

The Spirituality of Leadership: Grounding Our Life in Anglican Spiritual Practice



The Diocese of Southwest Florida 2013 Annual Vestry Retreat

DaySpring Conference Center

May 11, 2013

8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Schedule

8:00 – 9:00 am	Registration and Breakfast
9:00 – 9:20 am	Morning Prayer with the Blessing of Water
9:20 am	Welcome and Introduction
9:30 – 10:45 am	Session 1: Spiritual Maps Eucharistic Practices
10:45 – 11:00 am	Break
11am – 12:00 pm	Session 2: Eucharistic Practices
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Lunch
1:00 - 2:00 pm	The Holy Eucharist
2:00 – 2:15 pm	Break
2:15 – 3:45 pm	Session 3: The Eucharist and Leadership
3:45 – 4:00 pm	Wrap Up & Blessing

Our Time Together: Contents of this Packet

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The Daily Office

The Daily Prayers of the Church

I'm fed up with this ghastly picture of prayer as a private telephone line with or without a voice at the other end. It's much more like you and me playing our second fiddles in an unending heavenly orchestral symphony of praise and joy. When we pray, we take up our fiddles, and when we stop we put them down again—but the music never stops.

-Basil Moss, quoted in *Spirituality for Today* (London, 1967)

Daily Morning Prayer

The Invitatory and Psalter

Officiant Lord, open our lips.

People And our mouth shall proclaim your praise.

Officiant and People

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Alleluia.

Officiant Alleluia. Christ the Lord has ascended into heaven:

People Come let us adore him. Alleluia.

Christ our Passover *Pascha nostrum*

1 Corinthians 5:7-8; Romans 6:9-11; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22

Together

Alleluia.

Christ our Passover has been sacrificed for us; *

therefore let us keep the feast,

Not with old leaven, the leaven of malice and evil, *

but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. Alleluia.

Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; *

death no longer has dominion over him.

The death that he died, he died to sin, once for all; *

but the life he lives, he lives to God.

So also consider yourselves dead to sin, *

and alive to God in Jesus Christ our Lord. Alleluia.

Christ has been raised from the dead, *

the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

For since by a man came death, *

by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead.

For as in Adam all die, *

so in Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia.

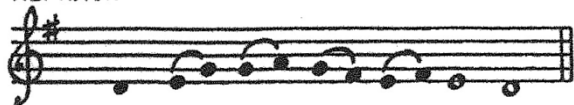
Officiant Alleluia. Christ the Lord has ascended into heaven:

People Come let us adore him. Alleluia.

The Psalm

[Psalm 87 Fundamenta ejus]

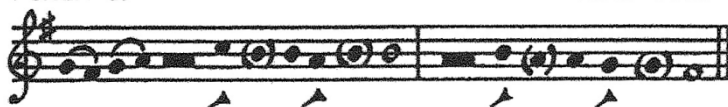
REFRAIN



Praise the Lord, all you na-tions.

PSALM 87

TONE VII \flat



1. On the holy mountain stands the city he has founded; *
the LORD loves the gates of Zion
more than all the dwellings of Jacob.
2. Glorious things are spoken of you, *
O city of our God.

REFRAIN

3. I count Egypt and Babylon among those who know me; *
behold Philistia, Tyre, and Ethiopia:
in Zion were they born.
4. Of Zion it shall be said, "Everyone was born in her, *
and the Most High himself shall sustain her."

REFRAIN

5. The LORD will record as he enrolls the peoples, *
"These also were born there."
6. The singers and the dancers will say, *
"All my fresh springs are in you."

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Reading

A Reading from Ephesians

[Ephesians 2:11-22]

The Word of the Lord.

Answer Thanks be to God.

The Song of Zechariah *Benedictus Dominus Deus* *Luke 1: 68-79*

Together

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel; *
he has come to his people and set them free.
He has raised up for us a mighty savior, *
born of the house of his servant David.

Through his holy prophets he promised of old,
that he would save us from our enemies, *
from the hands of all who hate us.
He promised to show mercy to our fathers *
and to remember his holy covenant.
This was the oath he swore to our father Abraham, *
to set us free from the hands of our enemies,
Free to worship him without fear, *
holy and righteous in his sight
all the days of our life.
You, my child, shall be called the prophet of the Most High, *
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way,
To give his people knowledge of salvation *
by the forgiveness of their sins.
In the tender compassion of our God *
the dawn from on high shall break upon us,
To shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, *
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.
Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

The Apostles' Creed

Officiant and People together, all standing

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth;
I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Prayers

Officiant The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Officiant Let us pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.

- V. Show us your mercy, O Lord;
R. And grant us your salvation.
V. Clothe your ministers with righteousness;
R. Let your people sing with joy.
V. Give peace, O Lord, in all the world;
R. For only in you can we live in safety.
V. Lord, keep this nation under your care;
R. And guide us in the way of justice and truth.
V. Let your way be known upon earth;
R. Your saving health among all nations.
V. Let not the needy, O Lord, be forgotten;
R. Nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
V. Create in us clean hearts, O God;
R. And sustain us with your Holy Spirit.

The Collects

A Rite for the Blessing of Water

Water is poured into a font or other container. A small amount of salt may be added.

Friends in Christ, we will use this water to remind us of our baptism. Let us ask God to bless this water that we might be renewed in our baptismal life so all may be to the Glory of God.

Priest The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Priest Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Almighty God, by water we are joined to your acts of Creation, the Red Sea, the Prophets, the Baptism of our Lord, and the waters of the Holy City. + Bless this water that it may be a sign of your grace in renewing our baptismal life, healing us from illness, protecting us from evil and forgiving us our sins; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Hymn 296 Holy Baptism

1. We know that Christ is raised and dies no more.
Embraced by death he broke its fearful hold;
and our despair he turned to blazing joy.
Alleluia!

2. We share by water in his saving death.
Reborn we share with him an Easter life
as living members of a living Christ.
Alleluia!

3. The Father's splendor clothes the Son with life.
The Spirit's power shakes the Church of God.
Baptized we live with God the Three in One.
Alleluia!

4. A new creation comes to life and grows
as Christ's new body takes on flesh and blood.
The universe restored and whole will sing:
Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen.

Words: John Brownlow Geyer (b. 1932), alt. Music: Engelberg, Charles Villiers Stanford (1852- 1924)

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Intercessions and Thanksgivings

Officiant I invite your intercessions and thanksgivings.

A Prayer of St. Chrysostom

Officiant and People

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. *Amen.*

Let us bless the Lord. Alleluia, alleluia
Thanks be to God. Alleluia, alleluia

The Officiant

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all evermore.
Amen.

