Sojourn Chaplaincy: Journeying With Others for 25 Years

By Monica Burden

For 25 years, Sojourn chaplains at San Francisco General Hospital (SFGH) have been true to their name by faithfully journeying with patients for a time. Sojourn provides chaplaincy services to patients and staff at SFGH, including patient drop-ins and referred visits, working with staff suffering from stress and grief, and providing regular worship services. On April 26, St. Gregory of Nyssa will host a gala event celebrating Sojourn’s anniversary. The event will mark the organization’s continued commitment to providing interfaith chaplaincy services at SFGH to patients and staff alike.

Over the years, a few dedicated members of the diocese worked to establish an Episcopal chaplaincy program at SFGH. The diocese had tried using seminarians as chaplains, established a Chaplaincy Board, and even paid a full-time chaplain for one year. However, the board was unable to sustain that level of support. Looking for another approach, in 1982 the board hired a layperson, Augie O’Connor, to gather and train lay people as chaplains.

It was an important time to begin a chaplaincy. Among the thousands of patients they treated every year, the staff at SFGH was beginning to see those suffering from a mysterious new disease that was making an especially profound impact among gay men in San Francisco. Overwhelmed hospital employees, gloved, gowned and masked against a disease they did not understand, were not always able to care for the emotional and spiritual needs of the patients. In 1982, the term AIDS was used for the first time. Those who were infected received physical care at SFGH, but because of fear, ignorance and prejudice, they were often stigmatized by society. Not only were people dying at an alarming rate, often they were dying alone.

Sojourn was established just before the AIDS epidemic took hold. Through Augie O’Connor’s tireless efforts, chaplains began to offer their presence to those patients on a regular basis. The mission and ministry of Sojourn, to offer compassion and understanding through a self-aware and nonjudgmental presence, were desperately needed.

In 1982, O’Connor wrote a Pacific Churchman article about journeying with a twenty-six year old man dying of infectious hepatitis, “one of those rare individuals with no resistance to the disease.” O’Connor describes bringing the patient and his family a Gideon Bible, praying with them through his passing, and helping prepare his memorial service at Grace Cathedral. “To the aspiring chaplain, to gather and train lay people as chaplains...

Today, while chaplains still minister to AIDS patients, the organization’s focus has broadened and deepened. With the AIDS epidemic held in check, Sojourn has become an integrated multi-faith organization, and is the primary spiritual care facility for the hospital. (There is also a Roman Catholic chaplaincy at SFGH.) During a recent visit to their small office and lounge at SFGH, I met with two chaplains, the Rev. David Lui, Episcopal priest at Church of the Incarnation, San Francisco, and Mike Goldman, Jewish lay chaplain.

Both chaplains emphasize care of the volunteer who wants to ‘bring God to the patients,’” she writes, “I can only say, ‘These are regular people. They happen to be in the midst of crisis. God is already with them. My being there shares God’s presence with them. It also shares His presence with me.’”

Soon the Episcopal chaplaincy at SFGH began training deacons as well. By 1987, the Rev. Connie Hartquist was training 41 chaplains for AIDS ministry. Sojourn chaplains, lay and ordained, met with those of all faiths, sitting with them, praying with them through their passing, and helping prepare their memorial service at Grace Cathedral. “To the aspiring chaplain, to gather and train lay people as chaplains...”

For each patient he sees and fully realizing that they are all someone’s son or daughter. He says the work also helps him remember that drug addicts and sex workers weren’t that way when they were born. Part of Sojourn’s mission statement is the belief that “each person is remarkable and unique and deserving of compassion and understanding.”

Lui began working with Sojourn in 2001, and he considers his volunteer hours there personal time rather than work time. Being a chaplain helps him reconnect with his call to ministry, helping others find “a holy space, in that moment where they can find comfort.” As the only Cantonese-speaking chaplain at Sojourn, he finds that serving the Asian community is a significant part of his ministry. He recalls being asked to meet with an Asian-American patient claiming to be a Buddhist monk. Lui found the man wasn’t a monk, but was hoping to become “enlightened” — and talking to a Chinese priest was okay with him. The patient shared his understanding of Buddhist philosophy, Lui shared his own Christian faith, and together they prayed that the young man might be liberated from his physical and spiritual agony. Lui remembers it as one of the moments that has led him to embrace the multi-faith nature of Sojourn.

The Rev. Will Hocker, Sojourn’s director, says that Sojourn will always remain Episcopalian, but also works actively to make their services and chapel space accessible and inclusive for people of all faiths. The volunteers are a diverse group. In addition to Episcopalians, interns from Westmont College (a conservative evangelical Christian school in Santa Barbara), and people from other Christian denominations, the chaplains are Jewish, Buddhist, Wiccan, and non-denominationally spiritual.

