

# Frankly Speaking

September, 2007

Pentecost, Year C

St Paul's Episcopal Church, Woodville, TX

*Break Down the Walls; Come, Know Jesus (Holy Ghost Power)*

## A CONFESSION IN FAITH

*Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.* (Book of Common Prayer)

For years and years, every Sunday when I said this prayer, I was confused. I never really understood what I was praying, but I prayed it anyway. Why? Because it seemed so much easier than going to a 'private' confession. I didn't really have to think about it, just go to church and say it. That's not a true confession, though, is it? It was an immature attitude. Immaturity is not bad; it's not sinful either, in fact, it's quite normal. But Jesus wants us to mature in our faith and understanding our prayers helps us to mature.

This is a good prayer to use before going to church to worship the Lord – it's a good one to reflect and pause on as an individual. Sin separates us from God and each other. Sin is offensive to God and to others, and mature persons take responsibility for their own sins and seek God's forgiveness. Don't rush through this prayer – pause a bit – daily confession is good because there is less to confess – but more important, I think, it helps to discipline us – it serves as a reminder.

What sinful thoughts have I had? What offensive thoughts did I have that would offend God, thoughts towards Him and His creation and other people, no matter where they are?

What sinful words have I had said that are offensive to God, to His creation, to other people?

What sinful deeds have I done? Things that offend God, offend His creation and are offensive to other people?

What sin have I committed by leaving something undone, by leaving some words unsaid? How does not doing or speaking for God cause me to sin?



*Frank is glad to see St Paul's School children back again!*

This next sentence explains the result or perhaps even the reason, for all that we think, do, or say – Take some time to reflect on this part of the confession:

*We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.*

How does our love compare with that of Jesus, who is our role model as Christians? Jesus really did love himself, he didn't just have a big ego, he cared about whom he was and valued his

relationship with His Father, Our Father. Jesus and you and I share the same Dad and His name is God. We think, say and act un-loveable (sinful) towards others when we don't feel loved, but the truth is, there are people who love you – because the truth is, there are people who know that God loves them and so they love themselves and they love others the way He instructs, the way Jesus did. Look around you some Sunday: some of the people in church are still learning about God's love and some have fully matured in God's love. We can too, as long as we don't quit trying. (Read I Corinthians 13: 4-8a)

In the opening paragraph I said I hadn't been making a true confession because I wasn't thinking about what I was saying. Consider then the following sentence in this prayer:

*We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.*

I was just saying the words and couldn't possibly have been truly sorry, and without that – how could I humbly repent? To be humble is to acknowledge my error and God's rightness – to be humble is to acknowledge that I need to change myself – my thoughts towards God, self and others. And that is the first step towards repenting. Repenting means turning to become a loveable person (able to love) instead of being un-loveable (unable to love).

Why do we do all of this?

*For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us; that we may delight in your will, and walk in your ways, to the glory of your Name. Amen.*

Why do this for the sake of Jesus and not our own sakes? I used to wonder that. I thought; Jesus is already in Heaven,

*(Continued on page 3)*

## WHAZZUP? Upcoming Events

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Sept 1: 2 pm Anne Witte family baptism - all are invited

Sept 11: 1 - 4 pm Community of Hope training

Sept 13: Caring is Sharing spaghetti dinner at Our Lady of the Pines

Sept 21: 7 pm Ultreya at St Mark's, Beaumont

Sept 21 & 22: 6 pm  
**AND** Sept 23: 3 pm Relay for Life Murder Mystery Dinner Theatre

Sept 22: deadline for newsletter submissions

Sept 29: Gray Panthers sing at Heritage Village

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Oct 19: 7 pm Ultreya, St Paul's, Woodville

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Nov 1: All Saint's Day

Nov 16: Ultreya, St John's, Silsbee

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Nov 22: Thanksgiving Day

Dec 2: First Sunday of Advent

Dec 21: Ultreya, St Stephen's, Beaumont

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## ASK FR STEVE

Q: I am concerned about our church maybe getting into trouble because of that "42" domino game night held in August. Isn't that gambling? I didn't come because I was afraid it would be raided by the police!

