

July 15, 2009

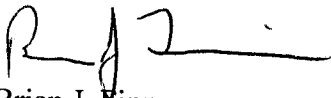
To all members of our Calix family:

Recently I mailed a questionnaire to twenty-two Calix units asking for information pertaining to their meetings. Twelve responses were returned with one stating they were "dormant". The responses received from the other eleven units have been attached to this letter. I will ensure all Calix units receive a copy. My hope is that each unit will find something, even if only one thing, that might help their unit grow stronger. We have had too many units go inactive over the years and we all need to help end this trend.

I was able to speak with twenty individuals directly before I sent the questionnaire and it was indeed a great honor and a very pleasant experience. Having an undying love for both their religion and their sobriety, Calix members are without a doubt the most friendly and interesting people in recovery.

I have not mentioned units by location except for the page which has several meeting formats currently in use.

Thank-you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian J. Finnegan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Brian J. Finnegan
Pittsburgh Calix

Meeting Format Samples:

West Hartford, CT.

Mass
Meal
Meeting
Preamble
Prayer by Spiritual Director
Introduction of Topic
Discussion
Lord's Prayer
Adjourn

Wichita, KS

Open with Preamble and Serenity Prayer
Read from AA material
Discuss
Pass basket
Announce next meeting
Close with Our Father

Philadelphia, PA

Mass 08:30 am
Donuts/Coffee 9-9:30
Meeting 9:30-10:30
2008 Calix and 12 Steps (Step/month)
2009 Stations of the Cross booklet (Station/month)

York, PA

2nd Saturday

Mass
Topic discussion meeting
Lord's Prayer
Calix Credo
Introductions
Spiritual portion of meeting
over to Chaplain where materials are
passed out for discussion; meditation topics, etc.
Announcements
Serenity Prayer and close

4th Saturday

Mass or Prayer Service
Spiritual exercise meeting
Anima Christa
Calix Credo
Reading and discussion of the assigned
Meditations from Fr. Harbaugh's book Turned
Lord's Prayer and close

Pittsburgh, PA

Rosary
Mass
Meeting
Opening Prayer/Purpose of Calix
Welcome new members/Roll Call
Remarks of Chaplain
Speaker (Jan, April, Jul, Oct)
Discussion (Feb, May, Aug, Nov)
Calix and the 12 Steps book (Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec)
Secret Bag Collection
Business Meeting
Treasurer's report/minutes from previous mtg
Old Business/new business
Adjournment

CALIX UNIT QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

UNIT INFORMATION

Where is your meeting held (church, school, etc.)?

- Church (5)
- Parish Hall (2)
- Hospital (2)
- Retirement Center (1)
- Priest Retirement center (1)

How long have you met at your current location?

- One year (2)
- Three years (3)
- Five years (1)
- Ten years (1)
- Twelve years (1)
- Twenty years (1)
- Twenty Five years (1)
- Thirty years (1)

Are you planning to move your location within the next year?

- YES (0)
- NO (11)

How many years has your Unit been active in Calix?

- One year (1)
- Three years (2)
- Five years (1)
- Thirty years (1)
- Thirty One years (1)
- Forty Nine years (2)
- Fifty Seven years (1)
- Not sure (1)

How far away is the nearest Calix Unit?

- 45 minutes (1)
- 50 miles (1)
- 60 miles (1)
- 90 miles (1)
- 100 miles (1)
- The other six responses were either blank, unknown, or the actual name of the nearest unit.

Do you have any mini conferences or meeting planned with nearby units?

- YES (1) - Day of recollection
- No (10) - with three of those mentioning a possibility of one

How many people attend your Calix meeting?

- 2-3
- 7
- 8-12
- 8-15
- 10-15
- 14
- 15-18
- 15-20
- 20
- 25-50
- 40

Does your Unit remind members to pay their annual \$25 dues to Calix International?

- YES (10) - By the Sec/Treasurer (1), Every Mtg. (1), Twice a year (1), Three or four times a year (3), Every year (2), Every so often (2)
- NO (1)

Does your Unit provide financial aid to those that can't afford the yearly dues?

- Yes (3)
- No (7)
- No answer (1)

Does anyone wear the Calix pin to your meeting?

- Yes (4) - One member (2), Two members (1), Unknown (1)
- No (7)

What is the average age of members attending your Calix meeting?

- 40 (1)
- 45 (1)
- 50 (1)
- 55 (4)
- 60 (1)
- 65 (1)
- 70 (1)
- Not answered (1)

How many elected officers does your Unit currently have?

- Two Officers (3)
- Three Officers (3)
- Four Officers (3)
- Five Officers (1)
- No organized structure (1)

What are the titles of your elected officers?

- Three units have a President and Treasurer
- Two units have a President, Vice President and Secretary/Treasurer
- Two units have a President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer
- One unit has a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and two Co-Treasurers
- One unit has a President, Vice-President and Treasurer
- One unit has a President, Vice-President, Secretary/Treasurer and Publicist
- One unit does not apply

How often are elections held?