The Rev. Tommy Dillon, co-chair with Sheila Andrus of the Sojourn board, reports that their newest board member is Souleman Ghali, founder and former...
Going Apart and Restoring Connection

John 1: 29-34

“The next day he saw Jesus coming towards him and declared, ‘Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!’ This is he of whom I said, ‘After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.’” And John testified, ‘I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. And I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “He on whom you see the Spirit descend is the one who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.”’ And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God.”

One way that understanding and sometimes illumination come is by restoring a connection between parts of a story that have been separated. We see purposes, origins, meanings that were previously unguessed. Elements of the previously separated chapters of the story that had been either elevated or neglected are reassessed. New weightings are revealed in the restored whole.

So it may be for us this Lent, if we compare John’s way of telling the Baptism of Jesus with the Synoptic (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) account. In the Synoptic gospels, the account immediately follows the Baptism and traditionally begins the season of Lent—the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness. I quoted the story from John because it was the one we heard during Epiphany this year. We shall return to it in a moment, after a sojourn with the Synoptics.

In Matthew, Mark, and Luke, the Spirit is the element connecting the story of the Baptism with the story of the temptation. The Spirit descends on Jesus at the Baptism, and the Spirit drives Jesus into the wilderness to face his temptation. God gives the gift of the Spirit, as shown in the Bible’s stories, to empower people to do ministry. Characteristically this means being prophets, bringing God’s restorative and transformative message once again to the people. We experience surprise at finding the Spirit turning Jesus inward, pushing him into a confrontation with his own motives and character, rather than outward to begin his extrinsic ministry.

The action of the Spirit is on the inner preparation of the prophet, or, we may read, the people of God. Emphasis is placed on the inner work that is necessary to engage in God’s mission, and on the gift of grace, without which such work is impossible.

So we return to John’s telling of this story, and experience yet another surprise—there is no temptation story. Jesus is immediately calling disciples, caught up in the swirl of his ministry, emerging as the individual-in-community he became at a wedding in Cana. What is going on? What of that inner preparation, that going apart we heard in the Synoptics?

Ethan Vesely-Flad

Episcopal Urban Caucus to Meet in Oakland

The Episcopal Urban Caucus National Assembly will take place for the first time in the Diocese of California from February 13 to February 16, 2008. The Episcopal Urban Caucus is committed to advocacy, strategy, and action in order to influence the Episcopal Church’s priorities and decisions regarding anti-racism, peace and war, poverty, hunger and other issues that adversely affect the inclusion of any person in the life of the Church.

The Assembly at the Oakland Airport Hilton Hotel will feature a keynote address by Eva Paterson, president of the Equal Justice Society. Workshops by local presenters will include the Diocese of California Environmental Commission, the San Francisco Night Ministry, the Task Force for Migration and Immigration, the Society of St. Francis, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children, and the Black Alliance for Just Immigration. There will also be site visits to social and economic justice programs in Oakland and Berkeley, including Destiny Arts, Ray Finch Youth Center, the Ella Baker Center and TransFair. Special activities are planned for youth as part of the Assembly.

For registration and information, see www.episcopalurbancaucus.org.

At noon on Thursday, February 14, the Episcopal Peace Fellowship will sponsor a luncheon. The speaker will be Ethan Vesely-Flad, formerly of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, and now communications coordinator for the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Contact CSFsfo@aol.com or 415-824-0288 to make reservations for the luncheon.

The Assembly Eucharist at St. Paul’s Church, Oakland, February 14 at 6:30 p.m., is free and open to everyone. During and after the Eucharist there will be a short candlelit peace witness featuring the reading of the names of California service men and women who have died in Afghanistan and Iraq and an exhibit of the American Friends Service Committee’s “Eyes Wide Open” display of military boots.

Ethan Vesely-Flad

Sojourn chaplains Will Hocker, Giancarlo Calabrese, Margo Olson, Sister Lyn Sharp, and Mike Goldman

Whether paid or volunteer, it’s clear that the staff finds Sojourn a motivating and enriching place to be. “Having to keep your heart open and be nonjudgmental is akin to religious practice,” says Goldstein. He remembers one patient, in the ward where jail inmates are treated, opening up and talking about how he had disappointed his mother. The man asked Goldstein to help him make a commitment to end the dysfunction in his family, and Goldstein did, not knowing if it would last beyond the patient’s discharge from the hospital. A month or so later, Goldstein came to the hospital to find this man waiting for him, along with his 18-year-old son. The man again asked Goldstein to be a witness to his commitment, and as they stood there, he pledged to his son that he would not hurt him or the rest of his family any more. By being present for those who are suffering, especially the marginalized population that forms so much of SFGH’s client base, Sojourn chaplains generate hope for all of us.

For more information about Sojourn Chaplaincy, please see their website at www.sojournchaplaincy.org or contact the Rev. Will Hocker at 415.206.6795.

