

Feedback November 2005

My Turn

Bishop Harry R. Jackson Jr.'s column about ministry in prison was excellent and honorable ("Church Behind Bars," June). As an inmate called to ministry and scheduled for release within the next three years, I have seen quite a bit of apathy directed at men "behind the wall." But what Christians on the outside fail to realize is that this place is fertile ground for spiritual harvest and revival.

God called me and six other elders (in cooperation with chapel staff) to start Allenwood Word of Faith Christian Center in this prison. The response has been phenomenal. The church grew from seven members to 70 in about a year and a half. The congregation hovers around 50 to 70 people on any given Sunday.

In celebration of our fourth anniversary, our vision for the year is "Pursuing Holiness: Lining Ourselves Up With the Standard of God's Word." Keep us in prayer.

Gary Mabry

White Deer, Pennsylvania

The Next Generation

Your issue ("Youth on Fire" by Lou Engle, September) is awesome! I'm 20 years old and agree that this is the generation the church must focus on. Youth are so different now and are exposed to so much. Thank you for recognizing our need for attention from God's people.

Sarah McCormick

Seattle, Washington

The article by Lou Engle may encourage a view of nonviolent "sieges" on abortion clinics. These may seem less deadly than clinic bombings, but they are still dangerous. The Christian

community needs to understand that closing abortion clinics will do little to decrease the number of abortions in America. Children will still die.

Abortion needs to be stopped, but abortion and the clinics are only symptoms. Christians are making women who abort feel victimized and persecuted by the community. The anti-abortion movement should be about the individual, not the institution.

The current methods used to “combat” abortion are flashy but superficial. They attract media attention but do nothing for suffering women. They paint an image of a church that is detached from and judgmental of the community it could help heal.

We should remember that when Jesus wanted to change a life He didn't throw a protest. Jesus sat down and had dinner with the people He wanted to save. Loving is more difficult than passing judgment. Too many Christians are taking the easy way out.

Aubrey Wilson
via e-mail

True Healers

Thank you for the wonderful article about John and Paula Sandford (“Healers of the Wounded Soul” by Julia C. Loren, September). They are loving and wise, yet tough when they need to be. The principles of emotional healing promoted through their Elijah House ministry have changed my life! Everyone could benefit from the classes, books and tools for recovery.

Teri Hamrick
Marietta, Georgia

I enjoyed reading about the Sandfords. They seem to care about people. It's wonderful when Christians are concerned with what concerns God. May the Lord bless their work.

name withheld

Cry from Catholics: Stop Bashing Us

I was disheartened to see all the negative comments from your readers about the Catholic Church after you published "Vicar of the Spirit" by Stephen Mansfield (June). I hadn't realized so many fellow Christians feel such disdain for Catholics. Thank you for including Catholics as part of the "body of Christ."

Brenda Rice
Horton, Kansas

I was shocked at the number of your readers who complained about your coverage of Pope John Paul II. It appears that many of your readers aren't knowledgeable of Catholic beliefs. For example, our respect for the pope's authority dates back to Jesus' words to Peter, "You are the rock and on this rock I will build my church." We respect our popes as successors to Peter.

Patricia Baldwin
Rocky River, Ohio

If we call ourselves Christians, then where do we get the right to judge someone else who is preaching and teaching God's love?

name withheld

I am a Catholic charismatic and very much a Christian. There are a lot of Catholics who read your magazine, and we respect everyone in other denominations. Please let your other readers who have hate in their hearts for Catholics know that we forgive them. Love is the message of Jesus. We love the Lord, too.

Vangie Santos
Oakdale, California

I would like to thank you for the feature on Pope John Paul II. As a Catholic, I was disheartened by some letters bashing Catholic brothers and sisters. As baptized children of God, we

need to stand together for Christ. In Him there is no room for a superior attitude among Christians.