A: Cheri and I met with Officer Jathan Borel, who discussed the situation with Chief Yosko. Our law enforcement officers determined that the way we were handling the event was indeed within the limits of the law.

The greater issue that causes me concern in this matter is that of gossip.

The song we sing, "We are One in the Spirit, We are One in the Lord," is not even true when we have division within our church family. There is a better way to resolve honest disagreements among us than to resort to

gossip.

Gossip is not Christian behavior. We are told repeatedly in the Bible that if we have a problem with our brother (or sister), we are to go to them privately and seek reconciliation. If that fails, we are to go to the elders - me or the Sr Warden or someone else on the Bishops Committee - to seek intervention in the situation. We are **not** to go behind backs and badmouth!

Gossip is divisive and destructive. Gossip is a violation of the 6th Commandment, since it "murders" the good name of some and the faith of others. As your priest, I tell you: it is a sin and must be confessed with your other sins.

Fr. Steve

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## HOLY COW(S)!

The next Holy Cows fund-raising event is the **murder mystery dinner theatre**, *Death in Them Thar Hills*.

This special 1880s murder mystery takes place near the Grand Canyon where prospector and gold mine owner "Dusty" Jones is being honored by the residents of Cactus Gulch. Jones had arrived in town five years before, flat broke and relying upon the generosity of local residents to help him get by. Today, he is the sole owner of the TAqIIA mine (He named it after his favorite drink, but Dusty never could spell).

Key citizens of Cactus Gulch have assembled to honor Dusty. Each one rises to say a few words about him and his contributions to the community. Then, it's Dusty's turn. After speaking his mind, Dusty raises a glass of Gila Gold, his favorite brand of tequila. He sits down and, a few minutes later, slumps over in his chair - dead.

The marshal then takes charge of the investigation as the suspects are interrogated.

Additional clues and key information are revealed as everyone is asked to figure out who killed Dusty Jones.

All roles will be played by dinner guests each night, with no one knowing "who done it" until the end of the evening, when the envelope containing the answer is opened!

Roles include Dusty, Marshall Nate Dillman, sharpshooter Annie Elmley, mayor Col. (ret.) Beauregard T Brady, and many more.

Each table will be an investigative team, so bring your friends to Cactus Gulch, wear your best western gear, and get ready for some great grub and great fun!

Shows are Friday Sept. 21 at 6 pm, Saturday Sept. 22 at 6 pm, or Sunday Sept. 23 at 3 p.m.

Seating is limited to 48 per show. Make your reservations now!

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## HOLY COW(S)! (PART 2)

We have had such a successful kickoff this fall for the 2008 Relay for Life that, following the murder mystery dinner theatre this month, we will mooove the cows out for a few months. Activities will resume in February. This will give everyone a chance to focus on the other activities this fall, allow time for the holidays, and still give us a running start in the spring. Thanks so much for your support!

(A Confession in Faith, *Continued from page 1*)

why does God need me to do this for Jesus? Well – because God loves Jesus – I remember my Grandmother scolding me once (I’m sure she scolded me more than once but I remember only one time) I had been disrespectful towards my mother, not only my mom – but my sister too – grandma saw the whole thing – I hit my sister because she wouldn’t give me something – funny I don’t remember what I wanted from her – anyway – My mom told me to go to my room and I started arguing with her and stomped off yelling “I hate you!” Well – that was enough for Grandma – she got up off the dining room chair and followed me into the room. She said ‘Sit down and listen to me!’ Then she told me that my mother loved me and that she loved my mother and she was very hurt that I had treated her daughter the way I did. Well – looking at grandma’s face I could tell she hurt – and I felt bad – not bad like a bad girl – bad like feeling sad – I loved grandma – so I apologized to her for acting that way and asked her if I could go tell mama I was sorry. She rubbed my cheek, moved my hair out of my face and said yes. She got up and opened the door and followed me out of the room, down the hall and to the kitchen. There was mom, at the sink in her apron – I tapped her side and she looked down – “I’m sorry mama. I love you.” She bent down, gave me a hug and a kiss and told me to go talk with my sister. I went to her and we just started playing like nothing had happened. I suppose I told her I was sorry too – but probably not until the end of the day – that’s when we would talk to each other – when we said our nighttime prayers.