Sojourn: From page 1

president of the Islamic Society of San Francisco. Ghali is helping them find Muslim volunteers, who will begin a condensed chaplaincy training program in April. The revitalized board and Hocker are looking forward to the future of Sojourn. They have continued to deepen their relationship with SFGH, which is now required to have a chaplaincy program to maintain certain accreditations. As a result, Sojourn has been able to hire a coordinator of programs, Elizabeth Welch, who not only designs training programs for hospital staff, such as domestic violence recognition training.

Despite these changes, Sojourn continues to run on a shoestring budget financed mainly by grants and generous donations from supporters. They currently have only two full-time paid staff members and about 20 volunteer chaplains. Although thousands of patients come to SFGH through the emergency room—SFGH is the Bay Area’s only Level I trauma center—Sojourn is currently unable to provide chaplains after hours. Hocker plans to remedy the situation later this year by hiring a paid chaplain to cover nights and weekends. Sojourn is also exploring the possibility of becoming an accredited Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) site. Doing so would provide those seeking ordained ministry with high-quality CPE training, as required by many dioceses, but would also help Sojourn better serve the hospital’s needs.

m2ss.org

ministry to straight spouses

m2ss makes no recommendations about the validity of relationships or of marriages. It has been put together by people who have lived with these issues and healed, it simply shares what has been been useful to others in this situation.
Absalom Jones: A Lenten Venn Diagram

By Sean T. McConnell

February is the shortest month of the year (at least we get one more day this year). In some parts of the northern hemisphere it is the coldest month. And for some reason, this short cold month is when we recognize the contributions African Americans have made throughout our history.

Lent is a time when we actively seek metamorphosis — a change of heart. It is a time when we change our behavior and we change our focus. For many of us, Lent is a time to strip away the trappings of this world and to go deeper into our relationship with the Christ. And most frequently — like this year — Lent begins in February.

In my mind, this overlap of Lent and Black History Month is like a Venn diagram. It presents an interesting convergence. This overlap, for me, creates a convergence of ideas and of stories, of death and of the hope of resurrection. This year, one sparkling light in that overlap occurs one week to the day after Ash Wednesday. On February 13 we will honor Absalom Jones — the first African American priest in the Episcopal Church. I would like to invite you into a short reflection on the overlap by inviting you into your own history.

Imagine it is a sweltering summer’s day in Philadelphia of 1794, and that you are a recently freed slave, attending the first service of the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas. Now free, you have sought the services of the Free African Society (FAS) in becoming established, finding employment, and building community. To provide for the spiritual needs of the newly free, members of the FAS (including Absalom Jones and Richard Allen) have worked closely with the Rt. Rev. William White, bishop of Pennsylvania, and other religious leaders to establish a place of worship for persons of African descent. The Rev. Samuel Magaw and his friend the Rev. James Abarcumber (both white men), were selected by White, to inaugurate this new church.

There you sit, humbled by your newfound freedom and excited by the opportunity this moment portends. Throughout the room old friends and new greet one another. They smile, and laugh, and shake hands and embrace, then take their seats in the tall box pews. Everyone present comes from a different religious upbringing or none at all. Some are sitting silently, looking around at this strange new church, others are praying; but you and every person in that room have a sense that this is a reward… a moment of grace… a gift from God.

The service begins with the prayers and readings from scripture, and then Magaw, a stately man in his robes and preaching tabs takes the pulpit. You close your eyes for a moment, knowing that you are about to hear a well-schooled preacher as he delivers the first homily you will hear as a free person. You stir with the newness, the freedom, the possibilities that lie before you. Then Magaw reads again from the Old Testament lesson:

“People that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.” Isaiah 9:2

You immediately have your own interpretations of this scripture. It rings true for you as you remember the deepest darkest moments of your slavery. But Magaw has a different take.

Magaw immediately relates the “darkness” to you and the others in the pew, and to the “Pagan darkness” that your parents and ancestors knew in Africa. He also refers to the “darkness of sin,” as if it is analogous with the color of your skin. He tells you to be humble and “remember your former condition. Pride was not made for man, in any, even the highest stations in life; much less for persons who have just emerged from the lowest. It is said, there is a great deal of this among your people, already; and that it is increasing extremely fast.”

You begin to realize that this white man in the pulpit is not sharing the scripture with you, but is in fact using it to remind you that even though you are a free person, you still carry the scars of slavery. “Set us free, heavenly Father, from the power of sin, and throw off all the trappings of sin.”

Lent calls us into, sometimes we have to strip away all of the trappings of who we have become or what we have learned to be.

“Set us free, heavenly Father, from every bond of prejudice and fear; that, honoring the steadfast courage of your servant Absalom Jones, we may show forth in our lives the reconciling love and true freedom of the children of God, which you have given us in your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever Amen.”

