

Splendor of the Kingdom 3

'Faith in the Lord's real Presence and His transforming power decides everything. If this faith is firm, the Church's doctrine about human sexuality will be comprehensible and equally firm. If it evaporates, then repentance, conversion, grace and sanctification evaporate with it.' Dr. Stephen Oster

I reentered Malibu Canyon for our third West Coast Living Waters Training and immediately discerned that 'evaporation' Oster describes: a Church so desiccated by the winds of sexual liberties that even the faithful have become brittle and unsure as to Jesus' power to re-integrate persons divided by fractured marriages and LGBT+ ideology. In the words of Archbishop Chaput, our friendliness with the world has 'bleached out our convictions and dulled our longing for the supernatural.'

Conviction and healing power go hand-in-hand. Those who lose sight of God's best for humanity in the sexual realm, which is nothing less than chastity for every human being (be he a macho carouser or a woman seeking to become one), lose spiritual authority. We need to stir up once more the good news that Jesus has power to transform sinners on the entire spectrum of sins against chastity. Truth and Kingdom power cannot be separated. The Church which holds fast to both will suffer persecution. But in her affliction she will pour out deep drafts of 'living water' for those dying of thirst. She who capitulates to the culture will dry out and return to dust.

Gratefully, I discovered communities of Jesus along the West Coast who are digging deep wells of 'living water' through empowered lay persons whose moral weaknesses have become strengths. Integrated with their pastors (several who were present with us) and a communal commitment to becoming 'cities of refuge' for the broken, these churches are models of moral transformation.

I want to highlight one in particular. Harvest Rock (aka HRock) in Pasadena California has a pastoral team well aware of the crisis in sexual and gender integrity today. Not only do they preach and teach well on the topic, they provide in-depth pastoral care for faithful, broken ones. Those being-restored-ones then accompany others seeking Jesus' way. I love the range of relational issues this team represents, from same-sex attraction to marital unfaithfulness to sexual trauma. They combine commitment to Jesus' healing authority with the clarion call to repentance for all who have violated Jesus' call to purity of heart. And their team, some of whom I have pictured in this blog are a delight. To enter into their deepening Living Waters experience is a joyful opportunity for transformation. I count them as a model for what the Church needs today if she will advance with a healing flood. Without a concerted effort to join together in truth and transforming power, she will be desiccated by dry winds, the drone of persons who have lost faith and now 'evangelize' the Church with false freedoms.

So prepare Church. Let pastors commission empowered lay persons to be trained and released to accompany broken ones into the 'waters' of Jesus' transforming love. Archbishop Allen H.

Vigneron of Detroit wrote a rousing, comprehensive call to his diocese to become a community of the Gospel's transforming power. I leave you with a quote from this pastoral letter entitled 'Unleash the Gospel': 'The unleashing of the Gospel is not something we do individually but a communal task, a work of the whole mystical body of Christ to which we belong. If we are living as a band of joyful missionary disciples, our communal life is itself a witness of the power of the Gospel.' ([Click here to download the complete letter.](#))

[Please join us in Kansas City for our next Gender Matters on Feb. 10th.](#) Become a part of God's healing army for broken persons you love. [Sign up now!](#)