



MISSION ENRICHMENT

Volume 18, No. 1 | Jan-Feb, 2018

The Spirit of the Gospel in Service of the Mission

“May Light always surround you;
Hope kindle and rebound you.
May your Hurts turn to healing;
your Heart embrace Feeling.
May Wounds become Wisdom;
every Kindness a prism.
May Laughter infect you;
your Passion resurrect you.
May Goodness inspire
your Deepest Desires.
Through all that you reach for,
may your arms never tire.”

- D. Simone



Feast of the Immaculate Conception



Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul

“UNLEARNING”

(from *Snow Falling on Snow* by Robert J. Wicks)

If we are to be successful, we must know the right kind of effort to make—an effort that includes embracing a radically new attitude and living out of a more honest identity. One way this can be accomplished more easily is through

continued on back page

Year of Oblate Vocations

Our Superior General, Fr. Louis Lougen has invited us to participate in a Year of Oblate Vocations, beginning **December 8, 2017 and ending on January 25, 2019...** This year... cannot be limited to those who seek to participate in our life as vowed members of our Congregation. We must also actively promote vocations to the many groups that are inspired by the example and charism of St. Eugene de Mazenod... Honorary Oblates, Oblate Associates, Oblate Affiliates, Oblate Employees, Oblate Mission Supporters, Oblate Partners and Oblate Youth. (Fr. Louis Studer, U.S. Provincial, Nov. 2017)

Christ continues to call people to follow him as disciples and missionaries. He continues to encounter people in their lives to involve them in his mission of preaching the Good News of salvation to the world. Vocation is a gift from God. It is God who calls, who transforms and who sends. Encounter with the person of Jesus Christ is crucial.... (Oct. 2017 General Guidelines for Year of Oblate Vocations) †

FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE FOUNDER

September 29, 1841 letter to Fr. Jean Baptiste Honorat



... You know that from the moment the Father sent us, his little flock, at the last hour to work in his vineyard, we returned from our modest labours with abundant fruit; that on beginning to proclaim his Word, God accomplished great things through us.... Therefore be mutually encouraging and edify one another. Be united in the same spirit, working together for the faith of the Gospel. You especially whom we have appointed to lead and direct your brothers, excel more in merit and virtue rather than in being elevated as the one in charge; endeavour more to endear the hearts of those under you by charity and mildness than to lead them by authority....

Go then forth upon your journey with a light and willing heart. May God our Father himself and Our Lord Jesus Christ guide your steps. The benevolent protection of the Most Holy Virgin Mary, conceived without stain, be with you and the attentive care of the holy Angel of God....

C. J. Eugene, Bishop of Marseilles, Superior General

Ideas or comments are welcome.

The Mission Enrichment Newsletter for those working with the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate is published six times a year.

Gerri Furmanek, Editor | Mission Enrichment Office | Paul Schulte Center | 224 S.De Mazenod Dr., | Belleville IL 62223-1035

Tel:618-394-6990 Fax:618-394-6987 | e-mail: gfurmanek@omiusa.org



A blonde and a redhead have a ranch. They have just lost their bull. The women need to buy another, but only have \$500. The redhead tells the blonde, "I will go to the market and see if I can find one for under that amount. If I can, I will send you a telegram." She goes to the market and finds one for \$499. Having only one dollar left, she goes to the telegraph office and finds out that it costs one dollar per word. She is stumped on how to tell the blonde to bring the truck and trailer. Finally, she tells the telegraph operator to send the word "comfortable." Skeptical, the operator asks, "How will she know to come with the trailer from just that word?" The redhead replies, "She's a blonde so she reads slow: 'Come for ta bull.'" †

Relationship Basics by Steve Goodier

One man said of his marriage "I very distinctly remember our wedding day. As we unloaded the moving van into our little house, I said, 'Darling, this is your and my little world.'" Then he became pensive. "Problem is, we've been fighting for the world's championship ever since," he said.

One woman was tired of the marital conflict. "Why don't we just ask God to strike one of us dead tonight," she suggested, "then this marriage would have peace at last." After a moment she added, "And I could go live with my sister."

