

NAAC LEADERSHIP: A VIEW FROM THE CROW'S NEST

From the crow's nest on a ship, you can see both where you have been and where you are going. I have a long history with NAAC and I know where NAAC has been. After a three year Sabbath, I have fresh eyes now with which to see a direction for the future.

As President, I see myself as the captain of the NAAC ship afloat in baptismal water. Just as in the catechumenate journey, our ship will sail into waters both deep and wide. From the Crow's Nest, I hope to guide the organization through uncharted waters, keeping the ship steady and safe along the way.

At the end of September the NAAC Board met in Denver for a Visioning Retreat. The goal was to review where NAAC has been and envision where NAAC might go. At the end of the Visioning Retreat, each Board member joined a working group centered on a specific area where there are opportunities for growth. Working Groups were formed around these

topic areas: Communications, Ecumenical Relations, Membership, Budget and Finance, Gatherings, Regional Chapters, and Training. Many exciting and innovative ideas arose in our retreat. It is too soon to talk about all of them, but here are a few highlights of what is currently underway.

- Work is in process on revising/restating a statement of NAAC's Purpose and Goals.
- Planning for the 2016 Annual Gathering in Albuquerque is well underway.
- An Operational Budget for 2016 has been developed.
- Training Institutes are being scheduled for 2016 and 2017.
- Models of Regional Chapters are being reviewed for possible adoption at a later time.

At the end of the retreat we gave thanks for all our partners in baptismal formation, we celebrated that from our diverse backgrounds we are yoked together in a common mission and each member of the board was anoint-



ed and blessed for the work that lies before them.

My prayer is this: That the wind of the Holy Spirit fill our sails and guide us gently forward. I hope this will be your prayer, too.

One last note: feel free to email me (revbevpiro@gmail.com) at any time with your thoughts, ideas and insights about NAAC.

From the Crow's Nest,
Bev Piro, President

HAVING A CATECHUMENAL EVENT?

We would like to use the vehicle of this newsletter to share the stories of the practice of the Catechumenate in its various manifestations in the United States and Canada.

If you have an experience that highlights either the values and opportunities and/or the challenges of the catechumenal practice on the ground in the local church, please write it up for

us (ideally approx. 500 words) and send it along to the NAAC Newsletter Editor at gsmi@uwo.ca.

We can learn from one another.

ALBUQUERQUE FEATURES THREE AMAZING PRESENTERS



Dan Benedict

“Sing a New Song: Unpacking the Mystery of Faith” will be the theme of the 2016 Annual Ecumenical Gathering hosted by the North American Association for the Catechumenate in Albuquerque, NM, Tuesday to Thursday, June 28-30. Our keynote speakers will help immerse participants in the mysteries of faith by exploring the four movements of the ancient faith formation process called the Catechumenate including the liturgical rites. Rich worship and music resources will also be shared.

Dan Benedict is a presbyter in The United Methodist Church. He writes in the arena of liturgical spirituality, teaches online through the Institute for Discipleship, and serves as the Abbot of the Order of Saint Luke. He is author of *Come to the Waters, An invitation to Catechumenal Ministry*, and *Patterned by Grace: How Liturgy Shapes Us*. His hands-on work with the Catechumenate is with the Cathedral of Saint Andrew (Honolulu) where he is Honorary Ecumenical Canon. He served as Director of Worship Resources for The United Methodist Church from 1993-2005.



Lizette Larson-Miller

Lizette Larson-Miller is the newly named Huron-Lawson Professor of Theology at Huron University College (University of Western Ontario). Her academic focus is in liturgical studies and sacramental theology, having received an MA in Liturgical Studies from St. John's University (Collegeville) and a PhD in Liturgical History and Theology from the

GTU (Berkeley, CA). She has just completed her term of office as President of the international ecumenical association, *Societas Liturgica*, and begins as chair of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation. She has written extensively on issues surrounding sacramental rites and liturgy and place, with a new book *Sacramentality Renewed* forthcoming in 2016.

Marty Haugen is a well-known musician, composer, and workshop presenter. Currently a member of the United Church of Christ, his work and faith journey has been shaped by his early Lutheran roots in worship and theology, by years of work within the Roman Catholic tradition, as well as by years of engagement with people in a number of cultures and religious traditions. This past summer he delivered two major addresses at the Australia Pastoral Musicians Network conference in Brisbane including the opening presentation on Pope Francis' announced “Year of Mercy” and the closing presentation on his encyclical on the environment, *Laudato Si*.

Only forty-five minutes south of Santa Fe, the Bosque Center is a first-class conference center run by the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande. Registration is now open for pastors, seminarians, musicians, educators, and other lay church leaders. Go to www.catechumente.org where you can download information, a brochure, and register online.



