



The Open Door

“Open wide the doors for Christ.”—St. John Paul the Great

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 4

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“We exist to joyfully worship God and carry out the mission of Jesus Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

Mission Statement of Christ the King

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Counseling as a source of healing

The man sitting across from me [Randy] in my office was experiencing something very powerful and very liberating. After a number of sessions of counseling, he could honestly say that he no longer felt trapped. He now had a level of control and freedom in his life that he never thought possible.

Up to this point, his long-standing depression had left him feeling hopeless that his life could ever be different. He was ashamed that he couldn't “get it together.” He saw his job as meaningless and boring. He loved his wife and children, but experienced much of family life as a burden. He sincerely desired to “man up” and be the husband and father that God called him to be and he wanted to be. But his lack of success left



him feeling guilty and like a failure. He was having a difficult time in his spiritual life and just could not get himself to pray or read scripture. It seemed tedious, empty and pointless. God would probably not hear his prayer anyway, so why bother? All in all, he was in a dark place, made all the more bleak because of his belief that real men are supposed to handle these things on their own and he knew he just could not – more failure.

After a difficult internal struggle, and with a good deal of

encouragement from his wife, he finally admitted that he needed help and decided to come to counseling. His story is just one example of the many we have experienced in our counseling practices.

There are many reasons why someone may seek counseling: depression, anxiety, anger management, life decisions, marriage issues, pre-marriage concerns, family dynamics and parent/child relationships, harmful habits or addictions (substances, pornography), physical or

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“A bruised reed He will not break...”

All of us, to some degree, have dealt with pain that has left us wounded. In this issue of *The Open Door*, we want to share just a few of the stories of people's pain, and some of the means that the Lord Jesus provides for help and healing.

As members of Christ's Body, may we treat each other with the same gentleness that Jesus does, remembering that, to one degree or another, we are all bruised reeds.



For the Jews, peace, shalom, had a much more extensive meaning than is commonly considered in our use of the word "peace." It referred to fullness of health: body, mind, and spirit.



Fr. Ed Fride is Pastor of Christ the King.

The peace of the Lord

"May the peace of the Lord be with you always!" We hear this from the presider at every Mass. This ancient greeting has its roots in Israel's relationship with the Holy One of Israel Himself, Who was seen as the source of their peace.

But for the Jews, peace, *shalom*, had a much more extensive meaning than is commonly considered in our use of the word "peace." It referred to fullness of health: body, mind, and spirit. It is the fulfillment of the Lord Jesus' statement, "I have come that you might have life, and have it to the full." *Shalom*, the fullness of life, is His intentional gift to us.

We see that one of His most common acts was to heal. He healed physically, spiritually, and emotionally. He delights to continue that healing ministry today, which He does in our midst in so many ways. We regularly hear the good news of folks being healed at Upper Room and in a variety of other ways. These healings include physical healings, as well

as spiritual and emotional healings. Many of us have experienced the wonderful intervention of His healing touch in our lives,

The important thing is to recognize that the Lord Jesus Himself wants us to become whole.

wherever we needed to be healed and however He chose to do it.

While we are very grateful for how He has chosen to move in those settings, we need to be careful that we don't limit how He may want to work in our lives to restore us to the fullness of life that He intends for us. Much can happen in settings like Upper Room, but He also does a great deal of healing and restoring through other means, even if they don't seem to be as "miraculous," for example, counseling and twelve-step programs. While we always need to exercise discretion and discernment as we seek His healing, we should never arbitrarily shut

ourselves off from ways in which the Lord Jesus might want to restore us simply because they seem too mundane or secular. He is free to use whatever means He chooses to restore us to health.

I have had some amazing experiences of healing of memories and similar events which greatly restored me. I have also been blessed by the healings I have received through participation in counseling and twelve-step groups, in particular ACOA, a program to help those whose lives were impacted by alcoholism in their parents.

The important thing is to recognize that the Lord Jesus Himself wants us to become whole. We are all born fallen, and along the way, we get even more broken, often experiencing events that further hurt us, but the King of Kings is greater and delights to heal and set free the People He has redeemed. Let us open ourselves more deeply to Him, however He wants to restore us!