[2 *Corinthians 13:14*]

The Holy Eucharist

For the fully Christian life is a Eucharistic life: that is, a natural life conformed to the pattern of Jesus, given in its wholeness to God, laid on His altar as a sacrifice of love, and consecrated, transformed by His inpouring life, to be used to give life and food to other souls.

- Evelyn Underhill

The Holy Eucharist

The Word of God

Celebrant Alleluia. Christ is risen.
People The Lord is risen indeed. Alleluia.

Hymn 214 Hail the day that sees him rise

1. Hail the day that sees him rise, Alleluia!
glorious to his native skies; Alleluia!
Christ, awhile to mortals given, Alleluia!
enters now the highest heaven! Alleluia!

2. There the glorious triumph waits; Alleluia!
lift your heads, eternal gates! Alleluia!
Wide unfold the radiant scene; Alleluia!
take the King of glory in! Alleluia!

3. See! he lifts his hands above; Alleluia!
See! he shows the prints of love: Alleluia!
Hark! his gracious lips bestow, Alleluia!
blessings on his Church below. Alleluia!

4. Lord, beyond our mortal sight, Alleluia!
raise our hearts to reach thy height, Alleluia!
there thy face unclouded see, Alleluia!
find our heaven of heavens in thee. Alleluia!

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788), alt.; Music: *Llanfair*, Robert Williams (1781-1821)

The Collect of the Day

The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Let us pray.

Reading

Reader: A Reading from Ephesians [Ephesians 1:15-23]

After

Reader The Word of the Lord.

People Thanks be to God.

Silence

Psalm

[Psalm 93 BCP Dominus regnavit]

1. The LORD is King;
he has put on splendid apparel; *
the LORD has put on his apparel
and girded himself with strength.
2. He has made the whole world so sure *
that it cannot be moved;
3. Ever since the world began, your throne has been established; *
you are from everlasting.
4. The waters have lifted up, O LORD,
the waters have lifted up their voice; *
the waters have lifted up their pounding waves.
5. Mightier than the sound of many waters,
mightier than the breakers of the sea, *
mightier is the LORD who dwells on high.
6. Your testimonies are very sure, *
and holiness adorns your house, O LORD,
for ever and for evermore.

The Holy Gospel

Then, all standing, the Deacon or a Priest reads the Gospel, first saying

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ
according to Luke.

[Luke 24:44-53]

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

After the Gospel, the Reader says

The Gospel of the Lord.

People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

The Sermon

The Prayers of the People

[Form III]

Father, we pray for your holy Catholic Church;
That we all may be one.

Grant that every member of the Church may truly and humbly serve you;
That your Name may be glorified by all people.

We pray for all bishops, priests, and deacons;
That they may be faithful ministers of your Word and Sacraments.

We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world;
That there may be justice and peace on the earth.

Give us grace to do your will in all that we undertake;
That our works may find favor in your sight.

Have compassion on those who suffer from any grief or trouble;
That they may be delivered from their distress.

Give to the departed eternal rest.
Let light perpetual shine upon them.

We praise you for your saints who have entered into joy;
May we also come to share in your heavenly kingdom.

Let us pray for our own needs and those of others.

The Celebrant adds a concluding Collect.

The Peace

The Holy Communion.

Representatives of the congregation bring the people's offerings of bread and wine, and money or other gifts, to the deacon or celebrant. The people stand while the offerings are presented and placed on the Altar

Offertory Hymn 215 - See the conqueror

1. See the Conqueror mounts in triumph;
see the King in royal state,
riding on the clouds, his chariot,
to his heavenly palace gate!
Hark! The choirs of angel voices
joyful alleluias sing,
and the portals high are lifted
to receive their heavenly King.

2. He who on the cross did suffer,
he who from the grave arose,
he has vanquished sin and Satan;
he by death has spoiled his foes.
While he lifts his hands in blessing,
he is parted from his friends;

It is you who lie upon
the altar; it is you, your
very life, within the cup.

Augustine of Hippo

while their eager eyes behold him,
he upon the clouds ascends.

3. Thou has raised our human nature
on the clouds to God's right hand;
there we sit in heavenly places,
there with thee in glory stand.
Jesus reigns, adored by angels;
Man with God is on the throne;
mighty Lord, in thine ascension
we by faith behold our own.

Words: Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885), alt.; Music: *In Babilone*, melody from *Oude en Nieuwe Hollandse Boerenlities en Contradanseu*, 1710; harm. Charles Winfred Douglas (1867-1944)

The Great Thanksgiving

[Eucharistic Prayer A]

The Lord be with you.

People And also with you.

Celebrant Lift up your hearts.

People We lift them to the Lord.

Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

Celebrant and People

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Celebrant Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

People and Celebrant

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your Name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial,
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.
A period of silence is kept.*

[Alleluia.] Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
Therefore let us keep the feast. [Alleluia.]

Facing the people, the Celebrant says the following Invitation
The Gifts of God for the People of God.

Communion Hymns
Hymn 335 - I am the bread of life

1. I am the bread of life;
they who come to me shall not hunger;
they who believe in me shall not thirst.
No one can come to me unless the Father draw them.

Refrain: And I will raise them up,
and I will raise them up,
and I will raise them up on the last day.

2. The Bread that I will give
is my Flesh for the life of the world,
and they who eat of this bread,
they shall live for ever,
they shall live for ever. Refrain

3. Unless you eat
of the Flesh of the Son of Man
and drink of his Blood,
you shall not have life within you,
you shall not have life within you. Refrain

4. I am the resurrection,
I am the life.
They who believe in me,
even if they die,
they shall live for ever. Refrain

5. Yes, Lord we believe
that you are the Christ,
the Son of God
who has come into the world. Refrain

Words: Suzanne Toolan (b. 1927); adapt of John 6 Music: I Am the Bread of Life, Suzanne Toolan (b. 1927);
arr. Betty Pulkingham (b. 1928) All rights reserved. Reprinted under OneLicense.net S-912928.

Hymn 657 - Love divine

1. Love divine, all loves excelling,
joy of heaven, to earth come down,
fix in us thy humble dwelling,
all thy faithful mercies crown.
Jesus, thou art all compassion,
pure, unbounded love thou art;
visit us with thy salvation,
enter every trembling heart.

2. Come, almighty to deliver,
let us all thy life receive;
suddenly return, and never,
nevermore thy temples leave.
Thee we would be always blessing,
serve thee as thy hosts above,
pray, and praise thee without ceasing,
glory in thy perfect love.

3. Finish then thy new creation;
pure and spotless let us be;
let us see thy great salvation
perfectly restored in thee:
changed from glory into glory,
till in heaven we take our place,
till we cast our crowns before thee,
lost in wonder, love, and praise.