All relationships experience conflict - marriages, friendships, parents and children. But too many beleaguered relationships suffer when well-meaning people are unable to resolve their differences. Their relationships dry up, become brittle and break apart like an old and valuable photograph left in the hot sun. A union that once seemed a work of art eventually resembles a discolored and crumbling canvas. Finding and restoring those pieces to anything attractive can be a near-impossible task.

And the amazing realization is this: the incidents that finally destroy a relationship are usually small and insignificant!

Momentous decisions and huge obstacles generally don't pull people apart. Most people in committed relationships can stand united when disaster strikes. It is the little problems, the insignificant stressors that do the most damage when allowed to fester.

Do you know what issue causes the greatest number of conflicts in households? According to a recent report, people argue most often about which television show or movie to watch. Would any couple or family have believed that the selection of television programs would become their major source of conflict?

Somewhere along the line we forget to just stop and ask ourselves what is important. Sometimes we just need to remember why we got together in the first place. And remember the difference between minor inconveniences and major issues. In short, we forget the basics. And we can end up paying a high price for our forgetfulness. †

For healthy and satisfying relationships, it's vital to remember these simple basics:

- **The people you love are more valuable than the things you own. Put them first.**
- **Most problems are just inconveniences. Let them go.**
- **Little things, if left unattended, will grow into big things. Working through conflicts are the dues we pay for long-lasting relationships.**
- **Treat love as if it's fragile. Tend it and care for it. That love, properly nurtured, will grow into one of the strongest forces in your life.**

Those are the basics. Simple, really. But they are the stuff satisfying relationships are made of.

Living from the Heart

(Random Acts of Kindness, by Editors of Conari Press)

"Fear grows out of the things we think; it lives in our minds. Compassion grows out of the things we are, and lives in our hearts." – Barbara Garrison

I don't care what anyone else says. These are awful times. There is hardness in people's faces. Children wear bruises and forget to laugh. Everyone shrugs. People sleep under black plastic garbage bags and carry their world in a shopping cart....

Our souls are leaking. We are in a recession and we're receding. We are not moving toward anything. We are receding away.... Away from each other. But it doesn't have to be that way.

When I was quite small my immigrant Russian grandmother once told me that people in this country give from the wrong place. "When you give from here," she declared, pointing to her solar plexus... "it's like keeping a ledger book. I give you three so you give me three. I sweep the floor so you carry the bundles."

... shaking her head back and forth, tssking her tongue against her teeth. "That's not giving, that's trading. You give your soul away when you give like that. Giving is supposed to be from here," she said, pointing to the center of her chest with a feathery finger. "When you give from your heart, it's not to get anything back. There is no owing

or owed. You just give because you want to give. When you give like this, it fills you up. It can't empty you.

"Your heart can never run out. The more you give from there, the fuller it will be." ...

Remember to give from your heart. Even to strangers. When you give like this there are no strangers. And remember to notice when other people give to you like this and be sure to say thank you."

... People are seeking ways to evolve beyond the crippling events of their histories, searching for ways to crumble the barriers behind which we all sometimes withdraw in defense and isolation.... "Who helped you learn to love?" or "What has sustained you through hard times?"

"What random acts of kindness have you done?" We are trained to believe that we don't matter and that we cannot make

Editor's note: the following is the seventh in an on-going series; with gratitude for all those who work the steps of recovery.

“The reason I make so much of being an Al-Anon member is that Al-Anon has been the means of making a better person of me.”

If I believe that it is hopeless to expect any improvement in my life, I am doubting the power of God. If I believe I have reason for despair, I am confessing personal failure, for I DO have the power to change myself, and nothing can prevent it but my own unwillingness.

Hello, my name is Elene. I grew up with two alcoholics, my father and paternal grandfather, who lived with us. I was an only child until I was eight and a half years old. I lived in constant fear of what would happen next. My coping mechanisms were to figure out how to do it right, be perfect, not rock the boat and be the good little girl. All the while, I wondered what I had done wrong. I searched for many years to find the way out of the entanglement. I looked good on the outside; I was super responsible, capable, and a “nice” person. On the inside I was a mess - full of fear, anxiety, anger, hatred of myself, and much practiced at keeping it all on the inside. Or so I thought. It leaked out in controlling behavior, people pleasing, compliant behavior, approval seeking, and judgment of self and others. Oh, yes, and did I mention living life from the viewpoint of a victim? There wasn't a name for the web of emotional pain and unhealthy behaviors I experienced.