- When required (1)
- Every six months (1)
- Once per year (5)
- Every 2-3 years (1)
- Haven't had an election since inception (Both three years) of unit (2).

Are there term limits for elected officers

- YES (5) – One year (3), Six months (1), One year except for Co-Treasurers that are 2 years (1)
- NO (5)
- N/A (1)

Does your Unit have a spiritual advisor?

- YES (9) – Father (5), Deacon (2), Reverend (1), Priest Chaplin (1)
- NO (2)
- One unit reports having a Chaplin and Co-Chaplain

MEETING INFORMATION

How many meetings do you hold per month?

- One (9)
- Two (2)

Are meeting reminders sent out?

- Yes (10) – Email (4), Mail (3), Email & Mail (1), Phone (1), Phone & Email (1)
- No (1)

What is the total time your Calix activities take when you meet?

- 1 ½ hrs (2)
- 2 hrs (2)
- 2 ¼ hr (1)
- 2 ½ hrs (5)
- 3 hrs (1)

Does your Unit conduct Calix induction ceremonies?

- Yes (3)
- No (8)

Does your Unit hold a Rosary?

- Yes (2) – Monthly (2)
- No (9)

Does your Unit hold an anniversary Mass?

- Yes (3) – Special celebrant when available (1), Auxiliary Bishop (1)
- No (8)

Does your Unit conduct any special ceremonies or events?

- Yes (6) - Ice cream social, one day retreat, special dinner (1), Day of recollection (1), Meeting with other Calix Units (1), During Lent have a mass for the sick and are all anointed (1), June Pot Luck dinner, December pot luck dinner and singing carols (1), Sock drive for the homeless (1)
- No (5)

Does your Unit have any special activities pertaining to Matt Talbot?

- Yes (1)
- No (10)

Does your Unit include Mass at your Calix meeting?

- Yes (11) – Regularly scheduled Parish Mass (3)
- No (0)

Does your Mass offer a wine substitute for communion?

- Yes (3) – Water (1), Grape juice (1), Mustim (1)
- No (8)

Approximately how long does your Mass last?

- 25 minutes (2)
- 30 minutes (3)
- 45 minutes (4)
- 50 minutes (1)
- 1 hr (1)

Is free parking available at your Calix meeting?

- Yes (10)
- No (1) - \$2.50 if Street parking is not available

Are snacks, drinks, meals, etc., provided at your meetings?

- Yes (9)- Coffee and a light snack to coffee, soda, sandwiches and desserts
- No (1) (Drinks provided and food can be bought at the at the cafeteria)
- Occasionally (1)

Is there a monetary collection at your meeting?

- Yes (9)
- No (2) - One of these units have a coffee collection when needed

Do you have an annual collection that is sent to the Calix International office?

- Yes (3)
- No (8) – Would consider a special collection (4), No (1) because they send money from time to time, Maybe (3)

NEWCOMERS

If a potential newcomer is in attendance, are they asked how they heard of Calix?

- Yes (8)
- No (3)

Is information regarding Calix available at your meeting?

- Yes (10)
- No (1-we will start)

Is an informational packet given to newcomers?

- Yes (6)
- No (3)
- Hand-outs available (2)

Are potential newcomers asked their name and address?

- Yes (11) - One unit takes name only, most make follow up calls

Is a recent copy of the Chalice given to potential newcomers?

- Yes (6)
- No (3)
- Sometimes (2)

If your Calix meeting advertised?

- Yes (8) – 1) Word of mouth, 2) Word of mouth/church bulletins, 3) Catholic Voice/church bulletins, 4) Church bulletins, 5) Diocesan newspaper/bulletins/AA meetings, 6) Bulletins/websites/packet sent to all Pastors in Archdiocese 7) Unit's website/letters sent to neighboring church bulletins 8) Diocesan newspaper/a few church bulletins
- No (3)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

What do you feel makes your Unit successful?

* Just keep asking people to attend *Interesting speakers, dinners are well attended (Christmas & St. Patrick's), July ice cream social *Spirituality *Fortitude, generally a safe place for alcoholics to celebrate Eucharist and share Catholic faith at meetings * Emphasis on Mass/Sacraments/Faith *Not successful-currently considering suspension of unit due to very low attendance. Some meetings are with one or two persons *Strong core membership, Church facility, Calix Mass. *The core group that meets. I'm not sure if our group has been successful in their goals. Do we have goals and plans? How are we implementing them? I guess that I should be asking these questions. *We use our time in the first monthly meeting for teaching as well as sharing via (our spiritual advisor) efforts (bringing spiritual topics, handouts). Our second monthly meeting, we use Fr. Harbaugh's book on the SE. We attempt to provide something that can't be found at AA meetings (i.e., folks can tell their story at AA). We often find that our discussions sometimes drift to the mechanics of the Mass, we learn about the traditions of the church, we clear up misconceptions, etc. We sometimes use materials found outside of the Calix literature list to discuss as well (i.e. viewing the DVD on the life of Sister Ignatia, etc)

Is your Unit planning any changes over the next year (please detail)?