Words: Charles Wesley (1707-1788) Music: *Hyfrydol*, Rowland Hugh Prichard (1811-1887)

Celebrant and People

Eternal God, heavenly Father,
you have graciously accepted us as living members
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ,
and you have fed us with spiritual food
in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood.
Send us now into the world in peace,
and grant us strength and courage
to love and serve you
with gladness and singleness of heart;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Blessing and Dismissal

Be Present, Participate and Engage

The Three Primary Ways People Join in the Eucharist

People need to be told that it matters that they are just present. There are the community-oriented reasons having to do with enjoying each other's companionship in the Liturgy, loving one another, and missing people when they are absent. At a more profound level there's this: the worship of God in the Eucharist is the reason we exist. We exist to participate in the life and glory of God and it is in the Eucharist that life is focused and actualized.

-Robert Gallagher

Be Present, Participate, and Engage:

The three primary ways people join in the Eucharist

There are three primary ways people join in the Holy Eucharist: Be Present, Participate, and Engage.

Be present

People need to be told that it matters that they are just present. There are the community-oriented reasons having to do with enjoying each other's companionship in the Liturgy, loving one another, and missing people when they are absent. At a more profound level there's this: the worship of God in the Eucharist is the reason we exist. We exist to participate in the life and glory of God and it is in the Eucharist that life is focused and actualized.

In the Liturgy, we the baptized participate in the worship of God in union with Christ, the church throughout the world, and with "angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven."

Just be present. Follow along as well as you are able that day. Let go of all the judgments about how you may not be paying enough attention or how you're not feeling especially pious. To accept that the essential act is being there is the practice of humility. It is also a statement that you have grown up enough to realize that it is foolish to allow your passing feelings to control your spiritual life. Because we give ourselves by being present, on occasion we receive the gift of being touched by deep joy, awe, and a sense of the harmony that exists within all things.

We begin with obedience and humility, not passion and devotion. The Eucharist is first an act of God and of the Body of Christ of which you and I are members. We can make a choice to set ourselves in the places of grace, in the holy spaces in which God has promised to be with us.

Participate

The parish can do a great deal to assist people in becoming competent participants in the Eucharist. The starting place is simple. Parishioners can learn the sequence and the common responses. They can be encouraged to develop the habit of setting the book aside and allowing their attention to be on the liturgical action—looking at the reader not the readings in a leaflet; during the Great Thanksgiving striving to be aware of the community they are with and the actions at the altar.

Our tradition makes much use of the body in liturgy. We stand, kneel, and sit; some cross themselves, bow and genuflect. We see, smell, hear, touch, and taste. When offering choices about participating, don't start by explaining the meaning of actions. Instead let it be more experiential. Have people try things on. Do it and then reflect on it.

Here are a few examples of practices that connect people to sound Eucharistic practice. Ask people to:

- Look toward the liturgical action. Look at the reader of the readings and the Gospel; look at the actions at the altar during the Great Thanksgiving, rather than down at a printed sheet. The parish can facilitate that by not printing the readings and the text of the Great Thanksgiving in a bulletin. An awareness of the liturgical action both expresses and fosters the unity of the church.

- Move forward at the “Invitation.” When the celebrant says “The Gifts of God for the People of God” the congregation is to move toward the places where communion is distributed. It is the people’s procession to communion. There should be none of the Victorian nonsense of ushers guiding or controlling this movement. As the ministers of the altar are receiving communion the whole congregation needs to be gathering so it may also receive.
- Receive both bread and wine, including receiving from the common cup.

Engage

The particulars will vary from person to person, temperament to temperament. Because the purpose of the Eucharist is to worship God in union with the whole church and Christ the head of the church, these forms of engagement are secondary to simply being present and participating.

Here are a few methods of engagement that can be taught.

- Intercession during the Eucharist. One tradition is to have a special intention in mind. Carry someone or a concern on your heart before God. If you think of it at the time, offer it during the Offertory, as though you were laying it upon the altar, pouring it into the chalice.
- Review the readings of the day before the Eucharist begins. That may be on arrival but could also be days in advance. Using a form of meditative reading may add to the experience. Focus on one of the readings. Find a phrase or word that touches you.
- Take a receptive stance during the sermon. Assume that God has a word for you. Set aside for the moment judgments about how well the preacher is doing.
- Make use of a type of affective meditative engagement. Seek a stance within yourself that fits with the part of the Eucharist happening at any given time. Maybe humility and faith during the readings and sermon; self-offering during the Offertory; unity with the whole church and with “Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven;” adoration during the Great Thanksgiving; communion and harmony at communion.

I recall sitting with Pat, my high school girlfriend, at a Mass in her Roman Catholic parish. Throughout the church new liturgical practices were taking hold based on a truer understanding of Liturgy. At one point in the Mass the priest stopped what he was doing, looked at the congregation, and said “please put down the rosary beads.” The priest wasn’t against saying the rosary but he understood that saying it during Mass was, for most people, interfering with their participation in the Eucharist.

Finding a way of engaging the Eucharist may be useful for many of us but is in no way essential. In fact there’s a danger that if we are inclined to become anxious about it personal engagement will separate us from the primary activity of participating in offering this thanksgiving to God.

From In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practice, Robert

Eucharistic Practices: The Waters of Baptism

When the Church baptizes a child, that action concerns me, for that child is thereby connected to that which is my head too, and ingrafted into that body whereof I am a member ... No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main ... any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee.

- John Donne

Spiritual Exercise

1. Introduction

On Entering the church

Holy Water – Some dip their hand into the holy water when entering or leaving the church. They then sign themselves with the cross in recollection of their baptism and their baptismal vocation.

+ Sign of the Cross

The sign of the cross is related to our baptism. The practice of tracing a cross on a person's forehead when they are baptized is seen in the baptismal rite. "*You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever.*" In the Liturgy the sign may be used at the beginning acclamation, when being absolved of sin, when being blessed and at a variety of other times. Each has to do with your status as a baptized member of the Body of Christ.

2. Make the sign of the cross – go ahead try it, even if you never do it again do it today so you have the experience.= and have reflected upon it.

3. There are six stations of blessed water.

In a minutes please go to one of them. Take your time, move in a slow, thoughtful manner. When you get to the water let your hand rest in it for a moment, then make the sign of the cross.

4. As people go to the stations we ask that you:

- 1) not interrupt the moment with side conversations,
- 2) that you look toward the person and hold them before God, and
- 3) that you join in the singing on the next page.

5. A Prayer

6. Form lines and move toward the water

Possible Part Two

A time of reflection related to your own baptism and its impact on your life.