—Fr. Ed Fride

Counseling as a source of healing

Continued from page 1

sexual abuse both past and present, sexual identity confusion, just to name a few.

Behind most of these reasons lies pain. Just as physical pain can signal a problem with our body, emotional/mental pain can signal a problem with our internal well-being. The depth and strength of pain is the impetus for seeking help. Minor muscle aches and pains usually don't get us to the doctor, but a broken bone will. Just so, the normal ups and downs of life, while they can be painful, don't mean we need the help of a counselor. It is when we realize that our internal distress is interfering with our ability to live in love with freedom, peace and joy that we should seek help.

Sometimes the experience of pain is not enough to move someone to get help. We have both worked with clients who have lived with a great deal of internal pain for quite some time and knew they needed

help, but just could not bring themselves to get it. When they finally come in, they say, "I wanted to get help before this, but I was afraid because it would mean I was [pick one] mentally ill, weak, unstable, inept..." Or they were afraid that other people would somehow find out and they would be stigmatized as not being able to take care of themselves. But once they have experienced the relief of finally talking to someone and making progress toward new freedom, overcoming those fears seems like a small price to pay.

Over the past few years we have noticed the increasing number of people who seek us out for counseling because we are Catholic. Committed Catholics and other Christians want to work with a counselor who shares their values and will be supportive of their faith. The human person is a marvelous creation of God, composed of both a body and a soul. Our faith perspective gives us the

essential foundation we need to understand the true nature and working of the human person and so allows us to integrate our faith and our counseling. A foundational goal of our counseling is to help clients grow in personal freedom. In gaining true personal freedom a person can more fully live in love with God and those around them.

We are very fortunate to have a growing number of talented, experienced Catholic therapists in Southeast Michigan. See the article below for more information about a new network for Catholic therapists.

Finally, we want to thank Fr. Ed and the rest of the pastoral staff at Christ the King for being so understanding and supportive of the growing need for counseling services. There is a lot of pain out there, but God is providing faith-based resources to set people free.
—Randy and Therese Cirner

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Randy and Therese Cirner are authors, speakers, and clinical counselors. They are founding members of Christ the King.

Catholic Therapists Prayer Breakfast launches

2017 was the inaugural year for the Catholic Therapists Prayer Breakfast. Catholic therapists from Lansing to Flint to Perrysburg, Ohio gathered at Christ the King to share worship at Mass together, network over a continental breakfast, and listen to thought-provoking presentations by peers.

Bishop Boyea's Liaison, Dcn. J. Kasprzak from Lansing, has attended both breakfasts and has been very supportive of our efforts. He initiated inviting the CEOs of Catholic Social Services in five counties to attend these breakfasts as guests.

45 therapists attended the October 2017 breakfast. Please pass the word to any Catholic therapists that they are invited to join the event in April 2018. They can contact me at tcirner@gmail.com.—Therese Cirner

When healing doesn't come

*They say that
what doesn't kill
you makes you
stronger.
But what if it
does kill you, or
is going to kill
you, or is going
to kill someone
you love?
Does it still make
you stronger?*



Aimée Godfrey is the Assistant for Adult Formation and Alpha Coordinator at Christ the King.



They say that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger. But what if "it" (whatever "it" happens to be) does kill you, or is going to kill you, or is going to kill someone you love? Does it still make you stronger? If it does, how does it make you stronger?

Walking with my first husband, Peter, as he prepared to die was one of the hardest things that I've ever done in my life. (The only thing that might have been harder was grieving for him after he died.) Watching someone die and helping them as they go through the dying process is messy and scary. It inevitably involves a loss of control and a great number of tears shed,

sleepless nights, and desperate times on your knees before God. For me, it also involved asking God "why?" numerous times, as we

prayed for a healing that did not come.

I'll never know the answer to that "why," but I do know what happened in me and in Peter because he was not healed, at least not on earth.

