



# DIOCESAN DIGEST

## for Central Pennsylvania

May 9, 2011

### FROM THE DESK OF.....

#### BISHOP NATHAN BAXTER

Dear Sisters & Brothers;

In this edition of DIGEST I resume answering questions regarding the ministry of the Church in our diocese. A question often asked is regarding the role of laity regarding the cure of souls (i.e. anointing and blessing).

In Anglican and Roman Catholic traditions only priests (not laity or deacons) anoint the sick or make unction. Uction, or anointing, is a form of consecrating. In this matter the "ABC" tradition prevails: only priests Absolve, Bless or Consecrate. While it is clearly expected that all orders have a role in the care of those suffering in body, mind or spirit, there is distinction of roles in such ministry. Laity may assist by offering or sharing in prayers for the sick, even laying-on-of hands; also they are encouraged in the ministry of consoling and offering the gift of presence. But, whether at a parish healing service or station or the visiting of a sick or shut-in person, it is appropriate for the priest alone to administer the sacrament of anointing. The Book of Common Prayer does allow that in cases of "necessity" a deacon or layperson may administer at the direction of the priest. "Necessity" means that it is an extreme emergency such as a priest is not available; that it is not a repeated or regular practice; and that in any such "necessity" it is done with the permission and guidance of the local priest or the bishop.

Having shared these directions, I stress that all orders share in the care for those in need of healing--- physical or spiritual. We are blessed in this diocese by a growing number of healing ministries from parish healing services, to prayer quilt, clothes and shawl ministries, to intercessory prayer groups. I have also been very moved in my visits to congregations by the spirit of faith during the Eucharistic Prayers of the People. [The ABC practice (Absolving, Blessing and Consecrating) also applies at the distribution of communion regarding persons not receiving (adults or children). It also applies to offering absolution to persons who may come to the railing to share a sin or failing. These are not the roles of deacons or laypersons.]

Certainly the ministry of prayer is always appropriate and encouraged for and among all the People of God. And the scriptural guideline upon which historically the Church has drawn role-distinction does speak equally to both situations. James 5: 14, 15 encourages:

<sup>14</sup> "Are any among you sick? They should call for the eld-

(continued at right)

### UPCOMING EVENTS...May - July

- May 12** 7pm Harrisburg Convocation mtg., St. John's, Carlisle
- May 15** Bishop visits St. John's, Lancaster
- May 18** 7pm Celebration of New Ministry & Installation of The Rev. Duncan Johnston, Mt. Calvary, Camp Hill
- May 20-21** Godly Play Training, Trinity, Williamsport (see flyer attached with this Digest)
- May 22** Bishop visits St. Luke's, Mechanicsburg
- May 26** 11am Clergy Association meeting at Trinity, Williamsport
- May 29** Bishop visits Trinity, Renovo
- May 30** Diocesan Office closed for Memorial Day
- Jun 5** Bishop visits St. Paul's, Columbia
- Jun 10-11** Diocesan Convention, Bucknell University, Lewisburg
- Jun 11** 9am-1pm Diocesan Children & Youth Day, Bucknell University, Lewisburg
- Jun 13** Bishop's Open Golf Tournament, The Links at Gettysburg (see p. 2 for more details)
- Jun 16** 10am Council of Trustees meeting at the Diocesan Cntr
- Jun 19** Bishop visits St. James, Lancaster
- Jun 19-24** Summer Youth Conference, Camp Mt. Luther
- Jun 22** Standing Committee Retreat (location to be confirmed)
- Jun 23** Bishop visits Summer Youth Conference
- Jun 26** Bishop visits All Saints, Selinsgrove
- Jun 27-Jul 1** Bishop at UBE Annual Conference
- Jul 9** Commission on Ministry Retreat (location to be confirmed)
- Jul 10** Bishop visits St. James, Mansfield
- Jul 12-13** Bishop at Diocese of Buffalo
- Jul 17** Bishop visits St. James, Bedford
- Jul 21** Bishop preaching at Lykens Valley Camp Meeting
- Jul 24** Bishop visits St. Paul's, Bloomsburg
- Jul 31** Bishop visits St. John in the Wilderness, Eaglesmere

If you have an event of interest to the Diocese that you would like to have listed on the Diocesan website calendar, please contact the Diocese at [officemailbox@diocesecpa.org](mailto:officemailbox@diocesecpa.org) or 888-236-5959

### Bishop's Message (continued from left)

ers ["Presburos" in Greek from which we translate priest] of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup>The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven." But then James hastens to encourage the prayer ministry of all the baptized by saying: <sup>16</sup>Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective."

All of us---laity, deacons, priests and bishops--- have a role in the ministries of the Cure of Souls.

Peace & Grace,

+Nathan

**MAILING ADDRESS**  
PO Box 11937  
Harrisburg, PA 17108

**DIOCESAN CENTER**  
101 Pine Street  
Harrisburg, PA

**TELEPHONE**  
(717) 236-5959  
**FAX**  
(717) 236-6448

**TOLL FREE IN STATE OF PA**  
1-888-236-5959

**WEBSITE**  
[www.diocesecpa.org](http://www.diocesecpa.org)

**EMAIL**  
[officemailbox@diocesecpa.org](mailto:officemailbox@diocesecpa.org)

**REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS...**

**The Rev. Dr. Erica Wood**, retired Rector of St. Luke's, Mt. Joy, and previous Priest-in-Charge of St. James, Lancaster, passed away on May 10th, after a long battle with cancer. Funeral arrangements are being finalized and we will let you know the details as soon as we have them.