For use during the spiritual exercise

From Hymn 370

*Christ be with me, Christ within me,
Christ behind me, Christ before me,
Christ beside me, Christ to win me,
Christ to comfort and restore me.
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ in quiet, Christ in danger,
Christ in hearts of all that love me,
Christ in mouth of friend and stranger.*

Words: Att. Patrick (372-466); tr. Cecil Frances Alexander (1818-1895); Music: *St. Patrick's Breastplate*, Irish melody; adapt. Charler Villiers Stanford (1852-1924); St. 6, *Deirdre*, Irish melody; harm. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958)

Hymn 711

1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and its righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you;

Allelu, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia!

2. Ask, and it shall be given unto you, seek and ye shall find,
knock, and the door shall be opened unto you;

Allelu, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!

Alleluia, alleluia!

Words: St.1, Matthew 6:33; adapt. Karen Lafferty (20th cent.). St. 2, Matthew 7:7, Stanza 2 is not part of the hymn as originally written.
Music: Seek Ye First, Karen Lafferty (20th cent.) All rights for the world on behalf of CCCM Music administered by Universal Music – Brentwood Benson Publishing. All Rights Reserved. Used By Permission.

Baptismal Insights

Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works.

- Book of Common Prayer

Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.

Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is the kingly rule of Christ, for

whose sake a man will pluck out the eye which causes him to stumble; it is the call of Jesus Christ at which the disciple leaves his nets and follows him.

-Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*

The enthusiasms of my conversion have worn off. For whole stretches since the dream, since the baptism, my belief has faltered, my sense of God's closeness has grown strained, my efforts at living in accord with what I take to be the call of the gospel have come undone Once upon a time, I thought I had arrived. Now I have arrived at a middle...In the American church, we have a long tradition of telling spiritual stories that culminate in conversion, in the narrator's joining the church, getting dunked in the waters of baptism, getting saved. But ... the baptism, the conversion, is just the beginning, and what follows is a middle, and the middle may be long, and it may have little to do with whatever it was that got you to the font.

- Lauren Winner in *Still: Notes on a Mid-Faith Crisis*

Our vocation is not simply to be, but to work together with God in the creation of our own life, our own identity, our own destiny-to work out our own identity in God, which the Bible calls 'working out salvation' is a labor which requires sacrifice and anguish, risk and many tears. -Thomas Merton

Baptism and admission to the sacred meal meant a break with the past and a gift of grace by which the individual could live up to the ideals and moral imperatives recognized by his conscience. In a word, Christianity directly answered the human quest for true happiness – by which more is meant than feeling happy.

- The Early Church, Henry Chadwick

It's about full immersion, about falling into something elemental and wet. Most of what we do in worldly life is geared toward our staying dry, looking good, not going under. But in baptism, in lakes and rain and tanks and fonts, you agree to do something that's a little sloppy because at the same time it's also holy, and absurd. It's about surrender, giving in to all those things we can't control; it's a willingness to let go of balance and decorum and get drenched. - - Anne Lamott

The lay person's primary function is out there in the world. There is a problem when the church becomes the primary focus of their lives. I can remember that when I was most unhappy on my job, I was most active in the church.

- Verna J. Dozier

Here once more we exhort our sons to take an active part in public life, and to work together for the benefit of the whole human race, as well as for their own political communities. It is vitally necessary for them to endeavor, in the light of Christian faith and with love as their guide, to ensure that every institution whether economic, social, cultural or political, be such as not to obstruct but rather to facilitate man's self betterment, both in the natural and in the supernatural order. And yet, if they are to imbue civilization with right ideals and Christian principles, it is not enough for our sons to be illumined by the heavenly light of faith and to be fired with enthusiasm for a cause; they must involve themselves in the work of these institutions, and strive to influence them effectively from within.

-John XXIII

***Spiritual Maps:
So we may become stronger
in love and faith***

A map offers a system of spiritual life rather than a list of assorted practices. A useful system will provide a balance of nurture and stretching. It will include our inner life and our outer life. In such a system our inclinations and gifts are supported and allowed to flourish and the less developed parts of us are drawn out and developed. All so we may become stronger in love and faith; more resilient, with a broader mind and an enlarged heart.

Spiritual Exercise

1. We will explore a spiritual map first by having a physical way to indicate which elements come easily for us and which are more challenging. During that process people will have an opportunity to reflect on their stance.
2. There will be a whole group brief presentation and conversation about spiritual maps.

Spiritual Maps

From *In Your Holy Spirit: Traditional Spiritual Practices in Today's Christian Life*, Michelle Heyne, Ascension Press, 2011

A map offers a system of spiritual life rather than a list of assorted practices. A useful system will provide a balance of nurture and stretching. It will include our inner life and our outer life. In such a system our inclinations and gifts are supported and allowed to flourish and the less developed parts of us are drawn out and developed. All so we may become stronger in love and faith; more resilient, with a broader mind and an enlarged heart.

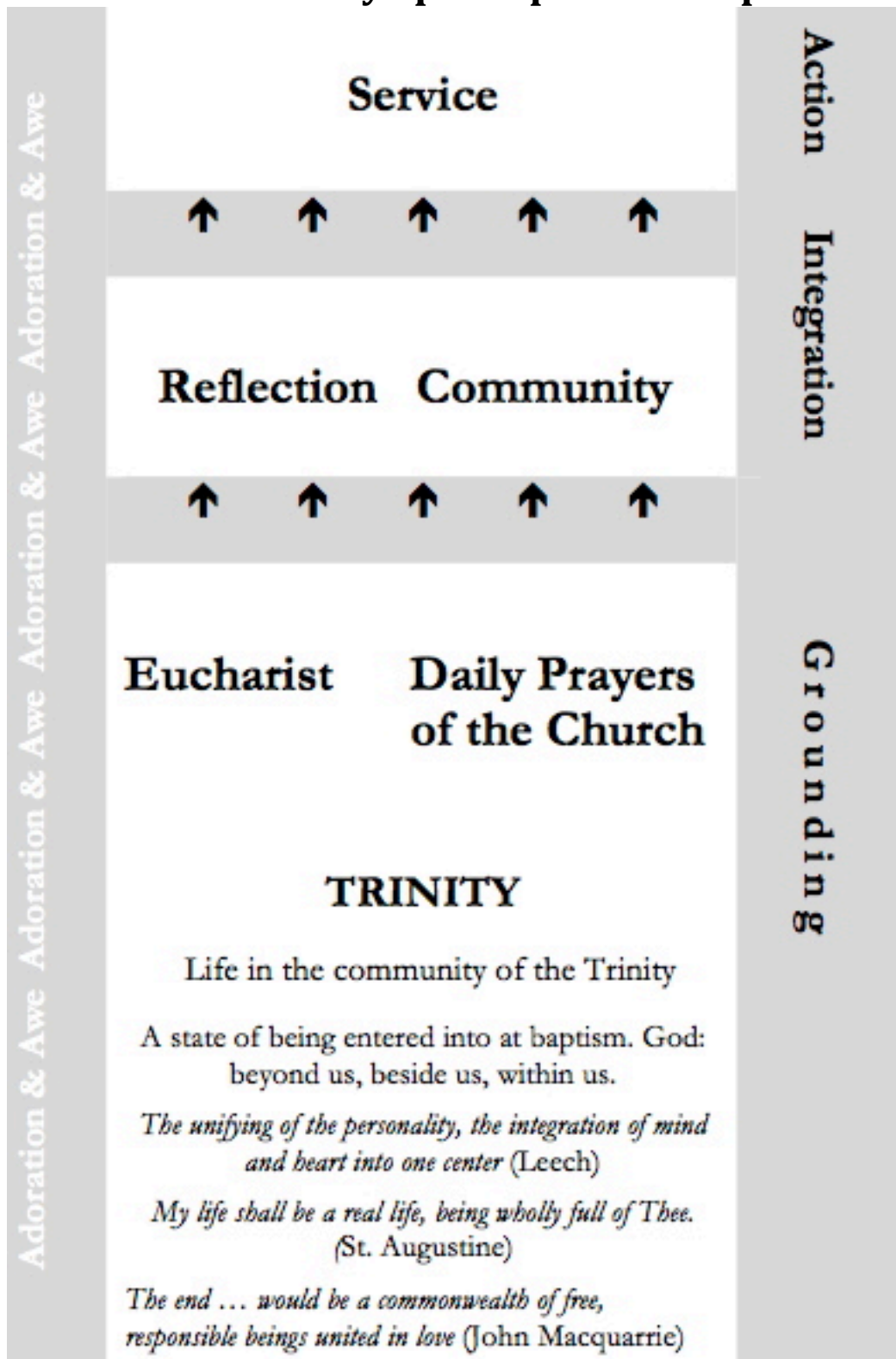
Maps are useful things.

