

Change Your Narrative, Change the Future

FROM ED BACON, RECTOR

"Stories are the way we make sense of the events of our lives."

~Daniel Siegel and Mary Hartzell,
Parenting From the Inside Out, p. 31

The most powerful story I heard this summer was about a 6-year old orphan named Jaden.

Jaden's father had died when Jaden was four and then one morning this summer, Jaden went into his mother's bedroom to find that she had died unexpectedly in her sleep.

"I tried and I tried and I tried to get her awake -- I couldn't," said Jaden, reported Steve Hartman on CBS Evening News (<http://www.cbsnews.com/news/after-losing-parents-6-year-old-embarks-on-mission/>). "Anybody can die, just anybody," Jaden said with sadness.

Jaden came to live with his aunt, now guardian, Barbara Di-Cola. As she tucked Jaden into bed recently he told her that he was tired of seeing everyone sad all the time. She told him to sleep on it and come up with a plan. He woke her at 5 the next morning saying he wanted to go into the streets of nearby Savannah, Georgia, and approach people who seemed sad. He would try to put a smile on their face by giving them candy or toys. So equipped with rubber duckys and dinosaurs, he has spent several days in sweltering August humidity bringing smiles to smile-less strangers.

"I'm trying to make people smile," said Jaden about his successful forays turning strangers' days around. People erupt in joy that a six-year-old orphan gives them a toy - expecting nothing in return - except a smile. His aunt reports that in addition to receiving an abundance of hugs that the reactions have done wonders for Jaden.

"It's like sheer joy came out of this child," said Aunt Barbara. "And the more people that he made smile, the more his light shone."

The wisdom of Jaden's mission leads him to add, "But I'm still sad my mom died."

A few years ago at one of our All Saints funerals I heard a story about a paperweight the deceased had given another All Saints member. It was after both friends had undergone foot surgery to repair damage inflicted by years of wearing high-heel shoes that cramped their toes. The paperweight read, "There are no bad people, just tight shoes."

"There are no bad people, only tight shoes" became a powerful image for my understanding of the constricting stories we tell ourselves about how the world works. We received these stories from our culture. They became the lenses through which we perceive our world. The tight, narrow, pinching stories by which we live can make us do destructive things to ourselves, to others, and to the planet. Cruel and bigoted religious practices and ideologies come hand in hand with punitive or even paranoid stories about God and others; such stories, repeated throughout a lifetime, can crowd out loving compassion for ourselves and others, replacing it with penalizing judgment.

A punishing angry story about God creates punitive, fearful, and angry people. A loving, forgiving, and inclusive story about God creates loving, forgiving, and inclusive people. A story about God who cares for the least of these forms people in solidarity with those who are marginalized. Hurt people hurt people and healing people heal people. Think of Jaden who without denying his own sadness is allowing the Divine to flow through him to make glad the City (Psalm 46:4).

I've learned something about how our stories can change. Several years ago a Kennedy School professor taught me that maturing and healing people can reflect on and change the narratives they have inherited. Grace leads us to determine to what degree the stories we live by are "toxic" (destructive) or "generative" (life-giving). The Tibetan nun, Pema Chodron, teaches that one benefit of meditation is taking a break from "the story line that we feel driven to maintain."

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September

(NEW NARRATIVE: Continued from page 1)

Sally Howard has taught me that there is a whole field of mental health concerned focused on constructing for ourselves a "secure narrative." That is, when we reconstruct the story of our lives in a compassionate and loving environment, we can develop a way of making sense both of our pain and fear as well as our joy and love. Even if we have not received consistent loving attention as a child we still can be loving to others and to ourselves.

The journey of constructing life-giving narratives animates all that we do in spirituality, community, and peace & justice at All Saints. Our New Members classes, our social justice action, as well as all of our formation, education, and small group work pulses with God's promise to make all things new including the stories we live by. This fall, Sally Howard, Jon Dephouse, and others will facilitate a trial "New Narrative" Lab for those who would like to focus on this part of their lives. Held on a series of Saturday mornings beginning October 10, the "laboratory" nature underscores the experimental nature of the gatherings which will serve as a foundation for participating more effectively in "co-writing" or "co-creating" a more just narrative in the life of our nation and world as well as our vision of new directions for Christianity.

Registration beginning September 6 can take place here <http://bit.ly/1JdkR6d> or at church.

Meanwhile our friend Jaden is creating his new narrative. He inspires us to acknowledge our own sadness and woundedness as well as the sadness and woundedness in the world. And, to make sense of it all by doing all we can to make glad the City.

