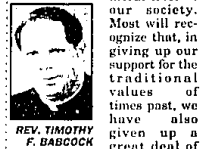


BELIEFS Values

We must embrace basic values to enrich society

Many writers today are getting into what appears to be a growing desire in American society to strengthen the moral fiber of our society. Most will recognize that, in giving up our support for the traditional values of times past, we have also given up a great deal of the stability and civility that have been written about restoring and embracing again, values that have been a balancing influence on the lives of individuals and of society as a whole. A significant increase in, and desire for, a healthier spirituality has led to numerous authors sharing their approaches and experiences. Such writings are being brought in unprecedented amounts.



REV. TIMOTHY F. BABCOCK

I would like to suggest today a few basic norms that I think every religious body would agree with and that, if embraced, would help society to be a much improved place. Embracing values, however, even as fundamental as these, means a great deal more than giving a "nod" in their direction. It means choosing them, and making a commitment to abide by them, not only when it is convenient and satisfying, but when it is challenging. It means sacrificing (a word we are not too comfortable with) our other desires and inclinations to maintain the commitment to allow the value to guide our decisions, and our behaviors. It cannot be a "sometimes" commitment, or choice.

1. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." Almost all of us would recognize this as the "golden rule." We recognize it, but do not necessarily practice it ourselves. Think what a major improvement it would be in our society if the great majority of us committed ourselves to living by this concept. Instead, most of us understand it as saying "do unto others as they do unto you." If people are nice to me, I will consider being nice to

them; if they are not, I am not. This is not what embracing a value means. It means that my behavior is determined by what I believe, not by what someone else does.

2. Seek the highest good; choose the better way! While there may be some disagreement in various situations about what the "better" way is, generally we will be better off if we have a vision of what is the best in particular situations and committed ourselves to striving for it. This could involve simply our relationships with other people, or as a whole. Think what a difference it would make in the relationship between parents and children, or between spouses, if they consciously tried to relate to one another in the "best" way possible. If we chose legislators and government leaders, or exercised our vote, according to what really would be the "best" for our society as a whole, rather than personal or profit motives, we could do much greater good for people. If we push ourselves to seek the "higher" way to relationships with others, it will make a great deal of difference.

3. Respect the dignity, and value of every person. As Americans, we believe that we are all endowed by our Creator with an unchangeable dignity and value, which gives us the right to a basic quality of life, to liberty, and to the pursuit of happiness. If we respected everyone we encounter with this attitude, it would add the same positive, hopeful and helpful vision to our relationships that our founding ancestors envisioned. It is far too easy for us to overlook these values in the midst of daily encounters, and conflicts. Far too often do we judge rather than respect.

All of us want to make our society a better place. Only we can take the responsibility for making it so. And to do so, we will have to embrace, make a commitment to, and live to the best of our ability, certain fundamental values. These few will make be a good place to start.

The Rev. Timothy F. Babcock is pastor of St. Andrew Catholic Church in Rochester. Call him at the church: (248) 651-7486.

Service recognizes medieval mystics

BY RENA FULKA
SPECIAL WRITER

The Gothic ambience of Christ Church Cranbrook will provide an inspiring backdrop when Birmingham Area Church Women United honor six Medieval mystics on World Community Day.

Spiritual works of art from the stained glass portrayal of 60 Christian women to the larger than life fresco of the shaping of the Christian church will enhance the overlying theme of ecumenical peace and justice.

The interfaith worship service entitled, "Gathering Seed From A Medieval Motherroot," was written by the CWU Celebratory Committee to be shared on Friday, Nov. 7, by Christian women around the globe.

"We invite and encourage all women to come," said Eula Bagley of Bloomfield Hills, a key delegate representing Christ Church Cranbrook. "It's very important to have a program that's stimulating and you leave feeling so good."

The Birmingham unit, which is comprised of representatives from 26 Oakland County churches, will begin the observance at 10 a.m. with a "Gathering" in the Guild Hall. Members are asked to bring the layettes, health supplies, school kits and other projects they've been working on throughout the year for distribution to the less fortunate in developing countries.

The Rev. Maryanne Lacey, associate rector at Christ Church Cranbrook, will wel-



Slaves in faith: Helen Booth (left) and Eula Bagley of Bloomfield Hills and Florence Purvis of Beverly Hills play key roles in Church Women United's World Community Day celebration, which honors the contributions of six female mystics of the Middle Ages.

come the 80 expected guests to the 10-30 a.m. service, which will be led by CWU President Lois Poston of Birmingham, a longtime member of First Presbyterian Church in Birmingham. The Rev. Edward Mullins, rector of Christ Church Cranbrook, will lead the prayer at the luncheon that follows the program.

The one-hour ceremony opens with the popular song, "All Things Bright and Beautiful," played by Christ Church Cranbrook Music Director Charles Raines on the newly re-

bished Skinner/Mander pipe organ. The deeply spiritual worship service focuses on the music, poetry and writings of six renowned Christian women of the Middle Ages.

The leading role of Hildegard of Bingen, whose 900th birthday will be celebrated next year, will be played by Phyllis Young of Franklin, a member of Franklin Community Church, United Methodist in Franklin. Joann of Arc will be remembered through readings by Beverly Hills resident Alma Winkworth of Beverly Hills

United Methodist Church; Teresa of Avila by Bloomfield Hills resident Juana Booker of Franklin Community Church; Julian of Norwich by Birmingham resident Maxine Osborne of First Presbyterian of Birmingham; Catherine of Siena by Beverly Hills resident Florence Purvis of First Presbyterian of Birmingham; Mechtilde of Magdeburg by Troy resident Lucille Maring of Beautiful Savior Lutheran in Bloomfield Hills; and Hildegard of Bingen.

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All Saints Day honors faithful Christians

BY RENA FULKA
SPECIAL WRITER

During the centuries-old liturgical observance of All Saints Day, Christians the world over reflect on the named and unnamed saints that preceded them in building the kingdom of God.

"A saint for us is a person who has lived a faithful life and is in heaven with God," said the Rev. Timothy Babcock, pastor of St. Andrew Roman Catholic Church in Rochester. "All Saints Day is the celebration of the communion of saints where we are all in oneness with

Christ." The feast day can be traced back to the 600s, when the early church honored the faithful martyrs who stood by their Christianity even until death. In the centuries that followed, the feast day was expanded to include the apostles, the great confessors of the church and the saints. "We don't earn the kingdom of heaven. It's earned for us through the salvation of Jesus Christ," said Babcock. "The saints are those who are examples and intercessors for us."

An intense examination con-

firms a life consistent with the Christian Gospel is undertaken before an individual is canonized to sainthood in the Catholic Church. A miracle must also be established through God's power. "We take it as a proof and confirmation that the person is with God," said Babcock. Roman Catholics normally celebrate All Saints Day on Nov. 1, with a liturgy featuring special prayers and hymns. Most Protestants tend to mark the observance during worship services on the Sunday following the feast day.

All Saints Day will take on a new dimension in West Bloomfield this year when five Oakland County congregations join hands for a unique reunion after centuries of estrangement. The event is being held in recognition of the historic "Formula of Agreement," made official in August, that links in pulp and altar fellowship the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Reformed Church in America and the United Church of Christ. The evening of celebration also coin-

See SAINTS, B11

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