

# How will you be remembered?



The Rev Randy D. Townsend,  
Parish of St. John's, Halifax

We often pray these words when offering thanksgiving to God for the life of a loved one while at a funeral worship service. The words to this beautiful prayer are found in the Book of Alternate Services.

I do not like to think much about prayer; rather I just like to pray. Although, when I do think about prayer I often think about the dangerous aspect of prayer - that we get what we pray for: "Ask, and it will be given you ... For everyone who asks receives ..." (Matthew 7.7-8). We may never know the time, place, or mode that the response to our prayer will happen, for those things we leave to our God to whom we pray. So the danger often lies in the change (oh yes, that dreaded word change) that may have to take place in our lives in the response to our prayers. The danger could be manifested in

*"We pray that nothing good in this man's/woman's life will be lost, but will be of benefit to the world; that all that was important to him/her will be respected by those who follow; and that everything in which he/she were great will mean much to us now that he/she is dead."*

our disappointment, in that what we may have thought the proper response to our prayer would be is not what God offers.

I am sure that most of you have heard adages such as: "What do you want them to write about you in your obituary?" or "How do you want people to remember you once you are dead?" When the prayer I started my article with is said at your funeral, are you concerned about how you will be remembered? Have you really contemplated what will be thought of as "good in your life that will not be lost", or what "was important to you that will be respected by those that follow?"

Of course, a good will can help to spell out in words what we wish to have continued or supported by those temporal or material things we have amassed during our earthly life. But just as important as leaving behind a material legacy for your family and friends is leaving behind a good will that expresses

your wishes for the disposition of your estate. This will certainly help in alleviating being remembered for the squabbles your will caused amongst your family and friends.

It is good to indicate what was important to you by directing what you wish to have supported with the residual of your estate. However, one of my prayers is that what is good in my life and important to me can be discerned by the example of word and deed in my life now. In this way, it will not be temporal things but the spiritual things that will not be lost, and will be of benefit and respected by those who follow.

I pray that the significance of Family, Friends, God, and Church are evident in my life now so that there will be no uncertainty in the response to the prayers of the people gathered in celebration of my life. How obvious are the examples of word and deed in your life that no harm will come of this prayer?

# GENEROUS Spirit

PLANNED GIVING IN THE DIOCESE OF NOVA SCOTIA AND PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND FALL 2004

## Give of yourself to the church, both now and later

Being a "clergy kid" has its privileges. Just ask Tanya Moxley. There is no doubt that Tanya's life has been enriched by the presence of the church in her life with her Mom a rector, but likewise, the church has been enriched by Tanya's contributions through her time, talents, energy, vision and most recently a planned gift she has made.

Tanya's mother, Sue (now Suffragan Bishop of our Diocese), and her father Bruce, made a conscious effort early on to make family life as "normal" as they could so that the clergy aspects of their lives didn't take over. "We had family vacations away that were not interrupted by needing to return to attend an emergency and no one ever called in the middle of the night to drag Mom out of bed to solve a crisis," says Tanya. "The parishioners were very respectful of our family space and seemed not to hold us, as a family to a higher standard than they held themselves."

It was Tanya's decision to become head server at St. Timothy's, where her mother was rector, as well as serving as youth representative on Parish Council and a Synod delegate for several years.

While in her teens Tanya became a founding member of the Christian Clown Troupe. The group's mission was to tell Bible stories in a way that would appeal to more people. This concept actually dates back to medieval times when the churches were so big that the people at the back couldn't hear those at the front so the clowns acted out stories at different spots in the church. Each clown in today's troupe



Tanya acts out a Christmas story at her mother Sue's Christmas Eve service.

the Church to maintain their monthly revenues during the summer and other times when people are away.

Tanya was also instrumental in establishing a Community Access computer site at St. Mark's in order to provide technology, internet access, and training to those who otherwise wouldn't have this opportunity. "Having the computers in the church means that community members can come in to learn how to use a computer (a critical job skill), write up a resume, apply for jobs on-line .... Seniors use the site to access health information and keep in touch with distant family members."

Tanya is currently completing a Master's in Adult Education at Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax. She would like to get into the area of technology in the classroom and as for a possible career in the church, she says "I am struggling to figure out whether the work I am wanting to do is a lay ministry or an ordained one." She thinks the Anglican Church needs to do more to emphasize the value and variety of lay ministries, so she will remain a lay person for now and hopes to make this point.

Her mother has taught her how important it is to do something in life that you love to do. "She does a job that she loves and does it superbly, but she is a great deal more than her job ... she strives to help other succeed and is proud of their successes," says Tanya. The most important lesson she has learned from her mother is "be yourself" and Tanya is doing just that.

chooses their own clothes and face paint, and wears a red dot on their left temple, the mark of a Christian clown.

When Tanya left home to attend the University of Guelph, she was pleasantly surprised to receive a financial gift towards her education from the Diocese through a fund set up to specifically help clergy children with the costs of post-secondary education. She was so grateful that Tanya has established a planned gift of her own that will contribute to the same fund - the Binney Fund.

"It's important that people think of the church when planning their wills, so that churches can have endowments or investments that help with continuing or starting important ministry programs." She adds that it is "just as important that people remember to give regularly every week or month

because in order for there to be a church to leave your money to, the work has to keep happening now, and that takes money, time and talents right now."

Tanya is so committed to her belief in the church and community, that when she returned to Halifax, she became involved in the TEC (Teens Encounter Christ) program, a weekend program designed to "introduce young people to a lively version of the Anglican faith...to Jesus as a real person who can walk with them in their faith journey." She also acquired her layreader's license and joined the finance committee at St. Mark's. The committee introduced Pre-Authorized Remittance, a program established by the United Church, whereby parishioners contribute financially on a monthly basis to their church via debit from their bank accounts rather than weekly envelopes. This system also allows

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## Two Seas

Adapted by Bruce Rockwell, original by Bruce Barton

There are two seas in Palestine. One is fresh, and fish are in it. Splashes of green adorn its banks. Trees spread their branches over it and stretch out their roots to sip of its healing water. Along its shores the children play.

The River Jordan makes this sea with sparkling water from the hills. So it laughs in the sunshine. And people build their houses near it, birds make their nests, and every kind of life is happier because it is there.

The River Jordan flows on south into another sea. There is no splash of fish, no fluttering leaf, no song of birds, no children's laughter. Travellers choose another route unless on urgent business. The air hangs heavy about its water, and neither humankind, nor beast, nor

fowl will drink. What makes this difference in these neighbour seas? Not the River Jordan. Not the soil in which they lie; nor the country round about.

This is the difference. The Sea of Galilee receives but does not keep the River Jordan. For every drop that flows into it, another flows out. The giving and receiving go on in equal measure. The other sea is shrewder, hoarding its income jealously. It will not be tempted into any generous impulse. Every drop it gets, it keeps. The Sea of Galilee gives and lives. The other sea gives nothing. It is named the Dead Sea.

There are two kinds of people in the world just as there are two seas in Palestine.

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## GENEROUS Spirit

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