Yes, there was Al-Anon, and that is where I began my recovery journey. Al-Anon was very helpful, a significant part of my healing. It helped shift the focus from my father to my own behavior. Yet, there was something

missing.

In my 40s, I discovered the missing piece; I was an adult child of an alcoholic. I first heard of ACA in 1985 and immediately felt a resonance. At last there was a name for what I was experiencing, and there were others like me. I wasn't alone. . . .

It was in 1978 that the name emerged: Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA). Tony A. (co-founder of ACA) was a New York City stockbroker, about 50 years old, who grew up in an abusive alcoholic home and noticed a set of behaviors that, in his observation, were common to himself and others in the group. He listed fourteen characteristics that have lovingly become known as “The Laundry List.” Some of the behaviors included in “The Laundry List” are those I listed in the first paragraph.

What exactly is meant by the term, “Adult Child”? It typically refers to adults who have grown up in alcoholic or other dysfunctional homes. In Tony A.'s words, “An adult child is someone who responds to adult situations with self-doubt, self-blame or a sense of being wrong or inferior---all learned from stages of childhood. Without help, we unknowingly operate with ineffective thoughts and judgments learned in childhood. The regression can be subtle, but it is there sabotaging our decisions and relationships.” In summary, it means we meet the demands of adult life with survival techniques learned as children.

As in Alcoholics Anonymous, there is a statement of the problem and solution. “The Laundry List” is a statement of the problem.

As stated in the literature, “The solution is to become our own loving parent.” All of us have two distinct aspects of our personality: the Adult and the Child. When these two parts are connected and working together, there is a sense of wholeness within. When these two parts are disconnected, - because of being wounded, dysfunctional, or undeveloped - there is a sense of conflict, emptiness and aloneness within. Healing happens when we make the decision to learn from and with the Inner Child.

. . . Emotions and the body feelings connected to them were deeply buried inside of me. **I came to see that the problem was not that as a child my needs were unmet, but that as an adult they were unmourned.** The hurt, betrayed child inside me cried out for what she missed. She so much wanted to let go of the pain and the stressful present neediness she felt in adult relationships. In fact, the neediness itself told me nothing about what I needed from others; it told me how much I needed to grieve the unchangeable past and get in touch with my own inner sources of nurturance. I did this in a variety of ways: Twelve-Step work, therapy, body work and spiritual direction.

The principles of ACA are not about blame. They are about owning your truth, grieving your losses, and being accountable today for how you live your life. Step by step, one day at a time, the movement is from shame to self-worth, from secrecy to honesty, from loneliness to connection with self, others and a Higher Power, and from silence to having a voice. †

a difference. We are trained to notice only deficits, only where we are stuck, only how we are suffering.

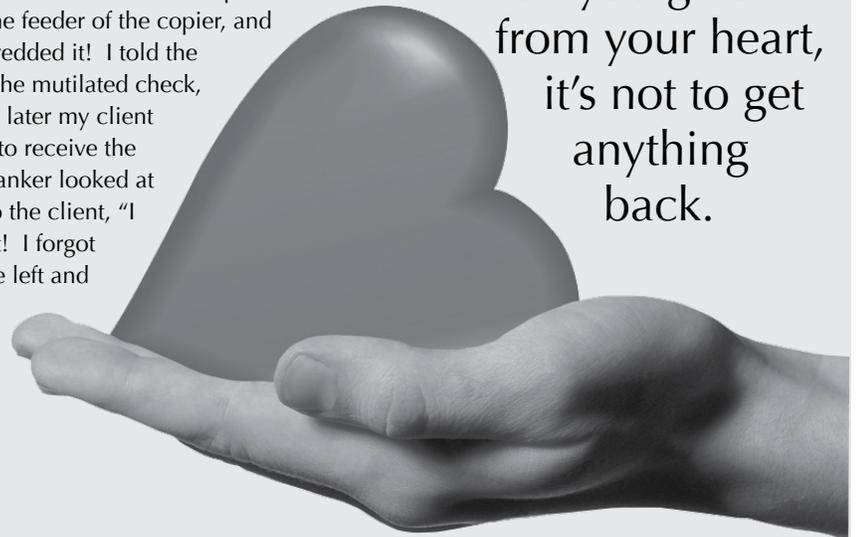
. . . . It is possible to decrease the suffering in the world by adding to the joy. It is possible to add to the light rather than trying to destroy the darkness.