Altar flowers are a beautiful way to remember a loved one, celebrate a special event, or to give thanks for someone who has touched your life. To donate flowers for the altars, please call 626.796.1172.

New Narrative Lab

You've felt the energy around the New Narrative Project at All Saints. Now it's time to enter more deeply into this transformative work. For 6 sessions, every other Saturday, beginning October 10, 9 - 11 a.m. in the Learning Center, the New Narrative Lab will be led by Jon Dephouse, Sally Howard, Katie Mills and other guest presenters. This will be an experimental laboratory and class setting focused on meditation, reflection, and writing in community for the purpose of engaging the complex and joyous process of developing a coherent religious narrative. Participants will learn how to perceive their life narrative through a variety of lenses—interpersonal, multi-cultural and religious—which will serve as a foundation for participating more effectively in "co-writing" or "co-creating" a more just narrative in the life of our nation and world. Registration begins Sunday, Sept. 6, at <http://bit.ly/1JdkR6d>. Space is limited. For more information, contact Jamie Hebert at jhebert@allsaints-pas.org.

Save the Date: Rectory *al fresco*!

Last year nearly 150 parishioners enjoyed an evening under the autumn sky at the Rectory as they committed to supporting the mission of All Saints Church with a pledge. Mark your calendars for this year's reception on Friday, Oct. 16th. Details and RSVP information will be announced soon.

CONNECT
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All Saints Church Foster Care Project: Annual Shopping Spree

Neither screeching fire alarms from smoke in the Starbucks kitchen nor drenching thunderstorms could dampen spirits on Saturday, July 18, when 28 children under the jurisdiction of the courts were accompanied by 40 volunteers to shop for back-to-school clothing at Target. Each child was matched with one or two adult volunteers and given a \$200 donated gift card to spend on school clothes, including jackets, shoes, underwear, pajamas and other essentials. Many of the children, ages 4 -19, started out shy and quiet, but soon warmed up and emerged from their shopping expeditions beaming with cloud-chasing smiles and chatter.

One comment overheard involved an eight or nine-year-old boy trying to decide which T-shirt to get. The accompanying adult said, "Why not get both?" The boy replied, "You mean I can buy two shirts?!" Another young boy wished to shop with his teen sister, explaining enthusiastically, "We're going to get matching Minions pajamas!"

Two boys couldn't make it to the event because of transportation problems, but we have already been in touch with their DCFS caseworker and will make sure they get to do some back-to-school shopping, too.

It was truly a win-win-win morning. The children loved it, their foster parents were very grateful, as were our caseworkers, and the volunteers had lots of fun being "personal shoppers." And we at Foster Care Project are thrilled that this annual program was a success once again, thanks to the volunteered time and generous donations from All Saints parishioners and community members.

Monday Night Tutors

Would you like to do something fun and make a difference in the life of a child, too? All Saints Church offers tutoring in math, English, reading, and other subjects at Willard School, 301 South Madre Street, in East Pasadena, from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. during the school year. Students range in age from Kindergarten through 5th grade.

Or, if that's not quite your cup of tea, maybe you'd like to help the English as a Second Language (ESL) program. This program is for parents of the students who come to tutoring; they learn English while their children are being tutored. You don't need to speak another language to participate in the ESL program, just a desire to help someone speak better English.

The semester starts on Monday, September 21st, and goes till Monday, December 7th.

Want to check it out? If you're interested in either the tutoring or the ESL program, please contact Marilyn Coffman at 626.796.5066 or marilync48@aol.com.

Registration Day for Children, Youth and Family Programs

Sunday, September 13, 8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m. Learn about Sunday School, Youth Group, Seekers, Acolytes, Parent Culture, and Children's & Youth Choirs and register your children for the coming year...or, volunteer to help nurture and mentor our children and youth. Bring your calendars, checkbooks and medical insurance info. Info = Jamie Hebert, 626.583.2733 or jhebert@allsaints-pas.org.



Homecoming 2015 — Sunday, September 20

Join the All Saints community in celebrating the start of a new program year. We will be celebrating Southern Hospitality with an outdoor festival of food, games for kids and adults, music, amid vibrant decorations and broad canopies. Back by popular demand is an array of foods from this area's hottest food trucks. It's also a great opportunity to volunteer just for an hour or two on one day. Information = Jim Jansen at Homecoming2015@aol.com.