1. They are based on the experience of many others. This is how others have made the journey.
2. They help you get somewhere .If you want to grow in the spiritual life it may help to have a guide.
3. They change as the circumstances of life change. In a world of rapid change and loose ties among people we have an increased need for a sense of perspective, being in community, and engaging daily routines that give us ground to stand upon.
4. They are only useful if people find them useful. People vary in temperament and spiritual inclination. Maps can provide too much or too little detail for different groups of people. The old maps, whether of 1932 or of 1976, continue to serve those able to embrace them. Our hope is that the map we offer here will serve many people seeking ancient practices to help them effectively and faithfully engage contemporary life.

From *In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practice*, Robert A. Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2011

William James said that religious belief is “the belief that there is an unseen order, and that our supreme good lies in harmoniously adjusting ourselves thereto.” James was speaking of much more than something like a spiritual map. His concern may have been more akin to the writer of Hebrews, “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” But at the boundaries of that unseen order exist all the practices that bring us into unity, give us hope and faith, and help us abide in love. These are the ancient ways of the spiritual life that maps of spiritual practice make more visible and accessible.

In Your Holy Spirit Spiritual Map

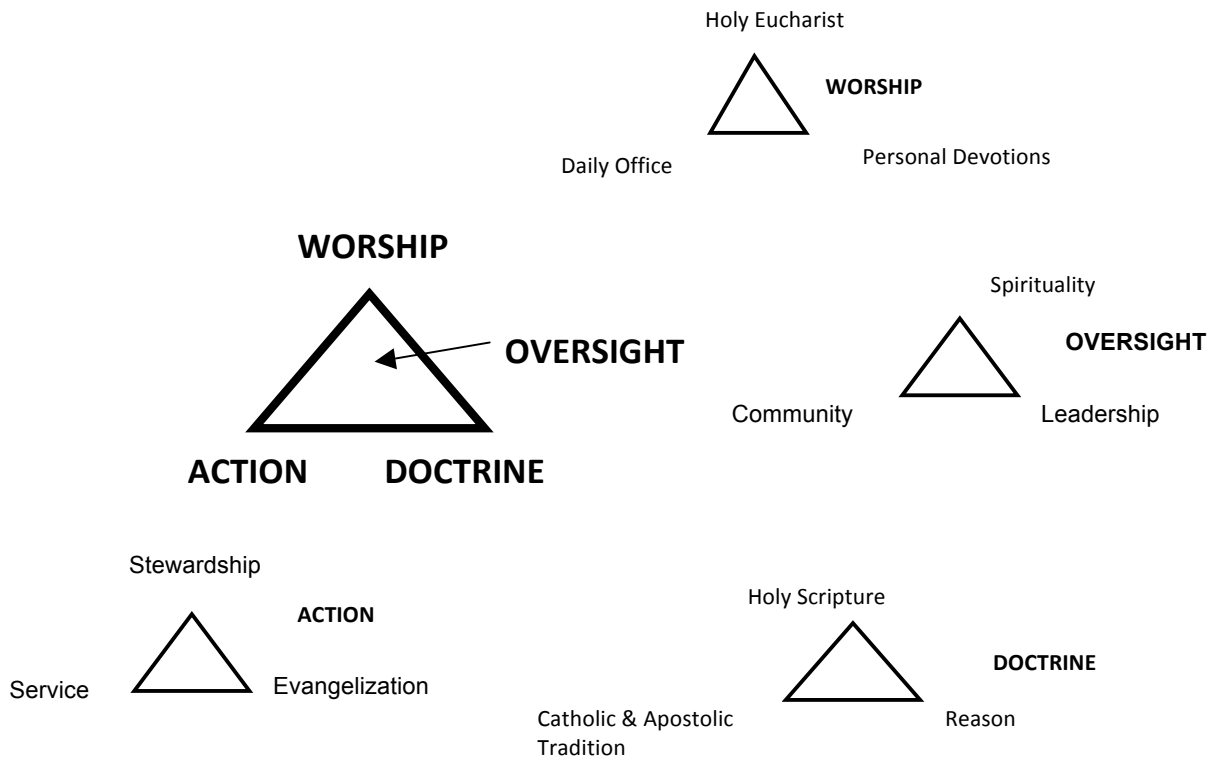


From *In Your Holy Spirit* books Gallagher/Heyne, Ascension Press, 2011

The Christian Life Model

In a world where carpenters get resurrected, everything is possible.
Eleanor in *The Lion in Winter*

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE MODEL



- Each element is a way in which Christ comes to us and in which we seek Christ. Each is an entry into, and participation in, the unity to which we are called. In them we are called into a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ - the heart of Christ, the mind of Christ, the work of Christ.

- The model can be used by parishes for self assessment, as a framework for planning, as a way to focus the parish on the essentials of the Christian life, and as a resource to individuals in shaping a Rule of Life. Each triangle is a system of mutual influence in which the elements strengthen and impact the other elements.