The intimacy we experienced was an intimacy that we'd never experienced before. It was an intimacy born of suffering, and knowing that, in Christ, no suffering is ever wasted. Yes, there was fear and doubt, but here was also joy as I cared for the needs of my spouse and realized that I was loving him more by walking with him as he died than I had ever loved him before.

I learned about my own capacity for suffering and for love and my ability to

live without fear during those months that Peter was dying. In the end, I learned more about myself from walking with my husband as he died, and also from grieving for him, than I learned in all of the previous years of my life. That's not something that I would trade for anything.

Because of Peter's life and death, I know, I truly know, that what doesn't kill you makes you stronger; and that even if it does kill you, it can still make you stronger.

This isn't to say that my husband's death was "easy," or that grieving for him wasn't the most heartrending thing that I have ever done. This is to say, though, that it was one of the most meaningful and fruitful things that I have ever done. It has made me not only a better wife and mother, but a more whole and complete human being. For that, I have Peter to thank. —
Aimée Godfrey

The pain, and stigma, of depression

A lot of you know my name. I am a current member of the Senior Leadership Team for the parish. I am a founding member and the Superior of the Servants of God's Love. And I have gone through counseling and am currently on medication for depression.

Naturally, I am wondering what went through your mind when you read that last sentence and what you think of me now. The fact that I am wondering is indicative that there still exists in our world—even within our parish—a bit of a stigma towards those who deal with mental health issues.

I think there has been a lot of advance in the past decade towards a destigmatization of those suffering from mental health. I find it very hopeful that prominent personages such as Prince Harry and Prince William have gone to such great effort to speak so candidly about their own struggles, especially after their mother's death. Nonetheless, the battle against lack of understanding and lack of acceptance within the church still goes on.



Emotional pain, for the most part, can be much more excruciating than physical pain.

I have come to learn from my own personal experience that dealing with depression can be one of the most painful sufferings one can undergo. Emotional pain, for the most part, can be much more excruciating than physical pain. Besides my own journey through depression, I lost a younger brother to suicide (which is a story for another time). To add to that pain by rejection or hurtful remarks (as naïve as they may be) only increases the pain.

My advice here is very simple. Be slow to judge. Think before you speak. Don't make folks feel like they have to put on a good front in order to belong. Walk at least a mile in another's shoes before coming to conclusions. And even better yet, walk with them their whole journey, without trying to "fix" them. Just be a good friend. You'll get to know Jesus in a way you never would have.

And thank you from the bottom of my heart to all of you who have done just that for me.—Sr. Dorcee Clarey, SGL



Sr. Dorcee Clarey, SGL, is a member of the Senior Leadership Team and a founding member of the Servants of God's Love and Christ the King.

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Songs of Belonging

Sigh of Relief

*It's amazing how
God can use art
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The beauty
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and into the
depths of truth.*



Martin Doman is
Director of Worship at
Christ the King.

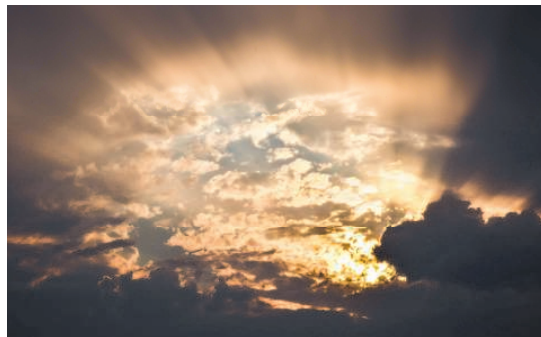
These days, I use a streaming audio app on my phone to listen to music I like. I have one of those accounts that lets me stream almost any song in the universe right to my phone, giving me an endless selection of songs, albums, and genres to choose from.

This freedom, I fear, is going to my head. Back in the 80s and 90s, one would have to spend hours collecting favorite tracks and creating an actual 3-dimensional product: the infamous

“mix tape”. I loved doing this back in the day, plastic tabs and all.

