

# THE MAGDALENE

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FROM THE DESK OF  
FR. NEIL...

## OUR LEGACY

One of the things we hear a lot about regarding people, usually of prominence, is their legacy. When the President or the CEO of a big corporation or a professional athlete or a Hollywood figure is talked about, we sometimes hear a discussion about their legacy. What did they do that people will remember? What impact did they have on other people or even the world? What “bit of themselves” will they “leave behind” that will impact “generations to come?”

I looked in my Topical Concordance to see if the word *legacy* was a word that made the list in the Bible. I found *left-handed*, *legends*, *legislation* and *legs*, but no *legacy*. I checked an exhaustive concordance and found an unrelated reference in Ecclesiastes 2:21 but that spoke more to the leaving behind of our labors to another, who may or may not squander all that we worked for.

In the Bible, we don't seem to see the idea of people laboring in life, doing something well, partly or even mostly so that others would remember them when they are gone. Marcus Aurelius (121-180AD) in his *Meditations*, even as a pagan has this insight. “He who has a vehement desire for posthumous fame, does not consider that every one of those who remember him will himself also die very soon. Then again also, they who have succeeded

them, until the whole remembrance shall have been extinguished, as it is transmitted through men, who foolishly admire and perish.” There is a lot of truth here. When we die, those who come after us who maybe even admire something about us, will also die, eventually leaving no one who will remember us...at least as well as those who knew us originally. Also, when we are dead, we do not reap any benefit from the accolades of others. We are not around to hear their praise.

The dictionary defines Legacy as – Anything handed down from the past, as from an ancestor or predecessor.” This is a good and acceptable definition for what we are talking about. But today we also use the word *legacy* in the sense of handing down a piece of ourselves. Something we have done to be remembered by. Something that a person has said or more often done that will be remembered by future generations and will make a difference in their lives. It might motivate them. It might make give them hope or an idea to improve their own lives.

Is this what we are to strive for as Christians, however? Is the goal of the Christian to be remembered? Certainly what we do in this life matters. We *are* to be concerned about how we appear to others. Paul speaks about the conduct of the Christian in most if not all of his epistles. Behavior is an important part of being a Christian. But is this the same as a legacy as defined and used by the culture around us? Are we to be living in such a manner so as to cause others in the future to admire us? Granted, a legacy is not necessarily about admiration. However, that is the context in which it is usually used today.

It seems that we certainly *should* be living in such a way that does influence and impact people. We can even hope that people that come after us will find value in something we have said or done. But the question is, "What will we be remembered by?" Another question is, "Do we want people to remember *us*, or do we want what we have done to point them to God?"

In some sense it does matter how we are viewed after we are gone. We won't be around to see whether people admire us, but we do know that when we die, there is a judgment about our lives. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil." (2 Corinthians 5:10, ESV)

Our aim in this life is to please God. We should be raised and be raising our children as commanded in Deuteronomy 6:7, "You shall teach them [the words of God] diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."(ESV) The importance, first of all, of being raised to learn about God and then follow Him is of utmost importance. If we are to accomplish anything that is deemed worthwhile in the eyes of God, we must be immersed in His Word so that we have something guiding our thoughts, words and deeds.

Second, when we are baptized, whether it is as a child or an adult, we promise to eschew the "world, the flesh and the devil." These three can hinder our Christian growth. They can effect how we live, so we must be constantly vigilant about how we are living in light of these assaults. Succumbing to their temptations can hinder our Christian walk. The Christian life is to be one of constantly demonstrating that we are Christians. Our actions should speak for us. In whatever we strive for in this life, however, if it

is not in conformity to what God desires of us, it will be in vain.

We have to also remember that it is God who works in us, "...both to will and to work for His good pleasure." (Philippians 2:13, ESV) God works in us to accomplish *His* ends and for *His* good pleasure. Any credit, or applause or admiration of anything that we have done in this life should be in order to glorify God and shine the light on Him rather than ourselves.

Jesus warned in a number of places, about praying in public and making a public spectacle of giving of our money so others can see. Perhaps Jesus summarizes this best with these words, "...let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:16, ESV) All that we do in this life should be aimed at giving God the glory.

Our legacy, if we can call it that, should be that we have lived a life that is evident to others that we have always desired nothing but to glorify God for all that He has done in, through and for us.



**St. Mary Magdalene Anglican Church**  
205 So. Glassell Street  
Old Town Orange, CA 92866  
[www.stmarymagdaleneacc.org](http://www.stmarymagdaleneacc.org)  
Rev. Fr. Neil Edlin, Rector

**Sunday Services:**  
8am Mass  
10am Choral Mass &  
Children's Sunday School

**Wednesday Service &  
Anointing of the Sick: 9am**

## CURRENT EVENTS

### BLESSING FOR OUR THANKSGIVING DAY FEAST

On November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 9am, a Special Mass will be said in thanksgiving for God's gift of food that he has given to eat. Please bring a canned food item that you will be eating that day or that you would like to donate to Mary's Kitchen for Fr. Neil to bless. A receptacle will be provided on Thanksgiving Day at the back of the church.