(Collect for Absalom Jones: February 13)
Putting Faith Into Action

Recycled AIDS Medicine Saves Lives

Br. Karekin Yarian, BSG

Remember the days when AIDS medications were hard to come by and treatment options were limited? Thanks to advances in treatment for HIV disease, we are privileged to live in a time and place where we have choices. So many, in fact, that we end up with cabinets full of medications we no longer use from treatment regimens that have ceased being helpful. What do we do with all those extra medications?

The Recycled AIDS Medicine Program (RAMP) has been collecting these medications since 1997 and sending them to clinics overseas that lack options for treatment of HIV disease. In places such as Zimbabwe, Honduras, Chile and Mexico where social stigma or economic realities deny access to life-saving drugs, RAMP and its affiliates overseas provide medications that are literally saving the lives of hundreds of real individuals. Siempre Unidos offers effective medical treatment and comprehensive social services to HIV positive populations in Honduras using medications provided by RAMP. Dr. Denise Main, a member of St. Stephen’s, Belvedere, was honored in 2006 by Yale’s Berkeley Divinity School for her work in founding Siempre Unidos.

I am a member of the Board of Directors of RAMP, and was privileged to assist at the clinics in Harare and Mutoko, Zimbabwe, this past year. At our clinics in Harare in February, over 400 people were provided with HIV medications gathered from the medicine cabinets and closets of folks in the Bay Area and Los Angeles. It was overwhelming to meet and speak with the patients in Zimbabwe — real people with absolutely no access to treatment other than that provided by volunteers. Several doctors from the Bay Area along with nurses and students from Harare spent two days providing treatment to individuals. Some of whom had walked two days to reach the clinic. Sadly, others needed to be turned away. An additional 150 people showed up hoping to begin treatment. By the time we could see them, there was enough medication for five. The saddest thing in the world is to turn away people you realize may not survive until the next clinic.

RAMP relies on recycling medications that otherwise might be thrown away. Getting these life-saving medications into the hands of those who need them is an environmental issue, and an issue of abundance. We gather medications through collection sites in San Francisco and Los Angeles. Our most recent acquisition was our first-ever collection box in the Tenderloin area at Tenderloin Health on Golden Gate Avenue. This year we will open new collection sites at the LGBT Center in San Francisco and at Vital Life Services in Oakland. Every bottle of medication saves lives. And every life saved is a family left intact because a provider, a husband, a mother, is given new hope for a future with a disease that may become manageable with treatment.

I decided six years ago to dedicate my time and energy in ministry through the work of RAMP. Just because we can breathe a bit easier in Bay Area, where our treatment options for HIV are more accessible, doesn’t mean we can rest while others are denied access to life-saving medicines. The most remarkable part of RAMP is that it is a group of volunteers — less than ten of us in fact. Our budget each year is about $5000, which we use for advertising and promotion. Last year we gave away over $2.5 million worth of medicines. This year, we are on track to do even better by accepting donations not only of medications, but of money that can be used to buy generics for even more people. With $1000, we can provide five people with medication for a year. I never want to have to turn folks away from hope if I can help it.

If you would like to find out more about our work at RAMP, visit our website at http://www.rampusa.org or email info@rampusa.org. If you really want to help, look through your medicine cabinets. Our website lists drop off sites and mail-in information. The only thing standing between a bottle of medication and a person’s hope for life and the future might be you.

Mwuia Ministers During Kenya Crisis

By Jan Parkin

CDSP alumnus the Rev. John Mwiya traveled to his native Kenya to work as an observer for the presidential elections, and has found himself in a country in chaos. When post-election violence erupted, John began working out of a church, giving aid to children made orphans and families made homeless by the reckless destruction rampant in that area. When John last made contact, 22 orphans were in his care, and he was preparing for a healing service for 1500 who were among those who fled when their city, Kisumu, was burned to the ground. John writes that he agonizes when the children ask why. As he strives to show the broken-hearted that God’s love is present, even in the midst of such overwhelming horror, there is still the need for the most basic supplies: food and blankets.

In a letter dated January 14, 2008, Mwiya wrote, “This week, over 3,500 families and over 2,000 children are sleeping at an open stadium in Nakuru town. On Friday and Saturday, I was at the stadium to receive the persecuted women and children on their arrival. For two days, I was frustrated to see the women and children sleeping in the open air: these people had a home, and today they only have ash to sleep on.”

“The most pressing need at the stadium is food and water. Some families are getting emotionally sick, because they will never recover. The children are supposed to report back to school on January 15, 2008; it has been very sad to hear stories from children who lost everything they have ever owned. I wish we could assist a few students to buy school uniforms.” He gave special thanks to the “prayer partners and supporters who in the emergency responded very fast,” including the Rev. Michael Kerrick, Episcopal Church, California; the Rev. John Kater, Episcopal Church, California; the Rev. William Burckett, Episcopal Church, Florida; the Rev. John Kelly, Lutheran Church, California.