Susan Kennedy

Bella Vista, Arizona

We all have been deceived at one point or another, regardless of our religious background. Don't just pray for Catholics, pray for all denominations. We all have some form of idolatry; it's a heart condition. I know many Catholics who have encounters with the living God. It's time to stop judging.

Carla Schobeck

Toledo, Ohio

I read the comments about Pope John Paul II. Some of them saddened me. In his teachings, this pope defined four laws of God. One of them reiterates the commandment to "honor your father and mother." The conclusion he reached in his book says that to have reconciliation in churches, we have to honor our "parent" religious group. So shouldn't Protestants at least desire to honor Catholics for giving them a spiritual heritage?

Marie Nield

Masterton, New Zealand

I am disturbed by all the letters filled with anti-Catholic bigotry. Is Charisma the forum for the ignorant and intolerant fringe? These pitiable people do not speak for me or the church of Jesus Christ. These critics need to remove the planks from their own eyes and learn something about the faith they supposedly follow.

David S. Roberts

Lumberton, North Carolina

Casting stones at Catholics must stop. We are followers of Jesus Christ, too!

Kathy Reder

Tuolumne County, California

I was saddened to see so much Catholic bashing by your readers in the August issue. Thank you for your efforts to promote unity in the body of Christ.

Scott Schmitt

Winter Park, Florida

I bought your August issue and was very disappointed with how people responded in their letters to the editor. To those who wrote the letters, you sounded like the Pharisees when they questioned Jesus. I'm a charismatic Catholic, and for once I would like to pick up a Christian magazine and not have to read about people putting down Catholics.

Imelda Garcia

Modesto, California

I have been reading Charisma for years, but I have always felt left out because I never see any writings from charismatic Catholics. I was thrilled to read your June issue with articles from Ralph Martin and Al and Patti Mansfield. There are many born-again Christians who live in the Spirit within the Catholic community.

Pat Baldwin

Rocky River, Ohio

Many of your readers' comments reflected an ignorance of the Catholic faith and the theology of John Paul II. Some readers claiming to be filled with the Holy Spirit found an opportunity to disparage Catholic beliefs. The gifts of the Spirit include wisdom, which should increase our capacity to love others as Jesus would.

Peter J. Bernot

Howell, New Jersey

I am appalled at the letters to the editor regarding Pope John Paul II and Catholics. To think people honestly believe the church teaches witchcraft or idolatry is absurd! What happened to "love thy neighbor as thyself"? It pains me to think there are people who call themselves Christian and yet publicly beat

up other Christians.

Michelle J. Dougherty
Waverly, New York

Changing of the Guard

I was very encouraged by J. Lee Grady's recent comments regarding the end of the charismatic era (Fire in My Bones, August). I am a pastor with strong charismatic roots, but recently I realized I've been chasing a version of Christianity rather than Christ Himself. We are living in changing times and I would love Charisma to continue to address this change.

Peter Magelssen
Kenmore, Washington

Tomorrow's Church

It was wonderful to see the variety of young leaders you profiled in your anniversary issue ("30 Emerging Voices," August). It's very encouraging to see that the future of Christian leadership includes women and men, singles and people of various racial backgrounds. I look forward to the day when the leadership of our churches reflects the same mix.

Gayle Robinson
Raleigh, North Carolina

Excuse Me, Mr. Colson?

Charles Colson worries that people may elevate environmental concerns over human needs (People & Events, July). His two examples do not bear this out.

Energy needs in the U.S. could easily be met by a major switch to clean, green energy such as wind farms and solar energy. Green energy would make the U.S. self-sufficient and would provide the complete energy security that is so desired.

Many Brazilians live in poverty, but clearing away the

rainforest will do nothing to alleviate that poverty. The human cost of clearing the rainforest is, first, genocide because at least 50 isolated tribes still live there.

In addition, ranchers often use slave labor to work their loss of the rainforest also means the loss of all the medicinal plants that grow there that might save lives.

Environmental concerns and human needs are not in conflict. It is only by honoring environmental concerns that human needs may truly be protected.

Elizabeth Moberly

Durham, England