

The Guild of Christian Healers

Newsletter

February 2011

A letter from Archbishop John. *Past President and Founder of the Guild*

I was pleased when Bishop Rod asked me to write a letter for the Newsletter. It is good to look back sometimes, and remember past successes, and gratifying to realise that the Guild continues to flourish in new capable hands, and also to recall the reason that this Guild was formed.

There were other active Healing ministries in the UK when I felt the call to become involved in this prayerful and practical expression of the Christian Faith in action, and it was to these that I looked with an intention to become enrolled as an active member of one such organisation.

Upon reading of the rules of several Healing Ministries, I was saddened to find; that without exception, each was affiliated in some way; to one or other of the many Christian denominations; and that membership was exclusive to either a person, or a group belonging to that Church.

In my research into the Christian Healing Ministry, it very soon became evident to me that Divine Healing crosses the boundaries of Christian Denominations, and that certain people from all the several persuasions, have been blessed with the Spiritual gift of "Laying - on of hands- for Healing." Many more still receive positive answers to their prayers for Divine Healing intervention.

There was no Healing fellowship that invited practising Christian Healers from all denominational affiliations into its membership. That was an incredible and quite unacceptable state of affairs. I believed then, and still do; that denominational differences should have no place in the Christian Healing Ministry and that individual clergy should never forbid, or place restrictions upon any of his/her congregation who wished to exercise their God -given gift of Divine healing.

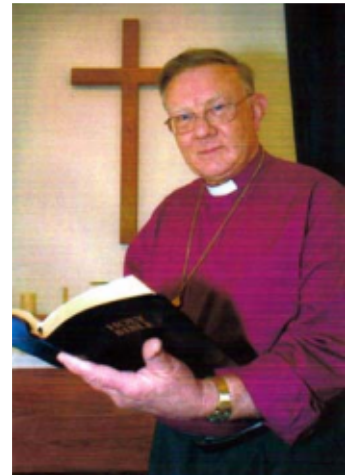
In my realisation that such restrictions were indeed frequently being imposed, I formed the Guild of Christian Healers. Releasing, and enabling others like me, and those who were being restrained, to unite and share in fellowship, prayer, and the practise of our gift, for the healing of the sick: and through successful healing; to bring the recipients to face the reality of a living, caring God, and hopefully from that realisation to embrace the faith.

It is my prayer that through the grace of God this miraculous ministry may become more widely acknowledged. Becoming once again the major influence it once was, by confronting the public with astonishing healing blessings , of the reality and certainty of an active, living, loving God.

Will you add your prayers to mine, by asking God to bless, enable and widen the scope of the worldwide Christian Healing Ministry?

This comes with my blessings and good wishes

++John M Rhodes CJ



Welcome from Rt Rev Fr Rod Walton
President of the Guild

I would like to pay tribute to our outgoing President, Rt Rev John Rhodes for his dedication, vision and hard work which brought the Guild of Christian Healers into being. It is my very great privilege to be asked to continue his work by taking on the mantle of Presidency of the Guild. I would also like to thank him for all the encouragement and support he has given me over the years, from when I was a deacon to the present day. It has been very much appreciated.



I would like to wish everybody a belated happy new year. I believe we are entering a very exciting time in church history and the Holy Spirit is being poured out on the church world wide. But the majority of the churches are still just plodding a long in the same old way. I believe it is time to claim our inheritance back, which the modern church has practically lost. If we look at the ministry of Jesus and the early church, we see that his mission started and continued after his ascension with signs and wonders following the gospel (see Luke 9:1-2).



First he sent out the 12 disciples and soon after 70 others (Luke 10:1). His instructions were “Heal the sick who are there and tell them the Kingdom of God is near you” (Luke 10:9). We see a full gospel ministry. They were ministering to the whole person.

What we must remember is that Jesus gave his church power “Greek dunamis” and he also gave them authority “Greek..exousia”. Jesus had authority and he delegated this authority to his church. As I mentioned, the early church used that authority with great results. There has been much talk in the New Age movement about healing. And the church, by and large, has not responded to the challenge. This has been a big mistake. It has led people in to occult practices, which leads to various other spiritual problems. It is time to step out in faith and authority. There is a scripture, which I often think of, 2 Timothy 3:5. “In the last days...having a form of godliness but denying its power ”

I believe that in the past the church has been guilty, not intentionally, but perhaps through conservatism, of not using the authority it has been given. I would like to encourage everyone, in this new year, to use the authority we have been so graciously given.