CDSP invites prayers for John and the people with and to whom he ministers. If you would like to make a gift to help John in his vital work, the Celtic Cross Society, CDSP’s student-run outreach organization, is accepting donations which it will pass on to Kenya via an emergency grant for all funds received.

If you wish to make an immediate online donation, fill out the form at http://ssl.charityweb.com/cdsp/ and type “Kenya” in the space provided for gifts in honor. Checks may be made payable to Celtic Cross (place Kenya in the memo section) and mailed to CDSP. To donate directly through Western Union, contact Ann Coburn at 510-204-0710.

A further CDSP connection will be forged in June, when two current CDSP students, Michael Barham and Linda Hall, travel to Kenya to work with John. Michael and Linda have received a grant from the Evangelical Education Society for this project. For more information about John, contact Ann Coburn, Director of Alumni and Church Relations at acoburn@cdsp.edu, or 510-204-0710.

The Rev. John Mwiya ministers to orphans in Kenya (above) and facilitates food delivery to refugees (below).
Millennium Development Goals: Mobilizing Your Parish for Action

By Nina Brooks and Shari Young

Sponsored by the Diocal MDG Taskforce, a workshop on the morning of February 2 at CDSP features Holly Hight, field organizer for Bread for the World, one of the most respected Christian organizations advocating for the poor and hungry. The workshop will explore the foundational issues underlying global hunger and poverty, cover the background of the MDGs, discuss parish responses to the challenge of the MDGs, train participants to advocate with Congress and the president to make the MDGs a priority of the US Government, and equip lay people and clergy to lead their parishes in projects and actions in support of the Millennium Development Goals.

Episcopalians are denominational partners of Bread for the World, and Bread for the World is a leading partner in the One Campaign. (Learn more about Bread for the World at www.bread.org.)

During 2007 our diocesan churches have done a terrific job of focusing hearts and minds on the global poor, dramatically increasing compassionate activism and giving. All Saints, San Francisco, raised money for a well in Zambria; St. Ambrose, Foster City, created an MDG vacation bible school; youth of Holy Cross, Castro Valley, and All Saints, San Leandro, are creating large MDG art pieces; St. Paulís, Walnut Creek, is building relationships with a ìsquatterís slumî in Honduras; and Episcopal Charities is serving fair trade coffee at all their functions, to name just a few of the creative projects under way around the diocese.

In 2008 we are focusing again on the starting point of the MDGs ó a call to all governments of the world to commit 0.7% of their national budgets to the alleviation of global poverty. Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Denmark and Luxembourg have all done so. It is past time for the most powerful country in the world to take a leadership role in this global movement.

In the new year, our emphasis is advocacy, turning the focus of our government toward the needs of the world as seen through the lens of the MDGs. Universal education; eradication of malaria, HIV/AIDS and other diseases; health and equality for mothers and children; and care and promotion of sustainability for Mother Earth can all be accomplished with aid from the developing world to poorer countries through global partnerships. To that end, the workshop will provide a template for parishes to participate in a diocesan-wide Lenten project: an offering of letters to our national representatives in support of the Global Poverty Act now before the Senate.

Why must we as Episcopalians advocate for the MDGs?

At the recent Point Seven Now! conference in San Francisco, Alex Baumgarten, international policy analyst of the Episcopal Office of Governmental Relations, eloquently explained why people of faith are uniquely positioned to lead the movement for the MDGs. Baumgarten said, ìThe Gospel of Jesus Christ tells us that the poor have faces, but more importantly, they have something to contribute. They may be poor in terms of economics, but they may be quite rich in ways our minds can scarcely imagine in other ways. Thatís why the life of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ shows, again and again, favoritism for those the world calls poor. Poverty impoverishes not just the poor, but the rich as well.î

That is a very vital piece of building the global will to achieve the MDGs, but itís largely missing. When Congress believes that poverty in Africa or Haiti hurts our own nation, hurts the stability of the world, hurts little boys and girls being born today in San Francisco and Sioux Falls ó not just Nairobi and Port au Prince ó thatís when real progress will begin.

There is a powerful national movement afoot to make the MDGs a reality (see http://condor.depaul.edu/%7Epszczerb/MDGs.html). We as a people of faith are uniquely positioned to lead the movement for the MDGs.

Baumgarten, international policy analyst of the Episcopal Office of Governmental Relations, eloquently explained why people of faith are uniquely positioned to lead the movement for the MDGs.

Nina Brooks and Shari Young are co-chairs of the diocesan Millennium Development Goals Taskforce.

The Rev. Sally Bingham was installed as the first Canon for Environmental Ministry on January 17, 2008, during an Evensong service at Grace Cathedral.

The Rev. Richard Helmer was installed as rector of Our Saviour, Mill Valley, on December 9, 2007. His wife, Hiroko, joined Bishop Marc and the congregation in welcoming Helmer into his new position.