Copyright Robert A. Gallagher, 1982, 1985, 2006, 2008

For more on the model see Robert Gallagher's *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Spirituality in the Parish Church*, 2008 and *Power from on High: A Model for Parish Life and Development*, 1982

More on spiritual maps in the follow up material at:
www.congregationaldevelopment.com/vestry-retreat-diocese-of-sout/

Eucharistic Practices: Engaging the Word

We must allow the Word of God to confront us, to disturb our security, to undermine our complacency and to overthrow our patterns of thought and behavior. -John R.W. Stott

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. John 1: 1 -5

The beginning, of course, is the Word. The opening of Saint John's gospel is the heart of the Catholic faith. Recapitulating the epic of creation in a hymn to Christ made flesh, John reveals the mysterious nexus of spirit and matter, divinity and humanity, which undergirds the Church, bears fruit in the sacraments, and gives substance to the world to come. It is no exaggeration to say that the long history of Catholic Christianity is the chronicle of men and women struggling to embody John's vision in their own lives and that of the world. Being human, they often failed. -"The Anglo Catholic Vision", John Orens

In the parish's expression of stability, conversion of life, and obedience what seems healthy to you, what unhealthy? Is the stability simply being static? Is the conversion simply being driven by an impulse to change? Is the obedience endless listening and process, too little listening, or a facade of listening? -Robert A. Gallagher

Spiritual Exercise: Part One

1. Listen to passage as it's read. Don't read along with the reader.
2. As you hear the reading – Is there a word or phrase draws your attention or touches you? Just notice it. Allow it to settle within.
3. If you are drawn to ponder the word or passage – go ahead and do so, briefly in the moment or later.
4. Share in groups of 3. What is the word or phrase? What is it that touched you, caught your attention?
5. Presentation - short (unless using Exercise part 2 (below))
God has a Word for you
There is a stance we can take

Jesus said to his disciples, "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you-- that everything written about me in the law of Moses, the prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures, and he said to them, "Thus it is written, that the Messiah is to suffer and to rise from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father promised; so stay here in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."

Then he led them out as far as Bethany, and, lifting up his hands, he blessed them. While he was blessing them, he withdrew from them and was carried up into heaven. And they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy; and they were continually in the temple blessing God. Luke 24:44-53

Spiritual Exercise: Part Two (if time permits)

1. Consider, make notes if you want: In the Eucharist what is the stance, the attitude, we need to take if we are to engage the Word? It may be different than what's useful in using the Scriptures in personal meditation, in study or group conversation.
2. Share (as directed by retreat leaders)

Lectio Divina

A slow, meditative reading of scripture. At a time when we are alert. In a quiet and restful place. You need time enough so there is no sense of being hurried.

1. Select a passage; possibly in advance, the day before. Possibly a section of a reading from the Daily Office readings or next Sunday's Eucharist.
2. **Lectio** - Read the passage slowly, pause as you want. Read slowly, gently listening for God's word for you. Read it again, and possibly again. Notice the phrases and words. What word or phrase draws your attention or touches you? Possibly read it aloud. Let the facts settle in; broods over them, allows them to enter imagination & memory. It is a matter of our spiritual development to cultivate the ability to listen deeply, to hear "with the ear of our hearts."
3. **Meditatio** - Reflection on the text. Bring to mind memories and associations related to the text. Allow the reading to sink into your heart and mind. Join Mary "pondering in her heart." Gently repeat the word or phrase, allow it to touch your thoughts, longings and hopes.
4. **Oratio** - Listening & responding to God. Respond silently or aloud with thoughts, words, desires, feelings, commitments, sorrow, and gratitude. Are there major concerns or joys in your life at the moment that this reading is addressing? Is there some area of your life where God may be inviting you to grow?
5. **Contmpatio** - Sit and enjoy the presence of God. Allow God to enter a deeper place in us. Trust that God is working within even if we do not notice. Rest in God's presence

Do not be overly tight about the steps. In practice they may flow from one to another; may happen at the same time. It may be a useful learning method to stay with the steps as separate acts for an initial period.

The Rhythm of Christian Life and of Lectio

The Christian life can be seen as a cycle between being renewed in our baptismal identity and purpose and an apostolate in which we are instruments of God's love in the world. The cycle is between a conscious and intentional attention to God, prayer life, our relationships, Christian formation **and** a subconscious reliance upon God as members of the Body of Christ, in the workplace, family, friendship, civic life and congregational life. (See *Fill All Things*, Robert A. Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2008)

The practice of lectio *divina* depends on that cycle. It is grounded in our developing the capacity for a gentle oscillation between action/practice and receptivity and renewal. In the one we are being transformed into the likeness of Christ. In the other we are actively cooperating with God's grace in human life. Copyright, Robert A Gallagher 2004, 2008

Other methods of creating a listening climate

From: *In Your Holy Spirit: Shaping the Parish Through Spiritual Practice*

Wait for all to arrive

You may recall the 2010 experience of the 33 miners in Chile. There had been a cave-in on August 5. For 17 days no one above ground knew if the miners were alive. Engineers drilling in search finally found them. They were underground for 69 days and they all survived.

In their time in the mine they developed a working community that included smaller groupings of eleven, and involved prayer and an interesting norm around meals. As of early September the hole through which all materials, food and messages had to pass was just 4 inches across. Luis Urzua, the shift leader, insisted that all the miners wait until everyone got food through the borehole before anyone began to eat.⁵²

This is an act of community that we see in First Corinthians, 11:33 (“when you come together to eat, wait for one another”) and Benedict’s Rule. Benedict wanted all to gather for the meal so they could all “pray together and sit down to table at the same time.”

In the same chapter of the Rule a similar expectation is applied to the Office. Along with that expectation comes one about personal responsibility.

As soon as the signal for the time of the divine office is heard, let everyone, leaving whatever he hath in his hands, hasten with all speed, yet with gravity, that there may be no cause for levity. Therefore, let nothing be preferred to the Work of God.

Rule of St. Benedict, Chapter XLIII

A parish can engage several related spiritual practices that can build up the community.

- Arrange meals in a way that easily allows all to begin eating at the same time.
- Wait for all to arrive before beginning a meeting. When a person needs to leave the room, suspend the discussion until all are together again.
- Don’t have any other activities taking place at the times of Eucharist and Office. The parish business office can take a break and meetings can begin after the times of worship.

Around the circle

This is a useful method of allowing everyone to be heard, and is something I’ve used with up to 45 people. Participants speak in turn around the circle. The comment is to be brief and on one point. The method helps equalize the voices in the room so the more hesitant are heard along with the more assertive. It can be especially useful when dealing with controversial issues.

Variations include the fishbowl and the Samoan circle. The methods are defined in different ways by various facilitators. In both cases there is a group that sits within the larger circle of participants and engages in a conversation. The inner group is to consist of the various positions on an issue, or might be an “expert panel.”