Nowadays, the modern version is the “playlist,” a collection of songs that exists “in the cloud,” compiled with a simple tap, and delivered to the ears instantly; and I have tons of them. Each of my playlists has a separate purpose based on my musical wishes, depending on my mood. It’s intoxicating. Making new playlists, and devising cool titles for them, is a serious weakness of mine. For example, I have a playlist called, “I’m a Dad,” filled with tear-inducing songs by reflective musical

fathers. I have a playlist called “Latin Love It,” featuring the best salsa tunes for my beautiful Puerto Rican wife and I to dance to. I even have an entire folder group filled with the best movie themes, each serving my arbitrary emotional needs. (I know, it’s an issue.)



My “go to” playlist is called “Sigh of Relief.” It’s filled with carefully selected movie tracks, specifically ones that express healing and resolution. I figured out that every good movie has a moment in the plot when the conflict resolves: the hero finally overcomes his adversary; the dust settles and the lovers finally come back together; forgiveness is finally attained in the dying words of a bitter soul.

The musical pieces that movie score writers compose for these moments are always rich with emotional resolution. When I listen to these songs, no matter how tough my situa-

tion is, I am inspired to hope. These songs help me turn an emotional corner in my toughest moments.

Why am I telling you this? It reveals something to me about the power of music to heal. It’s amazing how God can use art to heal us. The beauty contained in

well-written music transports us momentarily out of our lives and into the depths of truth. Whether we are worried, anxious, fearful, or stressed, music can remind us who we are and what kind of reality

we live in. Beauty surprises us with a new perspective, urging us to hope that our struggles are not without resolution, that we have a destiny that awaits us just around the next plot twist. And if we have been blessed enough to come to know God, we come to discover more and more, if we can open our hearts enough to see, how glorious that story is.

God has given us such a healing grace in the gift of music. I encourage you to explore it, see His beauty in it, and be comforted—even when it’s being streamed from a cloud. — *Martin Doman*

Prayer Ministry: Receiving What God Has for You

Prayer ministry is a unique way of receiving God's blessings. Anyone can bring the prayers of their heart to a team of prayer ministers so that together they can intercede. Jesus said, "Where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." (Mt 18:20)

To receive the most from prayer ministry, come with an open heart and open mind. Tell the prayer ministers what you would like Jesus to do for you. They will pray with you, either in English, in tongues, or both.

Be attentive to what the Holy Spirit is doing in your heart while they pray. You

may feel peace, hear His voice, gain new perspective, receive new hope, experience healing, or experience a myriad of other ways that He wants to minister to you.

If you do not notice anything obvious, do not worry. Just as a farmer plants seeds, but it takes time for them to break through the surface, you can be assured that Jesus is working under the surface in your life. In time, His work will bear fruit.

If the prayer ministers receive a prophetic word or vision, they will share that with you. However, prayer ministry is not spiritual direction, teaching, counsel-

The prayer ministers are conduits of God's grace; it is He Who is the answer to your prayers.

ing, or anything else except prayer, so do not seek answers from them. The prayer ministers are conduits of God's grace; it is He Who is the answer to your prayers.

It's important to always thank God for what He is doing in you. No suffering is wasted: "We know that all things work together for good for those who love God." (Rom 8:28) Praise the Lord! — *Christy Whiting*



Christy Whiting is Upper Room Director at Christ the King.

Testimonies from those receiving prayer ministry

Lynda Lehr had a cancerous mass on the side of her forehead for over a year. Everyone could see it. She received prayer ministry at Upper Room for healing. The next day, the mass began to shrink. Over the next few days, it disappeared completely. Her oncologist marked it in his records as a miracle. Thanks be to God!

At the Healing Service, there was a word of knowledge that someone was so lonely they wished they were dead. A woman there thought immediately of a friend who had recently said that. In fact, just before the Service he had called her a few times pleading with her to come visit him in rehab, where he was recovering from a stroke. However,

later during the Service he left a message that he was going to be fine, and not to worry about coming. Since then, he still enjoys visitors, but she's noticed a stark difference in how he can let go and is fine if someone doesn't come every day. After a few weeks' observation, she thinks the word of knowledge was for him and has been fulfilled. Praise God!

Ministry Spotlight: Rachel's Vineyard

"Hearing women tell their stories affirms everything I've ever been taught about the harmful effects of abortion on women."