Bishop Marc and youth and young adults from the Diocese of California lead residents from the Presidio Gate senior community in Christmas Carols on December 20, 2007, accompanied by violinist Lily Moebes.
En el artículo “Dying to Act” por el editor del periódico Sean McConnell, veo reflejada mi vida en los pasados 28 años en la comunidad de Richmond. Vino a mi mente que la violencia que con el paso de los años no ha disminuido; por el contrario ha aumentado y conquistado mas territorio; y una pregunta vino a mi mente. Que he heredado de la comunidad que yo amo? My respuesta fue “no lo suficiente”. En el transcurso de mi vida en la ciudad de Richmond, las cosas no han cambiado—el desempleo, la falta de viviendas en buen estado, la educación pobrísima,las escuelas viejas y deruidas con baños malolientes, edificios que deberían ser cerrados, calles llenas de huecos y las promesas de los políticos en cada elección que nunca llegan a cumplir. Pero todo es un punto de partida en la estructura social y familiar y esta apoyada por la falta de apoyo de la comunidad. Es necesario que todos nosotros los habitantes de esta ciudad nos pongamos a trabajar, para que nuestros niños crezcan en un ambiente sin violencia y tiroeos. Escuchar los sonidos de los tiroeos y saber que eso significa la perdida de una vida humana es terrible; pero es peor mantenernos indiferentes y no hacer nada al respecto. Como el editor de este artículo, yo comparto su visión y a mi de una idea de crear un comite con la gente de la, activistas, policia, personas del area educacional, padres de la comunidad y formar un frente común para desarrollar un plan y no solo pensar filosófico acerca del problema. necesitamos encontrar soluciones practicas a este problema para que la esperanza se vea reflejada en nuestros jóvenes y que ven en la violencia un modelo de vida. Los Jovenes han perdido la fe en la vida y no tienen esperanza de tener un futuro para la juventud la palabra “moral” y "buenas costumbres", no tienen sentido para ellos y no respetan la vida humana. yo se que el problema es complejo y tomar mucho trabajo y esfuerzo de todos nosotros los que amamos a esta ciudad de Richmond; pero se tambien que con fe y esperanza se puede alcanzar la inalcanzable.

Yo invito a los líderes de la Iglesia Episcopal a liderar este “Movimiento en pro de la vida,” especialmente a las iglesias que rodean la zona como Christ the Lord en Pinole, Holy Trinity en Richmond y St Albans’s in Albany a ser los lideres en este trabajo de restaurar la fe y la esperanza de vida en la ciudad de Richmond, creando una comunidad en el cristianismo y invitando a todos a unirse a esta tarea. Yo invito a los sacerdotes , pastores, líderes comunitarios, jóvenes, e instituciones como : la policia, departamento de bonberos, el servicio social, líderes en la educacion y todos aquellos que pueden guiar a quienes entran y salen en nuestras poblaciones urbanas . Unidos nosotros podemos sembrar semillas de amor, fe, esperanza y poder decirle a nuestros jovenes. “SI TU ERES IMPORTANTE PARA NOSOTROS, SI NOSOTROS ASESORAMOS TU VIDA, SI ESTAMOS AQUI PARA CASAR JUNTOS ESTE CAMINO, SI CREEMOS EN TE”.

En el artículo “Dying to Act” por el editor de este periodical, Sean T. McConnell, I reflect my experience of living the past 28 years as a member of the community of Richmond. It came to my mind that the violence has not lessened, but to the contrary it has increased and conquered more and more territory. This question came to me, “What has been done for this community which I love?” My answer was “not enough.”

In the course of my life in Richmond, things have not changed — the unemployment, the lack of housing, the poor education, the schools showing their age with the bad smelling bathrooms and buildings which should be closed, streets with huge potholes, and the promises of politicians in each election that are never kept. But this is a whole problem with roots in the social and family structure who are and is connected with the lack of community support. I think it is necessary for a whole village to help the healthy growth of a child in any existing community. To listen to the sound of shootings and to know that it means the loss of a human life is terrible, but is much worse to be indifferent and to do nothing.

I share your vision, and it evokes in me the idea of creating a committee of people of faith, community activists, police, people from the educational institutions, and parents to form a common front and to develop a plan not only to think and to philosophize about the problem, but to find practical solutions which will return hope to the youth, who only see the violence as the mode of life. These youth have lost faith in life and hope for the future; these youth do not know the meaning of “moral” nor good customs. These youth do not have respect for human life. I know that the problem is complex and will take a lot of work and the efforts of all, but I also know that faith and hope can do all.

