in a letter to Wesleyan women in ministry. "However, it is questionable

what kind of impact a few women would have on a gathering expected to include 70,000 clergymen. Thus, in the interest of good stewardship we will offer Wesleyan clergywomen who make the trip to Atlanta for the preconference session the chance to participate in an additional meeting designed for prayer and encouragement in ministry."

All Wesleyan clergy attending the Atlanta conference are gathering a day early to meet with their general superintendents. Female ministers will hold additional meetings as a one-day retreat prior to the main conference.

Retired Bishop Charged with Heresy

The second heresy trial of a bishop in the history of the Episcopal Church USA will begin next month when Walter Righter faces charges of ordaining a noncelebrate homosexual. The retired assistant bishop in the Diocese of Newark, N.J., was accused by 10 bishops of violating church doctrine when he ordained Barry Stopfel in 1990.

The case will be heard by a nine-member Court for the Trial of a Bishop in Chicago Jan. 3-5, 1996.

"He acted contrary to the church's teaching, and by so doing violated his

ordination vows," said Bishop Terence Kelshaw in a column quoted by the Episcopal News Service. "The [complaint] is not about homosexuality. Neither is it about rights. It is about Episcopal anarchy."

The heresy charge prompted Rector Tracy Lind of Paterson, N.J., to publicly announce her lesbianism.

"I decided that I cannot allow Bishop Righter or my friend Barry Stopfel to stand alone," said Lind. "I am coming out because the gospel demands it for the sake of justice."



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These openings result from increased student enrollment and anticipated faculty retirements. Candidates with terminal degrees (completed or nearly completed) in any of these areas should send a letter describing their interest in the college and the position along with a current curriculum vitae to:

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God Made Visible

JOHN C. BOWLING



John C. Bowling is president of Olivet Nazarene University.

THERE ARE TWO APPROACHES to the Christmas story in the Gospels. Matthew and Luke give us the human particulars of this divine drama. From them we learn of a child bride, a young stepfather, an unexpected pregnancy.

These Gospels tell of the trip to Bethlehem, the crowded inn, the birth in a manger, the shepherds, the song of the angels, the star, the visiting magi, and the fury of Herod.

But John, writing several years after Matthew and Luke, focuses not so much on the *what* of what happened, but the *why* of what happened.

In the Christmas story from the Fourth Gospel, one finds neither shepherds nor angels, for John is writing to an audience who, by and large, know the story; they have read or heard the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. There is no need to retell that story; so he writes from a different viewpoint. In doing so, he begins by saying, "In the beginning was the Word [Jesus Christ], and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (1:1).*

This first sentence of the Christmas story, according to John, intentionally echoes the first chapter of the Book of Genesis, which declares, "In the beginning God created . . ." (v. 1).

"The earth was formless and empty," nonexistent—just "darkness" (v. 2). Into that void came the voice (the spoken word) of God saying, "Let there be light" (v. 3). In that moment, God wrought physical light.

John's Christmas story tells of God speaking once more, this time not just in a spoken word, but in a living Word, a flesh-and-blood Word. And this "Word" once more brings light to the darkness. John 1:9 declares: "The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world."

Into our own night comes the light:

Into our personal night,
our spiritual night,
our moral night,
night of depression,
night of nondirection—
into *our* darkened world comes
THE LIGHT!

John uses wonderfully symbolic language to speak of these wonders beyond expression. Jesus is the Word; "In him was life, and that life was the light of men" (v. 4); and that light "was coming into the world" (v. 9).

Here we have the story of an invisible God becoming visible, of the unseen, seen. "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth" (v. 14).

God spoke a Word—a living, breathing, human Word, into the darkness of humanity. And that Word (Jesus himself) pushed back the night. This Christmas carol is one of illumination.

Helen Keller lived her entire life in

a darkness few would ever know. She could not see; she could not hear. Then Anne Sullivan began her labor of love and taught Helen to speak with her hands. Helen Keller called it "the birth of her soul."

Until then, Helen had never heard the name of Jesus, much less His story. And yet, when Anne Sullivan was able to lovingly communicate to her deaf and blind friend, Helen said of Jesus: "I always knew that He was there, I just didn't know His name." Her darkness had given way to the Light.

John 1:18 says, "No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known," and 1 John 4:12 declares, "No one has ever seen God; but if we love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us."