Luke 9:1-2

When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

Luke 10:1

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go.

Luke 10:9

Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God has come near to you.’

2 Timothy 3:1-5

But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God — having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with such people.

It is interesting to note that the only areas of growth in all denominations are those where the Holy Spirit has been working. The Roman Catholic charismatics are the faster growing part of the Roman Catholic church. This is reflected in the Anglican, Free churches and Pentecostal churches. This covers the full range of denominations.

I believe that all of us in the Guild of Christian Healers have much to offer and I would like to encourage everyone to submit their thoughts on how they see their healing ministry within the Christian church. In this edition of the newsletter, we have articles from Rt Rev Nicola Martin Davis on The Importance of Daily Prayer and from Rev Dr Caroline Wilkins on Practical Healing. It would be lovely if we could share articles, information and encourage each other. Please send any items for the future editions of the newsletter to our editor, Caroline, either by post or email (caroline@ib2bsystems.com). I believe this would go a long way towards encouraging and supporting each other in our ministries.



Next time, in the newsletter, we will be speaking about deliverance ministry (we are being asked more and more to help out in this area to resolve problems caused by people getting involved in the occult) and the benefits of home chapels. If anyone would like to send pictures of their home chapel for inclusion, that would be very helpful.

Prayer Requests

Please send your prayer requests for future inclusion in the newsletter to caroline@ib2bsystems.com

Kerry - we have been asked to pray for a young lady who is suffering terribly with anxiety issues, difficulty sleeping and agoraphobia

David - we ask your continuing prayers for the full recovery of David, the 56 year old father of one of Caroline's closest friends, who had multiple strokes last week. Please also give thanks that, although the medical staff had given little hope, he has been making a steady recovery. Many thanks to Bishop John, Bishop Nicola for supporting Bishop Rod and Revd Caroline in their prayers for David at this time.

David Gurling - please pray for David, the brother of Bishop Roger Gurling, who has liver cancer and has been told by doctors that he has very little time now.

Healing News

Please send your prayer requests for future inclusion in the newsletter to caroline@ib2bsystems.com

Practical Healing by Revd Dr Caroline Wilkins

"If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."

This well known and well loved verse from Paul's first letter to the Corinthians teaches many things. One of these things, I believe, pertains to healing (which may be an interpretation of "fathom all mysteries and all knowledge"). I think it reminds us that it is not enough to be a channel for God's healing, we must first be a channel for his love.

Love is powerfully expressed in practical ways and some of these ways can be directly and quite obviously physically healing; for example, the practical care offered in traditional nursing. Perhaps the most famous Christian healer in recent history, Mother Theresa, demonstrated in her life's work of compassionate nursing the power of practical healing as the result of a desire to serve God.

Not all of us are nurses of course. Yet we can all be practical Christian healers. We are all capable of doing even small practical things to help the welfare of another. That may involve giving someone who needs it a lift to hospital, or getting the shopping for someone who is unwell. It may be sitting with someone who is lonely, listening to someone in mental, emotional or spiritual distress, making a healthy meal for someone we suspect hasn't been looking after themselves. It can take so many forms. The key is to look at the people and creatures around us, notice where the needs are and do what we can to relieve those needs. We can't always solve all of a problem, but we can make a difference and convey God's love to people through every small act of love and charity.

In addition to the bereavement work I do with Rt Rev Fr Rod Walton, I am also heavily involved in animal rescue work. In this work, I am constantly aware that, no matter how many animals I can save or improve the life of, there are a great many more that I cannot directly help. Similarly, no matter how many bereaved people we can help find hope or belief in eventual reunion with lost loved ones, it is a drop in the ocean of people suffering the despair of bereavement. The following story (right) is of great comfort to me and I think it will be pertinent to others involved in healing. It's called "The Starfish Story" by Loren Eiseley.

The Starfish Story

Once upon a time, there was a wise man who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had a habit of walking on the beach before he began his work.

One day, as he was walking along the shore, he looked down the beach and saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself at the thought of someone who would dance to the day, and so, he walked faster to catch up.

As he got closer, he noticed that the figure was that of a young man, and that what he was doing was not dancing at all. The young man was reaching down to the shore, picking up small objects, and throwing them into the ocean.

He came closer still and called out "Good morning! May I ask what it is that you are doing?"