I invite the people of the Episcopal Church to be leaders in this action movement for life, especially from the surrounding churches of Christ the Lord in Pinole, Holy Trinity in Richmond and St. Albans’ in Albany, to be leaders in the work of restoration of the faith and the hope of life in Richmond, to create a coalition for LIFE. I invite all the priests, pastors, community leaders, youth, and institutions such as the police and emergency services, social services, educational leaders, and the community to be able to guide and who understand the problem of violence in our populated urban areas. United we can sow seeds of love, faith, and hope, and tell our youth “YES YOU MATTER TO US, YES WE VALUE YOUR LIFE, WE ARE HERE TO WALK WITH YOU, YES WE BELIEVE IN YOU.”

Friedman outlines this immunosuppressed condition over several chapters. I couldn’t wait for him to write his “imaginative gridlock,” reacting to our surroundings, blaming those around us, circling the wagons to forestall the next onslaught of malignant forces, and have become thoroughly unable to be playful about any of it. His prescription parallels current medical thinking: strengthen the immune system and help the body fight the infection itself. In other words, leaders need to stop focusing on motivational techniques, cease collecting data on how best to put out fires, and begin the hard work of self-knowing and self-differentiation.

Failure of Nerve is admirable for the clarity and elegance that Friedman brings to his arguments; this book also occasionally frustrating. As a historian, I had to continually remind myself of his paean to the brilliant leadership of Christopher Columbus is a metaphorical thought experiment in historical whitewash of a complicated human being during a complicated time. He also says that his analysis of group dynamics is universal and works regardless of culture, but provides only anecdotal evidence for this; no genuine cross-cultural study is provided to support Friedman’s claim.

The most frustrating aspect of the book, however, is that there is not enough of it. Friedman never finished it. Just as we get to the section on curing the disease, some practical models based on the theories, the manuscript becomes a patchwork of completed text, notes, and edited summaries. Chapter six, promised in the introduction to be the “keystone of the book,” ends in mid paragraph, concluding with a sequence of notes put together by the editors. Fortunately, these notes are surprisingly useful — they are the core ideas of the book distilled into bullet points. In a sense, this is just what the doctor ordered.

Although Friedman kept warning me that this was not a quick-fix book, that there was no recipe to follow that will produce effective leadership every single time, I still kept waiting for him to arrive. I was out in front of me. Thankfully, he didn’t. In fact, he continually throws the responsibility for figuring it all out back to the reader. These unfinished chapters and pithy notes mean that we have to keep wrestling with Friedman — that the ultimate responsibility for figuring out how to be leaders in our time will continue to rest on us.
**Diocesan Calendar**

**Saturday, February 2**
- Vestry Day, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
- Millennium Development Goals Workshop: Mobilizing Your Parish for Action! CDSP, Berkeley, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

**Sunday, February 3**
- Forum with James Mann, The China Fantasy, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 9:30 a.m.

**Wednesday, February 6, Ash Wednesday**
- Saturday, February 9
  - Annual Deacons Conference, Grace Cathedral, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
  - Youth Take Action Day, Harbor House, Oakland, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

**Monday, February 11**
- Alameda Deanery Youth Ministers Gathering, Jupiter’s, Berkeley, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.
- Southern Alameda Deanery Youth Ministers Gathering, Englander Brew Pub, San Leandro, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**Wednesday, February 13**
- Episcopal General Convention (EUC) National Assembly, Oakland Airport Hilton, Oakland, runs through February 16
- Thursday, February 14
  - Episcopal Peace Fellowship Luncheon, 12 p.m.
  - EUC Eucharist, St. Paul’s, Oakland, 6:30 p.m.
- Sunday, February 17
  - Forum with Parker Palmer, The Courage to Teach, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 9:30 a.m.
  - Bishop’s Visitation, St. James, San Francisco

**Wednesday, February 20**
- San Francisco Deaconry Youth Ministers Gathering, The Plough and Stars, San Francisco, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**Saturday, February 23**
- Young Adult Take Action Day, Harbor House, Oakland, 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- Sunday, February 24
  - Bishop’s Visitation, St. James, San Francisco
  - Beloved Community in Conversation, St. Paul’s, Oakland, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.
  - Forum with SF Mayor Willie Brown, Basic Brown: My Life and Our Times, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 9:30 a.m.

**Monday, February 25**
- Marin Deanery Youth Ministers Gathering, Marin Brewing Company, Larkspur, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**Friday, February 28**
- Peninsula Deaconry Youth Ministers Gathering, Steelhead Brewery, Burlingame, 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

**Saturday, March 1**
- Regional Faith Formation Event, Christ Church, Alameda, 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

**Sunday, March 3**
- Bishop’s Visitation, Holy Family, Half Moon Bay

**Sunday, March 9**
- Forum with Alexander Shaia, Quadratos: Beyond the Biography of Jesus, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 9:30 a.m.

