



The Little Church with the big heart



**From Rev. Mark C. Bigley**

## Reflections on Healing ...

*Last month I was deeply moved during the time when half of you in the congregation came forward to stand with Marilyn Fisher as she knelt to receive the laying on of hands and anointing for healing before her surgery. Following the anointing, feeling the Presence of God moving deeply through us all via the tingling I felt moving up and down through my spine, all I could do was turn to Mary Paffe at the altar and mouthed, "Wow!" There are not words to describe this kind of movement as The Great Stillness came over all of us.*



Healing transcends the cognitive basically because you and I aren't the ones doing it. Healing involves a particular receptivity to Divine Presence, like "getting out of the way" for what God wants to do: to restore us to wholeness and sacred Unity in the Divine Spirit. A metaphor for this might be the time years ago when I lived in Wyoming. The deacon at the church I was serving took me to a local clergy gathering at Ring Lake, a retreat center in the midst of the Rocky Mountains. During a walk around the lake, on the path, unexpectedly a small rock of pink granite caught my attention ("these stones will shout"-Luke 19). I leaned over and picked it up and placed it in my hand. It was shaped like an egg, about a half size larger than one. What amazed me was how smooth it was. No rough edges. It was symmetrical. It was a piece of glacial till—the ice and perhaps water that now fill the lake, honing it into its perfected shape, removing its rough edges. The "egg" still sits on my bookshelf in the living room some twenty years later. I still pick it up at times as I feel the "remembrance" of the moment and ponder how the Spirit has "tilled" me these past 60 years. I still have some rough edges—I'm not as smooth as the rock. But I've had enough eroding done to my spirit to rid my ego of my raggedness, that I long to have the rest of these irregularities removed. Why? Because the rough edges rob me of the Gift of God: Peace.

Healing is the emptying of what is not Peace, to receive true Peace. The intention to accept ourselves as God does, allow the Spirit to rub against our places of disturbance and empty us is the pathway to peace. I witnessed earlier today in my therapy office in Cleveland, that two clients, when I asked them what they wanted the most—what we could work on together for the outcome that most mattered to them, they both said: "Peace." This isn't the first time I've heard clients desire this as their #1 goal. They've spent enough time in chaos to know that whatever they've tried before hasn't worked. We all want Peace. Sometimes we look for this Peace, as the song goes, "in all the wrong places." Peace is an inside job. It doesn't come from external reality. It's allowing God to get at all the clutter blocking our souls and to allow it to be removed. This removal first is experienced as emptiness and anxiety because we are not used to change. But if we are able to trust God and hold in that space, we realize the Peace that passes all understanding has been there all the time. And there are no words for it—not even "Wow!"

Healing and Peace,

**Mark**



*Prayers for Healing...*

We will offer anointing and prayers for Healing at both Sunday and the Wednesday Eucharists. I would like to try to do this *after* the last person receives the Eucharist. Simply present yourself at the altar rail and tell me your prayer intentions. I believe having the Eucharist at this time in the liturgy will help our worship flow a little easier. If you wish to receive prayers for healing but feel it awkward to return to the altar rail after receiving communion, feel free to wait and receive communion as part of the last rail of communicants. As always, let me hear from you

*Choose Your Favorite Hymns!*



Here's your opportunity! During the month of September Dale (our organist) and I will choose the Sunday hymns from a list of your favorites that you give us. For this round, please limit your choices to the Hymnal. Later on we may be able to consider other tunes from alternative service music books. Please give your list to either Dale or myself, or place them in my mailbox in the computer room no later than August 21<sup>st</sup>. If we are not able to use all of your selections, we'll save them for the next time.

*The Spirituality of Hospitality* By Joan Chittister

Benedictine spirituality is a sacramental spirituality.

It holds all things-- the earth and all its goods--as sacred. When Benedict of Nursia began his new way of living in wild, licentious, sixth-century Rome, he turned that world upside down.

He took into his monastic community  
the rich and the poor,  
the slave and the free,  
the young and the old, artists and craftsmen, peasants and noblemen. It was a motley crew.  
And then, as if that weren't enough, he opened the doors of the monastery  
to anyone who came, at any time, to anyone who knocked, no matter who they were  
or where they had been in life along the way.

"Great care and concern are to be shown," the Rule goes on, "in receiving poor people  
and pilgrims because in them more particularly Jesus is received."

The point is clear: the guest, to the Benedictine, is much more than simply another social contact.  
Guests, the unknown and the wandering other,  
are the final and authentic addition to any Benedictine community.

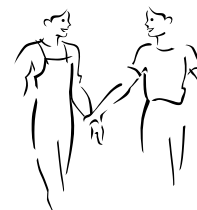
Without them, the very notion of Benedictine community  
is suspect, is nothing but more of the same. Without the guest we make the community life all about us  
alone. Families that concentrate only on themselves do not build up  
the entire human family. The Benedictine, on the other hand, is actually on the lookout for guests--  
for their needs, for their wisdom.

The guest in Benedictine spirituality is a visit from the God of Surprises  
who comes upon us at our most vulnerable and breaks us open  
to a new part of ourselves as well as to the needs of the other.

Guests bring the world in, place it at our feet, and dare us to be  
who and what we say we are. They are a blatant sign for all to see that any group that calls itself a Mon-  
astery of the Heart—but exists only for itself and its own kind--is really not a  
real community  
at all.

A Monastery of the Heart is a community with stretchable, permeable,  
illimitable boundaries made up of anyone who happens to come into it  
at any time, and always saying,

***We are here for you."***







**MASH update for August**

*(Mighty Alban Senior Helpers)*

MASH met on Thursday the 21st of July at church for a good old fashion Hamburger/Hot dog Cookout. Twelve of us participated by bringing the side dishes & deserts. While the food was grilling, we socialized & started a discussion concerning MASH's future plans/outings. A great time was had by all and everyone was on their way home by dark. If you missed this, we have some more events coming soon.



**Sunday Aug 7** - MASH will host an Ice Cream Social immediately following the 10:30 Service. Bring your Ice Cream appetites & enjoy the fellowship.

**This will take the place of the 1st Sunday's covered dish lunch.**



Sept. 23 - MASH is venturing out for a evening Dinner Cruise and tour of the Tennessee River Gorge aboard the Blue Moon (77 ft yacht). Cost is \$39 per person (plus tax). We will meet at the church at 4:30 PM and carpool to town. The tour leaves the dock at 6:00 PM & returns at 8:30PM. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Charlie or Kathy Brown at (240)

925-0717 or by e-mail at [browncbkb@aol.com](mailto:browncbkb@aol.com).

Other adventures being discussed are: a Lynchburg trip (Jack Daniel's Plant & lunch at Miss Mary BOBO's): a Tour of the University of the South (in Sevannee TN), a Sock Hop, etc. MASH is for anyone who considers them self a 'seasoned' or 'senior' individual/couple. There is no age limit on either side, however, most of our activities will focus on things which might be more interesting to retired people. It is strictly a social outreach group. You do not have to be a member of St. Alban's or be married to attend. **So, please come join us at MASH.....and bring a friend!**



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Note to MASH- Don't forget to make your Blue Moon Reservations early. Reservations can be made by phone number @ (323) 338-2230 or by e-mail address @ <http://www.bluemooncruises.org/> . Remember it fills up fast. This is the last week of the year for Evening Cruises.