The young man paused, looked up, and replied "Throwing starfish into the ocean."

"I must ask, then, why are you throwing starfish into the ocean?" asked the somewhat startled wise man.

To this, the young man replied, "The sun is up and the tide is going out. If I don't throw them in, they'll die."

Upon hearing this, the wise man commented, "But, young man, do you not realize that there are miles and miles of beach and there are starfish all along every mile? You can't possibly make a difference!"

At this, the young man bent down, picked up yet another starfish, and threw it into the ocean. As it met the water, he said, "It made a difference for that one."

I would venture further even than the beautiful sentiment of the starfish story. I would say that every time we make ourselves a channel for God's love by ministering to others, we are doing more than helping that individual. We are bringing more of God's love into the world and this will ripple out way beyond our immediate sphere of influence.

Love is one of the few things we can give away without depleting ourselves. On the contrary, the more we give, the more we have within ourselves. We need never worry about running out. Having said that, most (if not all) Christian healers highlight the need to maintain strength through prayer and to act only as a channel for God's healing. It is commonly heard for a Christian healer to say "It's not me that heals – it's God. To Him be the glory." This is not simply an expression of humility, it also carries advice to other healers.

St Francis of Assisi teaches us about this practical healing in his prayer (right).

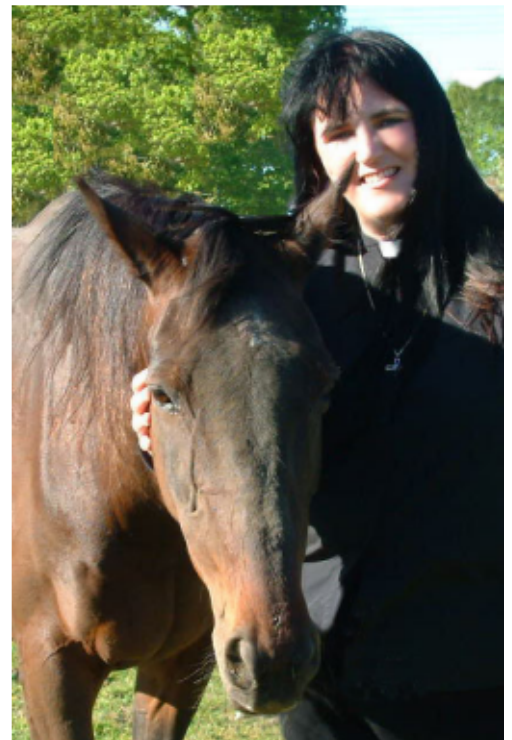
In the first part of his prayer, St Francis talks of various facets of practical healing. In the last three lines, he teaches eloquently on the nature of giving. It is possible to take a linear interpretation of the phrase "It is in giving that we receive" and see the act of giving as an act that will eventually be re-paid to us. Yet I think St Francis may have intended a more instant and yet timeless message. There is little more instantly rewarding and spiritually beautiful than praying deeply for the welfare or healing of another. Similarly, performing good works feels wonderful at the very point of action.

If we take the view of life that we are here on Earth to develop spiritually and help others develop, and we then view that in the timeless landscape of eternal life, then we can experience acts of love and charity as timeless and eternal developments of our souls which bring us closer to our Heavenly Father. What could be more instantly and eternally more rewarding than that?!

I should finish by adding that by no means do I suggest that Christian healing is exclusively a practical thing. On the contrary, I believe, in common with most in the healing ministry, that Christian healing is the legacy given to all Christians. Jesus himself said that those who believed in him would lay hands on the sick and they would get better. Thus the "laying on of hands" form of Christian healing is clearly valid, as is the more commonly practised form of praying more remotely for healing. I simply add that Christian healing can also take a practical form which is an important and valid form of Christian healing which should have a significant role in a holistic healing ministry.

The prayer of St Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of
your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow
love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled, as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive.
It is in pardoning that we are
pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born
to Eternal Life.
Amen.



Caroline with Beauty the horse, who she rescued from certain death less than 24 hours before she was due to be shot and nursed back to full health. Practical healing in action!

The Importance of Prayer

by Rt Rev Nicola Martin Davis

Daily Prayer - the raising of our hearts, souls and minds to God.

Daily prayers change lives.

They change your life, the lives of those around you and that of the entire world in which we all live.

You will discover a sense of peace through developing a deep and nourishing relationship with God and with this, you will live a far more spiritually fulfilling life.

