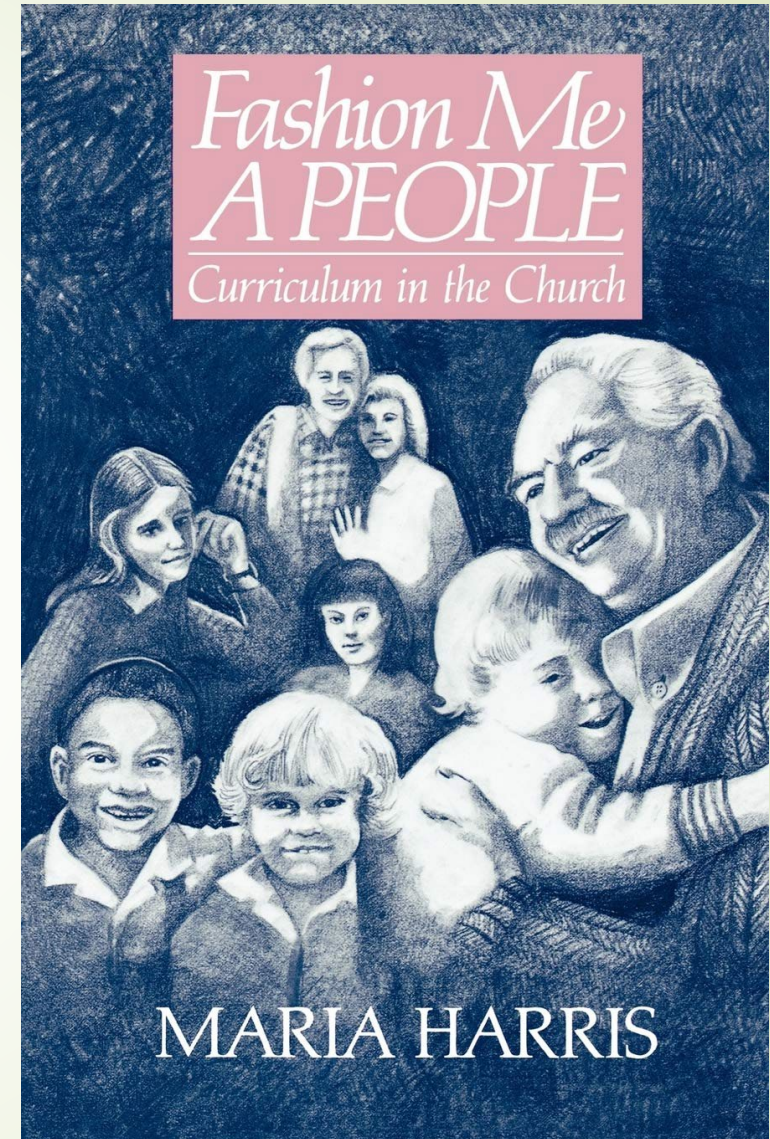



CHRISTIAN VOCATION

LEITURGIA: The Curriculum of Prayer





The Vocation

- Koinonia: The Curriculum of Community
 - Leiturgia: The Curriculum of Prayer
 - Didache: The Curriculum of Teaching
 - Kerygma: The Curriculum of Proclamation
 - Diakonia: The Curriculum of Service
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Lieturgia: The Curriculum of Prayer

- What is our community's prayer life?
- We are educated to prayer and we are educated by prayer.
- That education can happen at church and at home, but also on a bus, at a ball game, on the job, while going for a walk or while visiting in a nursing home, holding the hands of someone we love.
- Harris is highlighting the communal, corporate meaning of leiturgia, she also examines more personal forms of prayer that contribute to life of the whole body of Christ.
- John Westerhoff notes that liturgy best refers to "the activities of a people... that include both cultic life (ritual celebration) and daily life."



Forms of Prayer in the Church

- Read Catechism, page 856
- ACTS: Adoration, contrition (or sorrow), thanksgiving, supplication.
- Prayer is offered to God, or Father, Mother, Spirit, Holy One or Thou.
- We might pray to nonhuman creation, such as the sun and moon; or Native Americans might prayer to grass: “Let me so walk upon you as I pass by that you will not be crushed by my feet.”
- We might use our BCP or other prayer books or poetry.
- All forms of prayer fall into two categories: Personal prayer and Community Prayer



Personal Prayer

- Verbal prayer - Use words to address God
- Meditative prayer — Place ourselves quietly in the presence of God, breathe deeply and regularly, and think, reflect or meditate on a particular theme
- Contemplative prayer — Move away from these more conscious, reflective, mental powers and from specific thought. We remain in silence, attempting to listen, to wait, and to be attentive. The secret: prayer is as simple as breathing.
- We are taught that it is necessary on occasion to go apart and rest awhile. — “quieting the heart”



Corporate Prayer

- To complete our education in prayer, we need not only to know of forms beyond the personal, we need to experience them by engaging in the prayer with others.
- Leiturgia is at root “the people at prayer.”
- Prayer Group
- Retreat
- Service of worship



Curricular tasks



- A church must attend to spirituality through the work of pastors, staff and congregation to the same degree it attends to teaching, preaching and finances.
- It must refuse to divorce prayer and action for justice.
- It must design services of worship that foster multiple roles and multiple involvement.
- It must be a center for resources.



Spirituality



- Spirituality is more than prayer: it is, at root, our way of being in the world before God. In other words, nothing in our lives need be beyond the reach of our spirituality; wherever we are whatever we do can be bathed in the mystery of God.



Integrating Prayer and Justice

- The damage done by separating the forms of ministry from one another is evident when we examine how often prayer has been privatized. Nowhere is this more evident than when the curriculum of prayer is taught as quite different from the curriculum of action for justice — especially the actions of kerygma and diakonia. The task this sets for a community probing its pastoral vocation is the search to integrate these two great aspects of a single vocation to be the body of the Christ in the world.
- She proposes three ideas:
 - to draw on scripture
 - to examine our tithing and financial practices
 - to hold an annual justice retreat



Further thoughts

- We can suggest that for a month (or even a year), the focus of our prayer groups and our worship should be the question of where — as a church community — our practices of tithing and our assignment of revenues reflect our prayer life and our refusal to separate prayer from issues of justice.
 - Perhaps use retreats as a way to focus these discussions.
- Multiple Roles and Involvement in Worship
 - Include as many people as possible in the worship service
 - Worship committees or family units or others to plan or participate in planning of worship.



A Center for Resources

- Displays in the vestibule and during coffee hour that focuses on prayer, spirituality and justice
- Listing in the church bulletin persons who are, or would be willing to be, facilitators of prayer groups, the local community can foster the curriculum of prayer by seeing itself as providing all of these resources.
- Have a staff position — Minister of Prayer



Questions for discussion

- See list at your tables.
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