—Fr. Nate Harburg



Theresa Hofer is Editor of *The Open Door*.

"The focus is on healing grief. It's on a relationship with Jesus and reconciling with the Lord and your children." That's how CTK parishioner Beth Bauer describes the Rachel Vineyard retreats, a ministry to post-abortive women and others who have been wounded by abortion.

Rachel's Vineyard grew out of the work that Dr. Theresa Burke conducted with therapeutic support groups for post-abortive women. In 1995, she adapted it to a weekend retreat format. Word of the dramatic effectiveness of the retreats spread rapidly. Currently, over 1,000 retreats are held annually in almost every state and 70 countries. In 2003, Rachel's Vineyard became a ministry of Priests for Life.

Beth became aware of Rachel's Vineyard in 2003 when Bp. Cooney, former bishop of the Diocese of Gaylord, asked her to start a post-abortion ministry. After receiving training, she led



"The retreats are so powerful."

We see people physically transformed from Friday to Sunday."

Beth Bauer

Rachel's Vineyard retreats in Gaylord for several years. When her family moved to southeast Michigan, she started offering them in this area.

"The retreats are so powerful," says Beth. "We see people physically transformed from Friday to Sunday. The program is anointed."

Beth serves as the team facilitator and site leader. Other team members include a priest, deacon, or pastor; a counselor; and three to five team members.

Former CTK parishioner Fr. Nate Harburg, now a

priest in the Diocese of Saginaw, has served on several retreats. He says, "Hearing women tell their stories affirms everything I've ever been taught about the harmful effects of abortion on women, and convinces me to continue educating and praying for an end to this scourge."

Beth points out, though, that the retreats are not just for post-aborted women. "For every woman, there's a man. Abortion impacts everybody. We've had an ultrasound tech on the retreat, as well as the son of an abortionist."

Rachel's Vineyard retreats are available throughout Michigan and are completely confidential. For more information, go to www.RachelsVineyard.org, or contact Beth at toheal4give@outlook.com.

She encourages anyone dealing with the grief of abortion to remember, "There's *nothing* that God can't forgive." — Theresa Hofer

Participants gather to celebrate Alpha!



food, fellowship, and testimonies of what the Lord Jesus did through the Fall Alpha courses.

The evening also provided the opportunity to introduce the new Christ the King “Belong” T-shirts. Designed by Christ the King Director of Worship Martin

Doman, the T-shirts are intended to reflect and promote the parish culture that the Alpha program is designed to foster. Rectangular and round stickers with the same theme are also available. For more information, go to www.ckkcc.net/wear-and-share-ckk-logos.

Over 100 people gathered in the Christ the King Parish Center Gym on Saturday evening, Dec. 9, to celebrate Alpha. They enjoyed good

Testimonies from Fall Alpha

“I came here at the worst time of my life. My mother had passed, 2 months later my husband, then my beloved dog Stella. I was lost, to say the least, & isolating a lot. I made so very many close friends I hope to continue to have a relationship with.”—*Tuesday Alpha guest*

“I participated in this class with my husband. We are seeking information about Christianity and Catholicism. I do feel that the Holy Spirit has touched me deeply during my experience. At the make-up session for the retreat, while we were praying, I felt a warmth on my hand.

Originally, I thought it was my husband’s hand, but when I realized he was about 8 inches away from me, I knew it was the Holy Spirit and I instantly felt an overwhelming joy. I know this course has made a significant impact on my life.”—*Wednesday Alpha guest*

“I know this course has made a significant impact on my life.”

It’s not too late to join Winter Alpha!

Winter Alpha sessions begin the week of Jan. 7, 2018, on the following days and times:

- Sunday afternoon, 12:30-2:30pm (childcare provided)
- Sunday evening, 6:30-8:30pm (childcare provided)
- Tuesday morning, 6:30-8:00am
- Wednesday evening, 6:30-8:30pm

- Friday morning, 9:30-11:00am (childcare provided)

Christ the King parishioners are welcome to join a Winter Alpha session, either accompanying a guest or just to find out what all the excitement is about! Space is limited, so register now at

www.ckkcc.net/alpha.