How do you feel when someone you love is hurt by another? Probably pretty bad – maybe like my grandma felt – I think that’s how God feels when we hurt anybody, because we are all his children. How do you feel when you go to make amends with someone you have hurt? I can tell you that I felt stronger and more confident knowing that my grandma was behind me, walking with me towards my mother that day. I felt good knowing she was watching. I was glad she had spoken to me – her following me into my room, her explaining to me how she felt, and her following me out of my room gave me comfort. It’s like the comfort we receive from the Holy Spirit given to us by God. It’s the comfort we have in believing Jesus when he said, “I will be with you always.” He works through the people who believe in Him and His word, from one generation to the next.

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FHS

*If this is meaningful to you, then pass it on and pass along the mercy and forgiveness of Jesus Christ working in and through you to those you love and those you may have hurt. Let us delight in His will and walk in His ways together and forever! “They will know we are Christians by our love.”*

Note: This was written by a friend of Fr Steve & Nancy’s in Wisconsin. It is reprinted here with her permission. If you pass it on, please honor the copyright and pass on the complete text, including her name and the copyright symbol. Thanks!

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## WORDS OF WISDOM

Yesterday’s history.

Tomorrow’s a mystery.

Today’s a gift: that’s why we call it The Present.

(Thanks to a Gib Lewis inmate, via David Rust)

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## A DEVOTIONAL

by Elizabeth Elliot

If we really have too much to do, there are some items on the agenda which God did not put there. Let us submit the list to Him and ask Him to indicate which items we must delete. There is always time to do the will of God. If we are too busy to do that, we are too busy.

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(Thanks to Eugenia

## WHAZZUP? Upcoming Events 2

### Cursillo

The final Cursillo for 2007 will be held November 1-4, at Camp Allen. This will be a “campground” weekend. Ask Sandersons, Cheri or about the “campground” Cursillo weekend.

The 2008 Cursillos will be February June and August , with lodging in Camp Allen’s “hotel” rooms. November is always the “campground” weekend.

If you are interested in attending, or just plain curious about Cursillo, please see Fr Steve or anyone who has already attended. Cursillo.

### Relay for Life “Murder Mystery” Dinner Theatre

Friday & Saturday, September 21 and 22 at 6 pm, Sunday September 23 at 3 pm, at the Parish Hall. Limit of 48 seats per show. Call the church office 283-3710 or sign up on the sheet to make your reservation. Must be paid for by September 10 to guarantee your reservation. Make checks payable to St Paul’s . The net profit goes to Relay.

If you are part of or planning an upcoming church event, please provide the information so that it can be included in the newsletter! Just put your information in the newsletter mailbox in the parish hall, or email it to Fr. Steve at <frstephen@sbcglobal.net> or to Nancy at <nkseaur@yahoo.com>

Deadline is the 22nd of each month.

St Paul's Episcopal Church

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Break Down the Walls; Come, Know Jesus (Holy Ghost Power!)

Quick Peek at Upcoming...

Sept 11: Community of Hope training

Sept 13: Caring is Sharing spaghetti dinner

Sept 21: Ultreya

Sept 21-23: Murder Mystery dinner theatre

Sept 29: Gray Panthers sing at Heritage Village

Oct 19: Ultreya @ St Paul's

**READERS WANTED!!**

A Review of *Get Out of That Pit!* by Beth Moore

There are several ways to get into a pit.... we slide, fall, are pushed OR we jump, but from time to time, each of us must surely find we are at the bottom of a deep emotional, physical or spiritual hole without much hope of getting out on our own.

*Get Out of That Pit!* is just the book you need to read either for yourself or for a loved one. Beth Moore has a special way of bringing to light the everyday ways in which we, as mortals, need help in living our everyday lives.

Interesting, even entertaining, this is a book you'll want to take time to read. It could change your life or the life of someone you love.

(Thanks to Darby Kethan)

Note: This book is in our church library.