

The Brotherhood

of Saint Gregory

The Servant

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The American Dream

Probably the most difficult fact that late twentieth century Americans have to deal with is the realization that our nation cannot be all things to all people throughout the world. Perhaps it's because we've begun to grow up -- or maybe the rest of the world has. But it is hard to see America these days as the guardian of world peace; more often she's seen as a purveyor of gun-boat diplomacy, or as deeply involved with shady deals and back room politics.

We used to take pride in the fact that America had never lost a war -- but Korea turned the tide and Vietnam pulled us up short. We used to think that America was loved and respected the wide world over because our government was based on freedom -- but generations of intrigue and support of any "anti-Communist" government, no matter how oppressive towards its people, have shown the world that our foreign policy is a self-serving form of "do as I say, not as I do." We used to think of America as the bread basket of the world -- but then we stooped to using our abundance as a threat or a bribe, while tolerating, ignoring or denying the poverty and hunger among our own citizens. And we continue to mouth platitudes of freedom and justice about South Africa -- but have forgotten Selma, Alabama and the Black Hills of the Dakotas. Are we waking -- or still asleep and dreaming?

We like to think of America as a "Christian" country -- by which we mean not an Established State Church, but a sort of generic morality, a kind of government by the Golden Rule. The framers of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights were believers in a benevolent divine providence, and their faith is written between the lines of these documents. But is that enough?

"The Church should stay out of politics!" is a common refrain. But we Episcopalians believe that all baptized persons are "the Church." That means us, and Jerry Falwell too -- and Mr. Falwell does not show any reluctance in being involved as an individual and as the head of a powerful propaganda machine. If we feel that he is wrong, then we owe it to the nation and to ourselves to participate in the decisions which may change the moral shape of the world. "Take up your cross and follow me" may sound like a literary platitude -- but Christians know otherwise: It is a call to arms, a call to put on the armor of God and to fight for justice and peace.

Br. James Teets is a life professed member of the Brotherhood, serving as director of public relations. He is active in the liturgical program of the Church of St. Luke in the Fields, New York City. His secular employment for the last 17 years has been in the sales, management and accounting departments of New York's largest theater ticket brokerage, Golden-Penn / Leblang's / Mackey's.

THE FOUNDER'S FORUM

A Hamster in A Treadmill - Rocking Chairs - Standing Still!

Many of those who call themselves "active" in the Church are really standing still. It is life lived in a rocking chair -- moving back and forth and going nowhere. Many of us are like that; many religious are like that. It's like the hamster I saw recently running in a treadmill -- the treadmill goes nowhere and neither does the hamster!

Without active work our words are shallow. The words of one of my favorite hymns should become our watchword: "Come labor on; who dares stand idle?" There is just too much to do; too many to care for and about; too many mandates from God. And we cannot serve those around us by simply thinking about them. Lip service is easy -- manual labor is not. To paraphrase a commonly used expression "A religious' life is a terrible thing to waste."

To be involved in doing the will of God involves another mandate: Not simply "Thy will be done," but "Thy will be done -- beginning with me." The unsolved problems in our world are not the result of the scenery -- but rather are centered around the actors themselves.

Because so much is at stake, we as religious must leave the rocking chairs and take the hamster out of the treadmill.

Reinhold Neibuhr gives us guidance: "Wake up each morning and look at the world outside. Then take the New Testament in one hand and the New York Times in the other and go out and face the world." We are faced with a world full of crises -- many of these may be the very means by which God will create new dimensions in our lives. Who dares stand idle?

Richard Thomas Biernacki Superior General

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Next month's **Servant** will contain responses to our Special Report, and news from the General Convention. As of this writing, the response to the Special Report from bishops, clergy and lay people has been overwhelmingly positive. We pray that we will be able to report positively from the Convention.

OCTOBER INTERCESSIONS

Kalendar

2. The Most Rev. Robert A. K. Runcie
4. The Rev. Thomas R. Schulze
The Society of St. Francis
The Order of Friars Minor
The Community of St. Francis
The Friars of the Atonement
11. Lillian Waites, Companion
13. Br. Edward Munro, BSG
18. The Church of St. Luke in the Fields, New York NY
St. Luke's Church, Madison WI
The Order of St. Luke
20. Br. Joseph Thomas Irvin, n/BSG
23. The Rt. Rev. Charles T. Gaskell
The Order of the Holy Redeemer 25.
Br. Bernard Francis LaReau, n/BSG

For the ill:

Br. John Nidecker, BSG	Mae Weaver	Godfrey Little
Walter Hammond	Nancy Hansen	Sally Beauchamp

For the departed:

Charlotte B. Morgan	The Rev. Canon William Weitzel
Thomas Prather, Sr.	Alfred Vesce

Special Intentions for:

The Rev. E. A. St. John		
The Visitation Nuns	The Sacramentine Nuns	
Karl G. Sorg	George Keith	Kenneth Allen Staples
Fr. Ted Daniels and Holy Redeemer Chapel, Landover MD	The Retreat and General Chapter of the BSG	
Br. Charles Mitzenius, OHR		
Dana Elliot	The Rev. Ned Heeter	
Central Pennsylvania School of Christian Studies		

Thanksgiving for:

The institution of the Rev. William A. Davidson as tenth rector of Christ Church, Riverdale NY
The Hunger Ministry at St. Mark's, Keansburg NJ
The election of the Rev. Robert L. Ladehoff as Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Oregon