**The Rev. John Gale**, retired priest, is severely ill with liver cancer and receiving hospice care.

**The Rev. Barbara Hary, Deacon** has been under doctors' care for heart-related issues.

**Thomas Kerr**, father of The Rev. Lauri Kerr, has been diagnosed with advanced lung cancer.

**Sandi Imboden**, continues cancer treatments.

**The Rev. Tom Gregg**, father of The Rev. Rowena Gibbons is in the late stages of brain cancer.

**Maddie Letsche**, Acolyte at St. Luke's, Altoona, who continues treatment and physical therapy for Image Negative Transverse Myelitis.

**Bob Rose** continues his cancer battle.

**BISHOP'S OPEN**

Don't miss signing up for the annual Bishop's Open on **Monday, June 13, 2011 at The Links at Gettysburg!** ([www.theLinksatGettysburg.com](http://www.theLinksatGettysburg.com))



Bishop Baxter has advised that he will designate 50% of the net proceeds of the Bishop's Open for Children & Youth scholarships and the remainder to assist him in responding to "discretionary charitable needs" he deems dire in the diocese and beyond. It is important to keep in mind that, in this stressful economic period, charitable needs have become more demanding where there is sometimes no other support available. So, "Episco-Golfers", these are most worthy causes to support.

Golfers, regardless of ability, are encouraged to participate, have some fun, good fare, and fellowship. If you don't play golf, you can enjoy dinner following the tournament.

We also urge and encourage each parish, parishioner, business owner and professional, as they are able, to sponsor a hole (\$25, \$50, \$75, or \$100). Our prayer is that each Vestry would be "Angels" and approve a \$100 donation in support of this most deserving effort at their Vestry meetings in May.

A Registration Form and a Sponsor Sheet are posted on our website. Entries and sponsorships should be mailed **by June 4th** to Prince of Peace Episcopal Church, Attn: John M. Stevenson, 20 West High Street, PO Box 3005, Gettysburg, PA 17325 ([jmstevenson@pa.net](mailto:jmstevenson@pa.net)). Make checks payable to The Diocese of Central PA, with "Bishop's Open" noted in the memo line.

For more information, please contact John Stevenson at [jmstevenson@pa.net](mailto:jmstevenson@pa.net) or Mark Wivell at [mark.wivell@lmco](mailto:mark.wivell@lmco).

**CELEBRATE OUR CHILDREN & YOUTH**

On **Saturday June 11th 8:45am-1:00pm**, **Diocesan Children & Youth Day** will be held at Bucknell University, Lewisburg. Whether or not you are attending Convention this year, please plan to join us in celebrating our young people.

There will be workshops covering topics such as Godly Play; VBS; safe use of the Internet and social media; Bullying; youth ministry in small churches; special needs kids in the welcoming church; and developing spirituality in a busy home.

The Eucharist will be led by the youth. We will end the day with a picnic on the lawn, with music provided by our young musicians.

A flyer is available at [www.diocesecpa.org](http://www.diocesecpa.org) / Our Programs / Children & Youth, which you can download to post on bulletin boards, or pass on. For more details, contact Cn. Robyn Szoke at 888-236-5959 or [rszoke@diocesecpa.org](mailto:rszoke@diocesecpa.org).

**ERD TORNADO RELIEF**

Tornadoes have ravaged many areas in the South. Three parishes are on the front line, providing disaster relief and assistance to families in their immediate areas: St. Matthias, Tuscaloosa AL; St. Thomas, Windsor NC; and La Iglesia de Sagrada Familia, Newton Grove NC.

Contributions to the ERD USA Disaster Response Fund enable Episcopal Relief & Development to respond swiftly to disasters in the United States, providing critical supplies as needed. These funds also enable the agency to work with dioceses, preparing for crises and developing strong emergency response programs to lessen the impact of disasters on communities.

At this time, donations to ERD's USA Disaster Response Fund will support the relief efforts of dioceses affected by storms in the South and Southeast. If you would like to contribute, please send donations to the Diocese of Central PA, PO Box 11397, Harrisburg PA 17108 (make checks payable to the Diocese of Central PA, with "ERD USA Disaster Response Fund" note in the memo line.

**ATTENTION CLERGY**

**41ST ANNUAL NNECA CONFERENCE**

**JUNE 20-22, 2011**

Sheraton Westport Chalet Hotel, St. Louis

\$100 NNECA Members

\$100 Spouse/Partner

\$280 Non-Members

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION INFORMATION

ONLINE AT [www.nneca.org](http://www.nneca.org)

Make hotel reservations directly with the hotel by May 27th at: [www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/nationalnetworkofepiscopalclergy](http://www.starwoodmeeting.com/Book/nationalnetworkofepiscopalclergy)

*If you have news or announcements of diocesan interest to include in the Diocesan Digest, please contact Carolyn Joy Patterson at [cpatterson@diocesecpa.org](mailto:cpatterson@diocesecpa.org)*