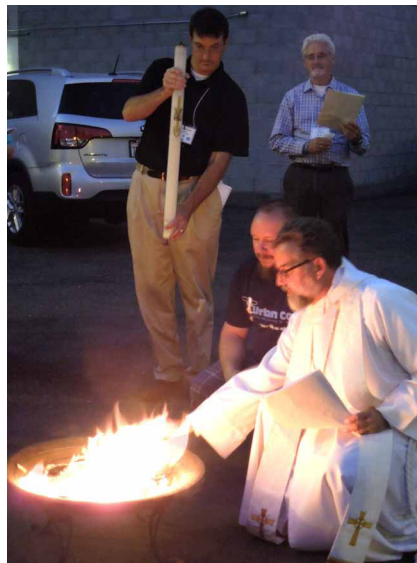
Marty Haugen

SCENES FROM A CATECHUMENATE TRAINING INSTITUTE

Thirty-five participants gathered in Sacramento in early October for a training institute held by the North American Association for the Catechumenate (NAAC). The event was co-hosted by St. John's Lutheran Church, the Episcopal Church of St. Martins, and Trinity Cathedral. Representing a wide diversity of ages and denomina-

tions, the group was made up of pastors, seminarians, and congregational leaders. They joined one another on a journey through the four movements of the Catechumenate: meeting in small groups, listening to stirring presentations, attending a variety of workshops, and experiencing inspirational worship including the full liturgi-

cal rites. In the scenes below a) participants share an insight, b) the group gathers at the church door for the Vigil, c) a sponsor watches as a candidate enrolls his name, d) Teresa teaches, e) the Easter fire is lit, f) affirmers celebrate their baptism at the Easter Vigil, g) sharing faith stories in a small group.



Training Institutes reveal to participants "the same dramatic journey you must make if you are going to become a disciple of Jesus. It is not enough to be impressed by Jesus' wonderful example; we need to deal with our resistance to the way of Jesus — a resistance we have been formed in by our culture." From the notes on a Resource in this issue.

RESOURCE: BECOMING THE STORY WE TELL

Becoming the Story We Tell is a resource from the Anglican Church of Canada.

Becoming the Story We Tell: Renewing Our Engagement with Christ Crucified and Risen is a process for re-entering the deep drama of the gospel, and restoring the connection between our baptism and our annual immersion in the story of Christ's Passion. It has been produced by a task force called by Archbishop Fred Hiltz, Primate of the Anglican Church of Canada. (The Primate's Task Force members: Jane Alexander, Terry Dance, Norman Casey, John Hill (chair), Jay Koyle, Richard Leggett, Joseph Mangina, Janet Marshall.)

Becoming the Story We Tell is accessible and available to anyone on line at <http://www.anglican.ca/primate/tfc/becoming/>

There we read: "Jesus' passion to do God's will led to his greater "Passion" — his suffering and death; his life given up for the life of the world. His resurrection was God's vindication of that passion — a passion which now lives on in the body of his followers."



Becoming the Story We Tell is a process for re-entering the deep drama of the gospel, and restoring the connection between our baptism and our annual immersion in the story of Christ's Passion.

These words from the introduction: "The resources for this process are designed to foster reflection on story and sacrament. They aim to strengthen us in communal discernment and spiritual conversation. The resources focus on renewing us in our baptismal identity and calling."

As we become the story we tell, we will find courage to live passionately as witnesses to Christ,

and to invite others to learn the way of Christ with us. And hospitality will be second nature to us."

Also from the resource: "This is the same dramatic journey you must make if you are going to become a disciple of Jesus. It is not enough to be impressed by Jesus' wonderful example; we need to deal with our resistance to the way of Jesus — a resistance we have been formed in by our culture. Above all, we need to recognize what it means that our world rejected Jesus. Only then will we be prepared to welcome the risen Christ who gives us his peace, and summons us to be his witnesses."

NAAC ON FACEBOOK



All supporters and practitioners of the catechumenal life for the Church are invited to participate in the virtual electronic community of our Facebook groups. There are two Facebook Groups. One is an "official" site for posting by the organization for the benefit of its membership. This site will be found as "NAAC (North American Association for the Catechumenate)". The other is a

public site, which offers the forum for members to post thoughts, conversations, and stories about their work with the Catechumenate. This is the site where shared dialogue can benefit everyone. This site will be found as "NAAC Public Group".

Be sure to "Like" and "Join" both Facebook Groups for complete connectedness to events and experience.

THE CATECHUMENATE AND THE ALREADY BAPTIZED

Dan Benedict asks, "What about using the catechumenal process with people already baptized?"

Catechumenal ministry welcomes and embraces all persons seeking faith in God and a life formed within the baptismal covenant. Catechumens are persons who are moving toward baptism. When persons have been baptized and have subsequently lived outside the communion of the Church, they are separated members. When such persons are drawn again to Christ and the Church, they are returning members because the grace of God offered to them in the baptismal covenant has never been withdrawn.

- In addition to Catechumens, two groups of people can participate in the stages of the catechumenal process: returning members and searching members.

- Returning members have been baptized, but they have not experienced the fullness of conversion, or they may have lapsed.

a. Some may have no experience of the Church, except baptism.

b. Some may have fallen away from even a nominal practice of faithful discipleship or have adhered to a non-Christian way of life.



c. Some may have been deeply wounded by a past experience related to the Church.

d. Some may come with little knowledge of the way of faith

e. Some may come with sophisticated knowledge but little experience of faith and of the use of the means of grace.

f. What they have in common is that they have lived apart from the church.

- The love of God calls them back; there is no blame or shame.

- Searching members have been baptized and are active disciples who desire a deeper journey of faith.

- Stages and rites that parallel the catechumenate may be used with returning and searching members.

- The rule of thumb is this: Because they are already baptized, returning and searching members participate with catechumens so long as they are not mistaken or treated as if unbaptized.

Dan Benedict, OSL will be one of the keynote speakers at "Sing a New Song: Unpacking the Mystery of Faith" the 2016 Annual Ecumenical Gathering hosted by NAAC in Albuquerque, NM, Tuesday to Thursday, June 28-30.