Depending on your objectives and issues, such as the time available, the outer group might remain silent, or there might be an opportunity for comment or questions from the outer circle, or there might be a way for someone from the outer circle to join the inner circle.

From *Fill All Things: The Dynamics of Parish Spirituality*, Robert A. Gallagher, Ascension Press, 2008

Obedience

Listening creates relationship ... Listening moves us closer, it helps us become more whole, more healthy, more holy. Not listening creates fragmentation, and fragmentation is the root of all suffering. I love the biblical passage: "Whenever two or more are gathered, I am there." It describes for me the holiness of moments of real listening. The health, wholeness, holiness of a new relationship forming. I have a T-shirt from one conference that reads: "You can't hate someone whose story you know." You don't have to like the story, or even the person telling you their story. But listening creates a relationship. We move closer to one another.

-Margaret J. Wheatley

- Become a listening parish. Teach skills for contemplation, communal discernment and interpersonal listening. Establish a pattern of opportunities to listen deeply to God, creation, others and self. Learn methods and tools that facilitate collective listening.
- Coach people in how to be open to influence in their spiritual life while also accepting responsibility for their spiritual life in a manner that fits their situation and life commitments.
- Provide opportunities in which people can reflect on and shape their spiritual discipline.
- Listening to God and each other opens onto the other elements. It is in listening that a parish can move beyond the distortion of the Promise as a struggle between change and stability.
- The Gospel mystery in which we lose life to find life is activated in the process of listening.

There are documents on a follow-up page on the web page on "survey feedback" and "communal discernment."

www.congregationaldevelopment.com/vestry-retreat-diocese-of-sout/

The Eucharist & Leadership

We pray that the pattern of the Eucharist may be the pattern of our leadership.

- *Taken, blessed, broken, given*
- *That the diversity of gifts may be brought into harmony to the glory of God and in fulfillment of the mission*
- *A synthesis: equality and hierarchy, transcendence and immanence, knowledge and love*
- *...To be with God, with the people on your heart. Michael Ramsey*

Three Quotes: A spiritual exercise

1. Please look at these three sets of quotes.
2. You will select one to work with using a worksheet in the following pages. Each worksheet suggests ways to relate the Eucharistic pattern noted in the quotes to our life in the vestry.
3. Complete the worksheet you have selected.
4. Share in the group assigned by the retreat leaders

That the diversity of gifts may be brought into harmony to the glory of God and in fulfillment of the mission. -Robert Gallagher **Go to page 38**

We are to be transformed, consecrated, made sacred to his creative purpose; and so fulfill the meaning of our life. -Evelyn Underhill

You are the Body of Christ....That is to say; in you and through you the method and work of the Incarnation must go forward. You are meant to incarnate in your lives the themes of your adoration. You are to be taken, consecrated, broken, and made a means of grace; vehicles of the Eternal Charity. -Evelyn Underhill **Go to page 39**

The Eucharist is essentially a social act...It is the sacrament of equality in an unequal world. ...The Eucharistic bread is the symbol of all bread shared. ...We share the Eucharist in order to share the world. -Kenneth Leech, *True Prayer* pp. 110-111

Jesus Christ does not in person decide about the day-to-day questions that confront the community of faith. To some extent, the whole community must decide about these questions, yet the community needs guidance. And it must have leaders who will interpret to it the mind of Christ on the matters in question. -John Macquarrie in *Principles of Christian Theology* **Go to page 40**

Gifts in Harmony

That the diversity of gifts may be brought into harmony to the glory of God and in fulfillment of the mission. -Robert Gallagher

Consider the quote above. Use this worksheet to make notes that connect this idea about one of the patterns in the Eucharist with Eucharistic Living, specifically in regard to the vestry.

The Development of Gifts – Done by training and coaching. Methods allowing people to self-assess themselves and receive feedback on performance are common elements.

1. How are the gifts of those serving at the altar and as readers developed in the parish's primary Sunday Eucharist (the one with the most people attending)?
2. How are the gifts of the congregation developed for joining in the parish's primary Sunday Eucharist (the one with the most people attending)?
3. How are the gifts of the vestry developed in regard to the functioning of that group?

The Facilitation of Harmony in the Use of the Gifts – The various gifts of members can be the source of considerable tension and conflict in the Body of Christ. Clergy and servers; choir masters and congregation; clergy and choir; and so on. It is an active work to facilitate trust and harmony among people as they participate in the Eucharist and in the vestry.

1. In the Eucharist – stories of complexity, trouble or success
2. In the vestry -- stories of complexity, trouble or success

OR

If the above questions aren't working for you – what was it about this of quote that caught your attention? What is the connection you make to the vestry?

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Transformation and becoming vehicles of the Eternal Charity

We are to be transformed, consecrated, made sacred to his creative purpose; and so fulfill the meaning of our life. -Evelyn Underhill

You are the Body of Christ....That is to say; in you and through you the method and work of the Incarnation must go forward. You are meant to incarnate in your lives the themes of your adoration. You are to be taken, consecrated, broken, and made a means of grace; vehicles of the Eternal Charity. -Evelyn Underhill

Consider the quote above. Use this worksheet to make notes that connect this idea about one of the patterns in the Eucharist with Eucharistic Living, specifically in regard to the vestry.

It's not just in the Holy Eucharist that the process takes place. All of life is Eucharistic. In all of life God moves so we might be transformed and made a means of grace. In the Eucharist we see and experience the pattern. That can help us see it in all of life.

1. There is an understanding in pastoral theology that the way the Sunday Eucharist is most effectively and efficiently improved is by:
 - There being in the parish a strong core that offers the Daily Prayers of the Church, the Daily Office, during the week (usually as individuals at home).
 and
 - By more intentionally bringing our daily life to the altar each Sunday—*It is you who lie upon the altar; it is you, your very life, within the cup.* Augustine of Hippo

These are ways in which we can cooperate with God's grace in the Eucharist.

Are these things that you do? How?

Do you have the impression that there is a core of members that does them?

2. Have you experienced times of transformation as part of being on the vestry? Have you been a means of grace in the vestry? Have you seen it in others? How?
3. To what extent is the pace, climate, and tone of the vestry meeting conducive to getting the work done and also being reflective about how we do what we do?

Not at all					Very much so
1	2	3	4	5	

OR

If the above questions aren't working for you – what was it about this set of quotes that caught your attention? What is the connection you make to the vestry?

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A synthesis: equality and hierarchy

The Eucharist is essentially a social act...It is the sacrament of equality in an unequal world. ...The Eucharistic bread is the symbol of all bread shared. ...We share the Eucharist in order to share the world.