**Saturday, March 15**
- Vocations Day, CDSP, Berkeley, all day
- Sunday, March 16, Palm Sunday
- Bishop’s Visitation, St. Francis, Novato

**Thursday, March 20, Maundy Thursday**
- Friday, March 21, Good Friday
- Saturday, March 22, Holy Saturday
- Sunday, March 23, Easter
- Jazz Evensong, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.

**Saturday, March 29**
- General Confirmation, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Sunday, March 30**
- Forum with Kathleen Frydl, UC Berkeley history professor, Grace Cathedral, San Francisco, 9:30 a.m.

See the diocesan calendar at www.diocal.org for more.

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**Free to Ski!**

By guest columnist Rob Gieselmann

As a single dad, I made the unilateral determination a few years back that snowsports are crucial to a child’s educational and spiritual development. Becoming one with the universe. On the downhill run.

For our first retreat, I dragged my kids to Wisp Resort, in western Maryland. I was 45 years old at the time, and because my son, Tate (then nine), wanted to learn to snowboard, I decided we’d learn together. Father/son activity and all. Snowboarding is very different from skiing. Snowboarding requires a kinship with the earth. Face down. This necessary kinship also turned my backside black and blue. I’m not kidding. Black and quite blue. Tate didn’t have to fall as far as I did, so he didn’t hurt so much. Besides, kids bounce.

My daughter, Tilly, is a skier. That first year, while Tate and I attended snowboarding school, Tilly attended the Willy Wisp Ski School. She learned to “pizza” (snow-plough) and duck-walk (walking on inclines with skis pointed outward). Tilly enrolled in Willy Wisp the second year, too, but halfway through her second day, and having mastered her wee twenty-foot kiddie slope, Tilly begged me, “Daddy, please take me up on the big hill with you. Pleaseee.” How could I resist a seven-year-old who had no front teeth? “Okay,” I said. Off we went to the Bunny Slope.

The Bunny Slope was closed. Figures. That left THE BIG MOUNTAIN! I had already promised Tilly, so up we went. Tilly hopped onto the chairlift like she was a pro. At the top, Tilly pizza’d off the lift, but she fell hard. Ouch! I wasn’t expecting that.

One of the hardest things for me to do as a parent is let go. To let my kids do things for themselves. Ski, snowboard, iron, cook or know. They stumble, at first, and I don’t always have the patience to wait for them. But I’ve discovered that kids like to discover. They learn by exploration, not by lecture. Set kids free to discover and explore, with perhaps a little pick-up upon falling, and they just take off.

My parents gave me a Bible when I was confirmed at age twelve. Their one piece of spiritual advice was to consider reading a chapter each day. I did that — probably until I was thirty. To this day, having a strong Scriptural background has helped me wade through the temptation to Scriptural literalism on the one hand, and Scriptural irrelevance on the other. I love Scripture, with all of its complexity, for God in Spirit seems to inhabit the pages, across the worlds. I gave Tate a Bible a few years back, with the same advice. He reads it because he knows I read Scripture; he knows I love Scripture. I don’t teach him – I let him teach himself. I let him explore. I let him, as one fellow says, rub the pages a little between his fingers. I do ask him, from time to time, what he’s reading – and he proudly tells me. Daniel. Samuel. Matthew. Sometimes he asks for suggestions. Jonah, I tell him. What a tale! Pretty soon, I’ll be giving Tilly her Bible, with the same advice. And I’ll bet you anything, she’ll be flying down the mountain — headlong and devil fast!
One of the more familiar bishop's crosiers in use by Bishop Andrus and his predecessors is the ivory crosier. This crosier is light and thus easier to carry than the heavy neo-Gothic Bishop Nichols' crosier of 1919. During a visit to Paris in 1957, Dean Julian Bartlett, then Dean of Grace Cathedral, came across a lovely ivory crosier (minus staff) in the shop of Lucien Jacob, a master restorer who had been responsible for a major restoration of Grace Cathedral in the 1940s. Jacob was able to create the ebony and silver shaft, given in memory of a Grace Cathedral friend, Reuben Ready, by his widow. Bishop Pike used the crosier from his early years as diocesan. Its most historic use was in 1964, when he used it to trace during the Consecration of Grace Cathedral the letters of the bronze Chi-Rho (the Greek “XP” monogram of Christ) in the center of the nave floor, setting the building apart forever for the work of Christ. His successors, Bishops Myers and Swing, used the crosier often. Ironically, and perhaps symbolically, as Bishop Swing unvested after finishing his last service at Grace Cathedral in 2006, his chaplain accidentally dropped the crosier, and the head shattered on the vestry floor. Sent to Elizabeth Cornu, master restorer at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the beautifully repaired crosier is now again in use.

Supposedly medieval, but possibly somewhat later in origin, the crosier head has a central boss depicting two angels supporting the Lamb of God seated on the Book of Life. A Latin inscription encircles the stem and hook of the crosier, which is now very much part of diocesan and cathedral history.