* Five responses were no and three responses were blank *Not that I am aware. But I hope that the meeting format will change. *We plan on sending our monthly reminders to the area churches to be placed in their bulletins. *Will be doing a membership campaign during summer.

What has your Unit tried that has not been successful?

*There was one question mark reply, one none and two blank responses. *Getting members to pay dues *Signing for the hearing impaired *Last summer we planned a retreat to Mt St Mary's to visit the Grotto, attend Mass and then visit the Shrine. We didn't have a large turnout. *Getting our Bishop to communicate with us *Recruitment of new members *Attracting new members. Outreach programs. I think that (our group) is missing the objective of the Calix Society Credo, wherein, "our second stated purpose is to promote the spiritual development of our membership". I enjoy saying the rosary, attending Mass and receiving the sacrament of Communion but we should go further in developing our spiritual growth through our first concern as alcoholics. I think that discussion meetings or leads surrounding our sobriety and spiritual growth, in lieu of business meetings, would support our Credo and attract new members. My suggestion is to hold business meetings, in addition to spiritual growth meetings, or schedule business meetings quarterly. It is my opinion that business meetings do not attract new members in our Society. Let's get back to our core Credo. *Presenting Calix at Matt Talbot retreats *Format change * Meeting informally outside of Calix meetings.

What improvements are needed at the Calix International office?

*There were two responses of none and one each of never been there, N/A, not qualified to respond and one blank. *Think the office does a great job *Jim B. and the other volunteers are doing a great job *I think that there should be more information sharing that is filtered down the units. What are the other units throughout the U.S. doing, i.e., their goals, their successes, etc. We learned about Philadelphia and York but what about Illinois, Minneapolis, etc. *Diversity in participation * More information and support to units experiencing low attendance and possible dissolution, *Chalice sent too late *Intl needs to define a mission and identify what the value of membership is, and then work to provide ways to offer that. For example the Phila Group has done a wonderful thing working through the Archdiocese of Phila to spread the word about Calix and I expect the fruits of that effort will result in good growth of our movement in Philadelphia. There is very little that Intl does to promote cohesion and collaboration between and amongst chapters. Sometimes we use things offered via Calix (i.e. an article in the Chalice) as a topic, not more often than not, topic information and materials is driven at our local level which begs the question... What is the value of belonging? The website offers some materials in the ways of tools for the local group to utilize for topic discussions, but we find that our own efforts seem to identify a wealth of information. It seems to me that Calix Intl could save lots of money if it were to convert the Chalice into an electronic newsletter on the website and put it into a password protected area. Passwords could easily change yearly and given to members upon receipt of their dues. It would save the cost of printing and mailing. The Chalice should have an area dedicated to reviews of books, CDs, etc. not offered by Calix yet pertinent to our cause (i.e., Fr Tom Weston and Harbaugh have some wonderful CDs available, there is a wonderful DVD on the life of Sister Ignatia, etc).

What improvements to the Calix website are needed?

*There were three blank replies and one each of don't use as yet, none, not qualified to respond and N/A. *The website could be structured to have a secured area where members could post prayer requests, announce anniversaries, announce upcoming activities, etc which might give other groups ideas on ways to strengthen their own groups as well as build cohesion. *Looks fine * It's got better *Fine as is-We don't have unlimited funds to be better. *It looks informative to me. Although, I would like to see the convention registration form on the web. (This was done)

What improvements can be made regarding the annual Calix convention?

*There were two None replies with one each of Never attended, ---, not qualified to respond, N/A and blank. *Two years ago, there was time set aside for some groups to describe what they're doing. Last year in Pgh, that wasn't part of the agenda and I feel that sort of thing is important. *I like inspirational talks-Something I or the group can use *Good recent addition of sacrament of Penance. *looking forward to Holy Hour *When I read my newsletter and reviewed the agenda for the convention, I thought why would I want to go to Minneapolis? The agenda was basically empty. I asked myself, what was this gathering going to offer me in way of sobriety and spiritual growth? I think that there should be a more thorough agenda offering participants various discussion groups with the topics outlined. In order to make this Convention a family growth experience, I suggest meetings with topics for discussion between other spouses or children meeting children. If that is too heavy, I would suggest a tour of the city or something fun. This would promote the gathering of the family unit and tie AA and Christ to the spiritual health of the family. *Better coverage of info and support to units experiencing low attendance and possible dissolution (include success stories).

What changes would you like to see in written material offered by Calix?

*There were two blank replies and one each of none and unknown *I think the material "Why Calix" is a well written overview. I have permission to place AA material in my local public library. Could, or possibly is, this Credo in pamphlet form that could be left with my materials at the library? In (my) area, there are thousands of Catholics that are not aware of our Society *Think the written materials are well done *Could be more inclusive of other 12 step programs *More information and support to units experiencing low attendance and possible dissolution *Greatly appreciate the materials offered and Jim B.'s effort and helpfulness * Extra copies of Chalice sent periodically for handouts to newcomers.