-Kenneth Leech, *True Prayer* pp. 110-111

Jesus Christ does not in person decide about the day-to-day questions that confront the community of faith. To some extent, the whole community must decide about these questions, yet the community needs guidance. And it must have leaders who will interpret to it the mind of Christ on the matters in question. -John Macquarrie in *Principles of Christian Theology*

Consider the quotes above. Use this worksheet to make notes that connect this idea about one of the patterns in the Eucharist with Eucharistic Living, specifically in regard to the vestry.

In the vestry's functioning:

- Meetings are conducted so we hear from everyone—ideas, opinions, and feelings.
This means doing more than being willing to hear from everyone if just those introverts would be more assertive. It means using methods to encourage such participation on the part of all. For example, at times going around the circle to hear from each, or occasionally breaking into groups of 3 or 4 for a few minutes or using a worksheet for making notes on an issue (both methods tend to help the introverts get their thoughts together and extraverts become more concise in what they share.)

Never	Frequently and successfully			Too much, we overdo it
1	2	3	4	5

- We have effective and structured ways for the parish community as a whole to express its collective voice. (circle whatever is closest)
Some parishes have community meetings 3 times a year—sometimes taking an overall look at the parish, other times on a specific topic. Other methods include “testing process” (quick, public check-ins on a specific issue) and survey-feedback processes. Note: the most ineffective process is “my door is always open.”

Not appropriate at this time in the parish's life	Too little of this going on in the parish	Doing this in effective ways.	Too much of this going on in the parish
---	---	-------------------------------	---

- The rector (vicar, priest-in-charge) takes initiative often enough and effectively

Not nearly enough or ineffectively	Enough and effectively			Too much, overdoes it
1	2	3	4	5

OR --If the above questions aren't working for you – what was it about this set of quotes that caught your attention? What is the connection you make to the vestry? Or what is the question you wish was being asked?

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A few thoughts about vestries

The parish vestry, the rector, wardens and members, share in the oversight of the church. The priest has a responsibility for the oversight of the whole parish as well as a particular responsibility for the worship life and spiritual formation of the congregation.

The vestry is one source of oversight in the parish. Avoid the temptation to become a centralized control system. Everything doesn't need to come through or be approved by the vestry. How much centralization, in the vestry, of decision-making and/or coordination is needed? What are factors to take into account when making this decision?

Is the role of the vestry just the basic work of overseeing property and finances? To what extent is the vestry going to be involved in setting and monitoring the overall direction of the parish or participate in the strategic management task of navigating the parish toward its goals and through its politics? And depending on the role, what other things need to be in alignment for the arrangement to work? There is not a "correct" answer to all this. It depends on the parish culture and where it is in its life cycle.

The competencies needed by a vestry member include:

- An adult spiritual life grounded in the Episcopal/Anglican tradition
- The ability to work with others as a team; to share responsibility for accomplishing the work while maintaining the relationships
- An understanding that the parish in its life of common prayer and community is forming people in Christ so they may serve in daily life: in families and with friends, at work, and in civic life. The question is how can the parish organize its life to support that and not how can people do more for the parish?
- Other skills and knowledge used in the vestry's work. Minimally oversight of property and finances. In some vestry's skills to facilitate listening and conversation, to lead small groups, to assist in setting and supporting direction, to build trust and manage conflict.

A Eucharistic Life

What happens in the Holy Eucharist is also what happens in the life of People of God, the Body of Christ. A few thoughts on some of the patterns.

That the diversity of gifts may be brought into harmony to the glory of God and in fulfillment of the mission. -Robert Gallagher

There are two things that strike me about how Saint Paul approaches the issue of gifts in his first letter to the Corinthians. The first is that he sees the problem that has emerged in that church over whose gifts are more important. He acknowledges the reality. Not an easy thing to do. The second is that he offers two "solutions." One is the image of the Body of Christ—"you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." And because that is true, you have need of one another. The second is that "Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things." [1 Corinthians 12 – 13]

We are to be transformed, consecrated, made sacred to his creative purpose; and so fulfill the meaning of our life. -Evelyn Underhill

You are the Body of Christ....That is to say; in you and through you the method and work of the Incarnation must go forward. You are meant to incarnate in your lives the themes of your adoration. You are to be taken, consecrated, broken, and made a means of grace; vehicles of the Eternal Charity. -Evelyn Underhill

This pattern is probably the most widely understood and commented upon—taken, blessed, broken, shared. Jesus Christ, the bread of the Mass, you and me—“taken, consecrated, broken, and made a means of grace.” “There you are on the paten, there you are in the chalice” said Saint Augustine. It’s our life offered to God. It’s that routine and sometimes terrified life of being in families, of having friendships, of engaging in work and being citizens, that is placed upon the altar. And it is that life, in its obedience to the pattern, that becomes a vehicle of the “Eternal Charity.”

Too many parish vestries get caught up in the false assumption that the parish’s main contribution to the mission is by what the parish does institutionally. We can enter into an illusion that it is the parish’s programs, its common acts of service, which are the primary vehicles. But that’s not the case.

The Body of Christ is scattered throughout the institutions of society. It is in our roles in the world where the influence of Christ primarily moves in and through us. To the extent we have become light, salt, and leaven by our participation in Christ; to that extent we will serve the world well.

A parish will best fulfill its place in the mission of God as it takes seriously the life of its members in the world. It is the most effective and the most efficient way.

The Eucharist is essentially a social act...It is the sacrament of equality in an unequal world. ...The Eucharistic bread is the symbol of all bread shared. ...We share the Eucharist in order to share the world.

-Kenneth Leech, *True Prayer* pp. 110-111

Jesus Christ does not in person decide about the day-to-day questions that confront the community of faith. To some extent, the whole community must decide about these questions, yet the community needs guidance. And it must have leaders who will interpret to it the mind of Christ on the matters in question.

-John Macquarrie in *Principles of Christian Theology*

Some Christians take positions where this is an either/or matter. Our sense of the issue is that it is better approached as a polarity to be managed. There is always a hierarchy—it may be one of giving power to those who are most articulate, or those most aggressive or most assertive; or possibly authority goes to

those who have been in the parish for the longest time. Most might now agree that authority or power based on race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation is wrong. Within the appearance of equality in any organization is often a hidden hierarchy. Hidden may be more dangerous than the obvious. What is useful at this time in our history? For the issues facing a particular parish?

Most of us may be inclination to believe that equality within a group is important yet there is research that suggests that a stable hierarchy leads to fewer conflicts and higher productivity in a group. We also have seen that a group will have a higher degree of internal commitment, commitment that last over time and under pressure, when it is grounded in free choice from real options, and that in turn is rooted in valid and useful information.

“What to look for in a parish priest” and “Vestries: Choices and Alignment” - in the follow up material at:
www.congregationaldevelopment.com/vestry-retreat-diocese-of-sout/

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