We could also use more team members to help with setup, hospitality, and childcare. Go to www.ckkcc.net/alpha and click on the button for “Winter Alpha Core Team.”

Pornography use in America is an epidemic. Fortunately, there is hope! We can protect our families and ourselves from pornography.

We Can Win the Battle Against Pornography!

Did you know...

- 20% of men admit to accessing pornography at work?
- 40 million U.S. adults regularly visit pornography websites?
- 47% of Christians say that pornography is a major problem in their home?
- Pornography plays a significant role in over 50% of all divorces?

The statistics on child and adolescent internet pornography are of even greater concern:

- The average age of a child's first exposure to internet pornography is 8.
- 80% of 15-17 year olds have had multiple exposures to hard-core porn.
- The largest population of internet pornography users is 12-17 year olds.

These statistics are probably gross underestimates of what is really happening in the world. The truth is that there is no way for us to really



know how bad it is. Still, the data we do have is enough to show us that pornography use in America is an epidemic.

Fortunately, there is hope! We can protect our families and ourselves from pornography. Come to the "Made for More" presentation to learn how.

Dr. Peter C. Kleponis is a Licensed Clinical Therapist and Assistant Director of Comprehensive Counseling Services in Conshohocken, PA. He is author of several books, including *Integrity Restored: Helping Catholic Families Win the Battle Against Pornography*, and

creator of the successful *Integrity Starts Here!* recovery program.

Dr. Kleponis' presentation will help you learn how to protect your family and yourself from the porn epidemic. Join us on Saturday, Feb. 10, 7-9:30pm in the Church Worship Space. Cost is \$15/person or \$20/couple (financial aid available to CTK parishioners).

For more information or to register, go to www.ctkcc.net/madeformore. Questions? Contact John Hoving at 734-929-0977 or jhoving@ctkcc.net. — Aimée Godfrey

Schedule of Major Events

- 1/1: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. **Not** a Holy Day of Obligation in 2018.
- 1/1-2: Parish offices closed
- 1/4-6: Encounter Conference 2018
- 1/5: Parish offices closed; no Upper Room
- 1/12, 19, 26, 2/2: Upper Room Praise & Worship
- 1/13: Keeping Your Kids Catholic
- 2/2-4: Women's Retreat

For more information about these and other events, check the bulletin or go to www.ctkcc.net and click on the "Calendar" tab.

MAJOR EVENTS—JANUARY 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
31	Jan. 1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	Feb. 1	2	3

Save the Dates!

Keeping Your Kids Catholic: Help and Hope for Catholic Parents and Grandparents, Saturday, January 13, 2018 at Christ the King. Workshop presented by Dave Mangan. To register, contact Nuala Holowicki at nualahol@yahoo.com.

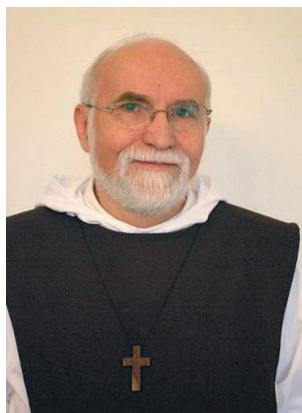


Every Day in Love, Saturdays, February 10 & 17 and March 3 & 10, 9am-noon. Equipping and empowering married couples to experience being passionately in love amid all the stresses of everyday life. Great *Living in Love* refresher!



Every Day
in love

CTK Parish Mission with Fr. Jacques Philippe, March 11-14, 2018.



Check future bulletins for more details about these great events!



Christ the King Catholic Church

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Coming in future issues...

- Lent and Prayer
- Testimonies
- Parishioner and ministry profiles

Look for this and more in future issues of

The Open Door

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We welcome your comments. Please send them to Theresa Hofer at thofer@ckkcc.net.

The Open Door is the monthly newsletter of Christ the King Catholic Church.



Christ the King Women's Retreat

with Dr. Mary Healy

February 2-4, 2018

Faholo Christian Conference Center

Registration is open!

For more information and to register, go to

www.ckkcc.net/2018-womens-retreat