### ANOTHER CONFIRMATION AND POTLUCK!

Yes, on Sunday November 25<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am Mass, Bishop Scarlett will be joining us to confirm Keith Chamberlain, Pam Minor, Raven Myers, Brad Miller, and Jonelle Prideaux. We will also be receiving Jim and Nikki Strate into the Anglican Catholic Church on that same day. We are so blessed.

Please join us in celebrating with our new members by participating in the Potluck following the service. No desserts please. We have delicious cake coming.



### MEN'S FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON & CHRISTMAS PREPARATION

All men of the church are invited to lunch at "Avila's El Ranchito" restaurant in Orange on Saturday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. We will meet at the



church at 10:00am. It should be a great time for fellowship. Plan to stay an additional 30 minutes and help Fr. Neil with Christmas preparations.

### TREE TRIMMING IS A CHURCH FAMILY ACTIVITY

We, as a church family, will be trimming the Narthex Christmas tree after the 10:00 service on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Guild will be serving a wonderful selection of Christmas treats to enjoy while we decorate. Grab a cup of coffee or a hot cocoa, a Christmas goodie and join your Church family in the Christmas festivities.

## NEWS

### ITS NOT TOO LATE TO PLEDGE YOUR SUPPORT

"Pledge Month" is coming to a close but it is not too late to pledge your support to the ongoing work of Christ's Church. We are encouraged by St. Paul to give cheerfully, not grudgingly or out of compulsion (1 Corinthians 9).

Please be prayerful at this time asking God to guide you in your support for His Church and its mission to further the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Filling out a Pledge card assists Fr. Neil and the Vestry in budgeting for the New Year. Without your input, we cannot plan for paying the bills associated with our operating expenses. No minimum amount is required but every member should be participating.

### RALPH'S COMMUNITY PARTNERS PROGRAM

Thank you so much for your ongoing support of Ralph's Community Contributions Program. Our church receives up to 2 percent of your grocery purchases when you shop at Ralph's. To ensure SMM church continues to receive these benefits you must re-register now. For your convenience,

step-by-step website registration instructions can be found at [www.ralphs.com](http://www.ralphs.com). If you don't have computer access, please call them at 1-800-443-4438 and Ralph's will do it for you. We are listed as Church Of St. Mary Magdalene (Member #GC111).

## **OUTREACH: A BLESSING FROM GOD**

Our local communities become very busy during fall and winter with helping the needy, stocking soup kitchens, collecting clothing, and so on. Announcements are made, congratulations are given, and bows are taken. People joyfully leave the pews feeling like God's work has been accomplished. In St. Matthew's Gospel, Jesus tells us, "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven." [Matthew 6:1] Does this mean we shouldn't do Outreach projects? First, one must think about the nature of God. Does He need us to do his bidding? Does God keep a list of our giving as some sort of offering? Surely not. By virtue of our faith in Jesus Christ, God transforms us by the Holy Spirit. We are filled with His spirit and our desire to please Him grows. This is His blessing to us.

In Deuteronomy 16:17, we read, "Every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you." So it seems that God blesses us. We give. He blesses us again and we give again. So what is Jesus really saying? "Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven."

Let us pray that we continue to reach out to others, not to boast, but out of a pure desire to please God so we can continue to receive His blessings in our lives.

# Acquiring Truth

***"Why are Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John represented as animals in the stained glass windows? And what do they represent?"***

The stained glass representations of what are known as "The Four Evangelists" are signified by animals in our Church stained glass in the sanctuary. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, the first four books in the New Testament called the Gospels, are ascribed to them.

In Revelation 4:6–7 we read this: "...around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. (ESV) Though the Bible does not say that these four "living creatures" represent the Four Evangelists, Church tradition is strong in aligning the imagery with the writers. (See also Ezekiel 1:5,6,10)

Tying the names of the "Four" to the creatures we see has a long and varied history. In short, the strongest tradition explains it this way: Matthew being the first Evangelist in the order in the New Testament is symbolized by a creature with the face of a man because his emphasis when writing about Jesus was Him being a man. He is the son of David, the Son of Abraham and traces His genealogy back to Adam, the first man. Mark is signified by the winged lion. Mark begins his Gospel with John the Baptist, the "voice crying in the wilderness." Luke is signified by a winged ox. Luke stressed Jesus' sacrifice, as the ox is an animal of sacrifice. John, signified by the eagle, points to flight, i.e. ascension. According to St. Jerome (ca.347-420AD), Johns' Gospel soared to magnificent heights.