These two verses begin with the same seven words, "No one has ever seen God, but . . ." The Gospel says that God was invisible, but Jesus revealed Him, making the invisible visible. The First Epistle of John says that this miracle of making God visible can continue. How? "No one has ever seen God, but if *we* love each other, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us" (4:12, emphasis mine).

God spoke a living, breathing, human word into the darkness of humanity.

Prayer: *O God, our compassionate Creator, in the darkness we see the light and find in it comfort and confidence and cause for celebration, for the darkness cannot overcome it. May we rejoice to nourish this light in ourselves, in other people, and in the world for the sake of Him in whom it was born and shines forever, even Jesus Christ, the Word. Amen.*

*All Scripture quotations are from the *New International Version* of the Bible.

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Notes from an editor's journal

by Mark Graham, Managing Editor

On Dreams and Their Value

Ah, the halcyon days of our youth. We could run forever and not grow weary. We could eat 10,000 calories a day and burn them off by that evening. We could stay up all night and be renewed with a couple hours of sleep.

As kids, we had great visions of what we would do with our lives. We would be accomplished doctors, lawyers, engineers, firemen, writers, artists, entertainers, teachers, or farmers. We would find a cure for cancer or, like Perry Mason, wring confessions out of sweaty culprits in a courtroom.

We would be successful homemakers, husbands, wives, and fathers. Our brains played videos of what was to be. We could see us and our doting spouses in La-Z-Boys around a blazing fireplace, chatting with our loving kids, sipping eggnog while bouncing towheaded grandchildren on our knees.

Our homes would be two-story Cape Cods with white picket fences (front and back). Our grass would be emeralds, flecked with pastel roses and saffron daffodils. Neighbors would be there for us whenever we needed them—ready to lend a hand, loan a tool, or take care of our kids on a moment's notice.

Our churches would be beautiful buildings with 30-foot windows and steeples that brushed the clouds. Our pastors would be perfect—sages who could answer every question and solve every riddle (and could do it in a 12-minute sermon). Sunday School teachers would smile with delight as we brought our perfectly behaved children to their classes. We would know everybody, and everybody would know us. We could share our deepest concerns and would be completely confident that they would never go beyond that conversation until our friends lifted our needs to the Lord in prayer. We would attend the same churches as our children and grandchildren and would be there to relish their glorious pageants at Christmas and Easter.

Our health would never fade, our confi-

dence in humanity would never fail, our marriage would be solid as a rock, our kids would never rebel, our church would never let us down, our love for God would see us through the few and far between crises.

Then, one day we look around and realize that our mental pictures never quite developed the way we imagined they would. Some of our dreams did pan out, but many didn't. Perhaps our marriages fell apart, or our kids aren't quite the charmers we thought they'd be.

Our homes are apartments rather than showplaces, and our churches and pastors aren't quite perfect.

Instead of doctors or lawyers, we're clerks in offices. Instead of sitting around the table with loved

ones at Thanksgiving, we're grabbing chili-cheesedogs at the Quik-Mart.

Our faith in God is still there, but our faith in humanity isn't what it once was. We have been ripped off, cut off, torn down, slapped around, put down, and (at times) knocked to the ground.

Dreams are wonderful things. Pity the person who no longer has them. But we err when we put too much stock in them and measure our worth by them. God doesn't expect us to find our value in fancy homes, beautiful churches, or cultured kids. He expects us to find rest for our souls in Him. That means that our dreams must be tempered by the reality that He has said He will never leave us nor forsake us—even when our sweet dreams sour.

I heard a lady tell some kids, "In case you haven't learned it yet, life isn't fair." But it doesn't have to be for us to have peace with ourselves and with others. Life only has to be centered in our Father.

We are not failures because we haven't realized our hopes and dreams. We are failures only if we miss being friends of Christ.

Sometimes our mental pictures don't develop quite the way we expected.

Quake Affects Nazarenes

At least 120 Nazarenes are homeless in the wake of a massive earthquake affecting 13 states in central and western Mexico Oct. 9, according to Jorge Cordova, national Compassionate Ministries coordinator.

The earthquake, measuring 7.6 on the Richter scale, is blamed for at least 39 deaths, more than 1,000 injuries, and massive property damage. The tremor's epicenter was located near the Pacific Coast town of Manzanillo, 250 miles west of Mexico City.

"The roads, bridges, and houses are destroyed," said Manual Zavala, pastor of the Melaque Church. "One thing that really hurt my heart was to see the damage to the house of one of our sisters

who had just been converted to the Lord. Her house was completely destroyed. Everything was in the midst of destruction. Eight families lost virtually everything they had."