Once you begin to acknowledge random acts of kindness—both the ones you have received and the ones you have given—you can no longer believe that what you do does not matter.

. . . create space in your life for the expression of gratitude. What has sustained your soul? What has inspired you to hold on when all else was pulling you over a cliff? You are, we all are, the culmination of an infinite number of improbable gifts from myriad nameless sources.

. . . . I am a corporate lawyer, and several years ago I was at my first closing. The

investment banker came to deliver a check for \$55 million to my client, and before my client arrived, I went to the Xerox machine to copy the check for our records. I put the check in the feeder of the copier, and it promptly shredded it! I told the banker about the mutilated check, and a moment later my client arrived, eager to receive the money. The banker looked at me and said to the client, “I can't believe it! I forgot the check!” He left and returned an hour later with a new check, and I kept my job. †



**When you give
from your heart,
it's not to get
anything
back.**

“Unlearning” continued from front page

a deep appreciation of the process of unlearning, so that relearning and responding in new creative ways can really become possible.

All through the history of the human race we **have heard stories of people being asked to let go, unlearn, reform, renew, and accept an identity that is more in line with who they could become rather than who they have settled for being because of the presence of anxiety or ignorance.**

Like them and others throughout history, we are now called to unlearn much of what we have absorbed that is untrue about ourselves and others so we can have an attitude of sensitivity. This will allow us to be open to new realities and new possibilities and to find our own true name and identity. We can then model this for others so they can also be empowered to see and take their places of dignity in the world.

~ ~ ~

7 Lovely Logics

1) *Make Peace with your Past*

So it doesn't spoil your Present.

2) *What others Think of you is*

None of your Business.

3) *Time Heals Almost Everything.*

Give the Time, Some Time.

4) *No one is the Reason of your Happiness*

Except You yourself.

5) *Don't compare your Life with others*

You have No Idea what their journey is all about.

6) *Stop Thinking too much.*

It's Alright not to know all the Answers.

7) *Smile, you don't own*

All the Problems in the World.



MAKE NEW YEAR'S GOALS

(from *The Language of Letting Go: Daily Meditations on Codependency* by Melody Beattie)

Make New Year's goals. Dig within, and discover what you would like to have happen in your life this year. This helps you do your part. It is an affirmation that you're interested in fully living life in the year to come.

Goals give us direction. They put a powerful force into play on a universal, conscious, and subconscious level. Goals give our life direction.

What would you like to have happen in your life this year? What would you like to do, to accomplish? What good would you like to attract into your life? What particular areas of growth would you like to have happen to you? What blocks, or character defects, would you like to have removed?

What would you like to attain? Little things and big things? Where would you like to go? What would you like to have happen in friendship and love? What would you like to have happen in your family life?

What problems would you like to see solved? What decisions would you like to make? What would you like to happen in your career? Write it down. Take a piece of paper, a few hours of your time, and write it all down - as an affirmation of you, your life, and your ability to choose. Then let it go.

The New Year stands before us, like a chapter in a book, waiting to be written. We can help write that story by setting goals. †

Traveling Joke

So it was Jim's first time leaving Europe, he was excited about visiting America and expanding his horizons. "Excuse me", said a woman to him at the airport. "Do you happen to be traveling to America?" "As a matter of fact I am" responded Jim. "Do me a favor, my husband left for America 2 months ago and I haven't seen or heard from him since. If

you meet a fellow named John Dun, tell him to call his wife." Jim happily complied and was on his way. He was barely in America for a hour when he saw a big building with the words Dun Watches, "Wow!" thought Jim "that was easy." Jim walked into the building and asked the lady behind the desk "do you have a John here?" "Second door on the left," was her reply. Jim saw a man walking out of the door drying his hands "are you Dun?" he asked. "Yes" came the mystified reply. "Call your wife," said Jim, "she's been waiting to hear from you." †