Many people think nothing of exercising their bodies on a daily basis - and those who don't walk, run, swim or attend a gym - wish they did something to live a healthier life. Daily Prayer is the necessary exercise for a healthy soul and a far better developed sense of well being from deep within yourself.



We are being asked all the time how to develop a more Christian way of life. We understand that this doesn't mean being a 'better' person as such although this goal is a great one! We know this is a need to learn how to become closer to God. We are a small church and do not have clergy as yet in every part of England - but we are being contacted again and again by people who feel alone in their faith and seek a worshipful life with us. Sadly many who have contacted us live some way from our church buildings and so this is our only way at this time to feel closer to one another as we grow in numbers and outreach. To pray together is, as they say, to stay together. However a strong prayerful life is learning process that comes to us eventually - with practice!

Developing a strong prayer life can change you, dramatically. Praying can become a deeply satisfying routine in many ways. Just as developing a healthy body can prove hard at first, so can developing your daily prayerful life. I consider it the only opportunity I have to firm up my relationship with our Creator, fully understanding how essential routine prayer is to address the needs of the entire human race, as well as the people I know and love and for my own needs and strength in ministry.



Our clergy meet hundreds of people on a weekly basis within our ministries who crave a more meaningful life of worship. We are also being emailed by people too far away from us to attend our local services. Many ask when, where and how often they should pray. Some have no faith home and others lead quite a lonely spiritual life within their secular world - but would love a deeper relationship with God. The problem is, they don't know where to start. I fully understand this quandary as years ago I also felt prayer could be an ad hoc thing; something we just do anyway and therefore needed little formal structure. How wrong I was!

It is good to talk to God in a haphazard way (for want of a better description) as He likes to hear your thoughts and needs. However, to firm up this daily 'chat' you may already enjoy - just as a great athlete doesn't just randomly take a jog now and again in order to run a marathon - our prayerful lives, for the sake of the Kingdom of God, must take a disciplined form. It can take a long time to structure your life towards this way of praying but once practised, you will find you cannot get through the day without it. You may feel your busy lives do not make provision for daily prayer but you will eventually realise that not only have you got the time to pray, but in truth, you haven't the 'time' not to! Using a formal prayer structure is a good way to discipline yourself towards a Christian life.



I tell people that there are also great theological benefits if they are new to studying the Bible as it familiarises them with the Psalms and the Gospels and letters written to the Early Church. It will focus your spirit to the solemnity and reverence needed within yourself to work fully towards living a Christian life, changing how you currently live (no matter how well you think you live your life) beyond all recognition. It will encourage you to seek others for a shared worshipful life and it will firm up your desire deep within your very soul to strive towards acting every day as Christ taught us to. And one of His instructions to us was to pray.



I have just returned from Lourdes - the message from the Mother of God to little Bernadette was to pray and pray and pray again. Every visionary throughout history has reported the same - pray to God and never cease doing so. Can we really do this without harnessing the discipline and structure given to us by the men and women the early Church? Many daily prayer formats are totally inspired by God and so we should use them as best we can.

There are many disciplined prayer formats, as we all know, and what I advise people who are keen to start a prayerful life is this: It doesn't matter if it is catholic, Reformed - whatever - as long as it is Christian!

I use a Morning and Evening Prayer book which was given to me by my former bishop and it is a shortened version of the Breviary (The Divine Office) which can be very complicated if people are in their early prayerful life, as it is mainly used by clergy. I hope this article helps you to help others find an understanding of the importance of prayer and more essentially, the necessity to discipline your life to solid prayer as soon as you wake and before you sleep. The rest of your day and night will be taken care of by God.

Why must we pray to God?

- In Adoration of Him.
- In gratitude for all the goodness of the day.
- For the sorrows of ourselves and the peoples of the world when the day has been troubled.
- With sorrow for our wrongs and the wrongs of the world.
- In Thanksgiving for His blessings, His Grace and especially the gifts we often take for granted.
- In our requests for ourselves and others - for happiness, health and peace.

Sometimes we all pray for certain things that are not a part of God's plan for us. We soon get to realise what is His Will and what is not best for our lives. To pray for more money may not get you more money - but to pray for your physical needs being met is something completely different. Give us, this day, our daily bread is a prayer that nourishes our bodies as well as our souls as Christ Himself told the dark one we do not live on bread alone.