More than half of the 6,000 residents of Melaque, Jalisco, were displaced by the quake, according to Cordova. The state of Colima also received much damage. Other affected areas include: Aguascalientes, Guerrero, Manzanillo, Mexico City, Michoacan, Nayarit, Puebla, Sinaloa, Sonora, Torreon, and Zacatecas.

Public buildings, such as schools and hospitals, sustained the most damage in the region, according to Cordova. Many roads were closed because of the quake.

Nees Calls for Reconciliation



Tom Nees, multicultural ministries coordinator for the Church of the Nazarene, called for reconciliation in the

wake of the verdict in the O. J. Simpson trial Oct. 3. Nees emphasized the Church's need to act responsibly to the tensions in society revealed by the trial.

"The conclusion of the year-long O. J. Simpson trial revealed not only tragedy for three American families—the Simpsons, the Browns, and the Goldmans—but it laid bare the racial tensions that continue to plague American society," said Nees.

"From the beginning of the trial, public opinion divided along racial lines. Beyond

the public justice issues that captured the attention of the nation, no other event in recent history has so polarized whites and African Americans.

"The ministry of reconciliation is more important now than ever. Believers from all racial and cultural communities must join together in a broader faith community to provide healing from the separation and hostility this trial has uncovered and produced."

Simpson was acquitted of charges of homicide and released after being jailed for more than a year. Industry analysts announced that the telecast of the verdict may have been the most watched TV event ever, surpassing the first moon landing and coverage of the Kennedy assassination.

MVNC Students Killed in Auto Accident

Two Mount Vernon Nazarene College students were killed and two others injured in a two-vehicle accident early Saturday, Sept. 23. Jared Gardner, 20, a sophomore from Willard, Ohio, and Judy Priest, 22, a sophomore from Columbus, were killed.

Kevin Miller, 20, a freshman from Upper Sandusky, Ohio, was airlifted to Cleveland Metro Medical Center. Another student, Reginald Hetzler, 20, a sophomore from Elyria, Ohio, was admitted to a hospital in Elyria. Hetzler underwent leg surgery. Miller suffered from broken bones in his face and a hairline fracture in his hip.

The accident occurred at about 1 A.M. on Ohio Highway 99, one mile south of Ohio Highway

162 near Willard, Ohio. A highway patrol spokesperson said a northbound passenger van veered left of center and struck Hetzler's car (a 1989 Ford Taurus) head-on. There were three passengers in the van. One of them, a woman, was killed.

Funeral services for Judy Priest were held Sept. 26 in Columbus. Services for Gardner were held Sept. 26 in Willard. A memorial service for the students was held Sept. 27 at MVNC.

Priest is survived by her parents, A. G. and Delilah Priest; a sister, Debbie Skinner; and a brother, Jeff.

Gardner is survived by his parents, Dale and Esther Gardner; and brothers, Brian, Brad, Clay, Cory, and Paul.

Hurricanes Strike U.S./Caribbean

At least 10 Nazarene families were displaced and several churches damaged as Hurricane Opal struck the Florida panhandle Oct. 4. The storm is blamed for at least 17 deaths and \$2 billion in property damage in the southeastern United States.

Four families in the Port St. Joe Church reported as much as two feet of water in their homes from the storm surge, according to Ron Gilbert, Nazarene Disaster Response coordinator for the North Florida District. Another six families in the Destin and Mexico Beach areas were unable to return to their homes to evaluate the damage for a while after the storm.

Preliminary estimates suggest at least

\$20,000 damage to Nazarene church properties, according to D. Moody Gunter, North Florida District superintendent. He said property damage from this type of storm is usually not covered under normal insurance policies.

Rebuilding efforts for six churches affected by hurricanes in the Caribbean Region continued through the fall.



The parsonage roof of Saint Croix Central Church lays on the ground in the wake of several hurricanes affecting the Caribbean Region and the southern U.S.

Gossip, the Sin No One Commits

JANICE DUCE



Janice Duce is assistant pastor at First Church of the Nazarene, Monroe, Michigan

“TATTLETALE, TATTLETALE, sitting on a fence, / Trying to make a dollar outta fifteen cents.”

Tattling. It doesn't seem harmful at times, so why do we disdain it so much? A wise friend who is also a children's educator once gave me some insight on discouraging childhood tattling that I've never forgotten. She said that tattling should be discouraged because it is a childish form of gossip.

As adults, we sometimes find ourselves tempted to “tattle.” After all, what harm is there in passing on to others a concern we may have about someone else? Dr. Jeffrey Messenger of Adrian, Michigan, could tell you what harm it can do. Messenger, a dermatologist, is giving up and moving his practice elsewhere because of 18 months of rumors that he tested positive for the AIDS virus. Messenger's test results were negative for HIV, but the simple rumor that he tested positive was all it took to cause him problems. He sent letters and copies of his test results to patients. He went on a local radio talk show to counter the hearsay. He even took

another HIV test and made public the negative test results, but to no avail. People simply chose to believe a concerned friend or relative instead.

Few sins disguise themselves as well as gossip. That's because there's such a fine line between right and wrong in our talk. There are times when we may be doing right when we share information in order to help or protect others. We certainly want a child to tell us if another child is doing something harmful or dangerous. But there are also situations when talking about someone only *appears* to be the right thing to do. I believe that an inside look may reveal that there is another motive clouding our better judgment.

I believe that sometimes we share gossip in an effort to be in control by “fixing” people and things around us. I might be tempted to “fix” the interpersonal relationships of those around me by always being “in the know” about how others “really feel” and be compelled to pass on the information. But regardless of how noble this may seem, Proverbs 16:28b warns: “A gossip separates close friends” (NIV). In the same way, I may feel that I need to “fix” my church by participating in the good ole grapevine, dubbed more recently by a friend of mine as the “NazNet.” But again, the wisdom in Proverbs 26:20 would caution against fixing people problems in the church by doing such things as collecting personal opinions and repeating the words of others: “With-

out wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down” (NIV).

Gossip not only hides itself well but also is very appealing. As Proverbs 18:8 says: “The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man's inmost parts” (NIV). I know I have been tempted to greedily gobble information about what others say about me because of fear. (What do they really think about me?) I also lean toward wanting to get the real inside scoop, which can lead to devouring information about others. (Who are they really?) This hurts us because it creates the habit of learning about others secondhand rather than by building firsthand authentic relationships.

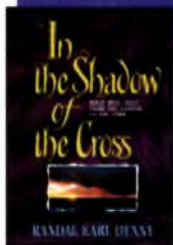
I am still working on understanding and applying biblical principles regarding spreading and listening to gossip. On my refrigerator next to

Sometimes we wrongly justify gossip as a means of fixing relationships or problems in the church.

my phone are these words from Proverbs 10:19: “When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise” (NIV). I know from personal experience that we can be made aware of the motives seeking to rule us and can receive wisdom about the consequences of our words. If we are fully surrendered to the Holy Spirit of truth and walking in His power daily, we can avoid gossip. H

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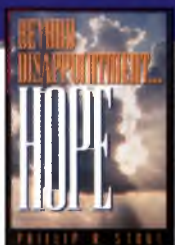
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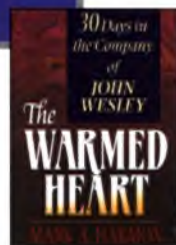
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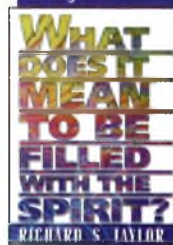


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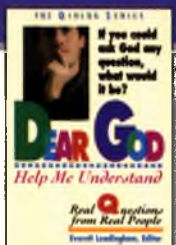


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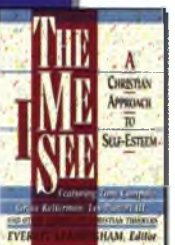
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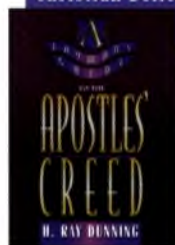


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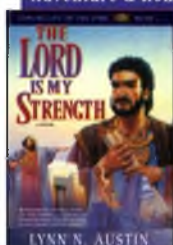
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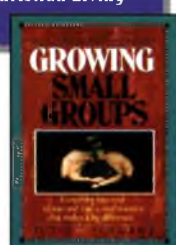


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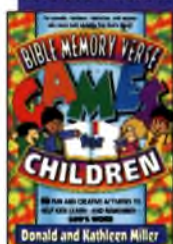
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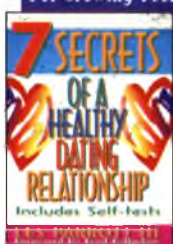
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