Celebration of Ministries—Sunday, September 27

Looking to make a difference...to meet new people...to deepen your faith journey...to discuss a great book...to have a good time...to serve others? Step out



onto the quad lawn for the Celebration of Ministries! Everything you ever wanted to know about All Saints ministries can be found at the tables on the lawn. Learn about the ministries of All Saints up close and personal. You can also chat with volunteer coordinators at the signup kiosk about ministries that might be a good fit for you. Find ways to get connected and to serve the community and God through our work in the world. Information = Anita Nuñez, 626.583.2769 or anunez@allsaints-pas.org.

Adapting to Climate Change's Impact on Weather

The surge in recent years of extreme weather events linked to climate change is alarming. This month's Conscientious Projector documentary *Weather Gone Wild* captures this trend. It will be shown Thursday, Sept. 10, 7:00 p.m. at Armory Center for the Arts, 145 N. Raymond in Old Pasadena. The film highlights vital and winning efforts by cities around the world to adapt to the damage that has already been wrought and to prepare for destructive patterns yet to come. Robert Haw of the Pasadena-Foothills Citizens Climate Lobby chapter facilitates a discussion afterward. Admission is free and the facility is accessible to disabled persons. Information = Marty Coleman at 818.517.8878.

All Saints Theatre Ministry Fall Season

- **Real Women Have Curves** – Fri., Sept. 25, 8:00 p.m. at Pasadena Playhouse. Tickets are \$44. Tickets available at <http://qrs.ly/d24t3ch>
- **Seven Spots on the Sun** – Fri., Oct. 30, 8:00 p.m. at Theatre @ Boston Court. Tickets are \$24. Tickets available at <http://qrs.ly/as4t3cm>
- **A Flea in Her Ear** – Friday, Nov. 13, 8:00 p.m. at A Noise Within. Tickets are \$35. Tickets available at <http://qrs.ly/kn4t3co>

Tickets will be available at the links above or you may purchase at the Sign-Up Center on the lawn beginning Sunday, Sept. 6. Information = Debbie Daniels, 626.583.2750 or ddaniels@allsaints-pas.org.

Transition Life Happenings Celebrate Ed Bacon's Last Year

Save these dates now, and celebrate Ed Bacon's time at All Saints Church!

- **September 20** - Homecoming: "A Timeline of All Saints": a written history of Ed's tenure and warm remembrances added by parish.
- **December 20** - Baby Jesus Gathering: Ed invites all the babies who played Jesus in the Christmas Pageant to celebrate.
- **January 10, 2016** - Reza Aslan
- **March 12-13, 2016** - Meditation and Brain Health weekend: Dan Siegel returns to All Saints.
- **April 3, 2016** - Richard Rohr at All Saints
- **April 22, 2016** - Roast and Champagne reception, open to all.
- **May 1, 2016** - 10 a.m. Service on the Street. Ed's last Sunday! All-parish service followed by all-parish lunch.

Watch this space for more details and added events!

Navigating Life's Changes

How do we make life's changes fruitful and transformative? Whether you find yourself between jobs, a new empty-nester, or dealing with loss, there is always a tendency to rush through the confusion of these turbulent times and demand solid ground again. This fall, All Saints will offer three book groups focusing on William Bridges' *Transitions*, in order to foster a space for reflection, storytelling, and community-building as we navigate our personal and collective transitions.

- **Monday Nights** – Sept. 28-Oct. 26, 7 p.m.
- **Tuesday Nights** (focused on people in their 20s and 30s) – Nov. 3-Dec. 1, 7 p.m.
- **Sundays** – Oct. 4-Nov. 8 (five Sundays, skipping 11/1, time TBA)

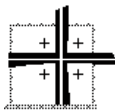
The "El Camino" Pilgrimage Comes to All Saints

The Transformational Journeys Ministry will offer an opportunity for parishioners to experience the pilgrimage along the "El Camino de Santiago" in Spain in 2016. Three different routes for walking or biking the El Camino are planned, based on an individual's available time, personal and spiritual interest, and physical capacity. The first informational meeting will be held Sunday, Sept. 26, 3 - 5 p.m. in Sweetland Hall, at which costs for housing, food and supplies--and helpful tips on how to pack and avoid or treat blisters along the way will also be discussed.

Travellers from around the world find the centuries-old pilgrimage to the shrine of the apostle St. James the Great in the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela to be deeply transformative. Some hikers are looking to prove their faith, some to find answers to their deepest questions, some to renew their spiritual purpose. Others do it to lose weight or quit smoking. For information on this Transformational Journey, contact Ada Ramirez at 626.583.2734 or aramirez@allsaints-pas.org, or Matthew at 310.849.8342 or matthew90046@earthlink.net.

The Many Storeys and Last Days of Thomas Merton

Monday, Sept. 28, 7 p.m. in the Forum. *The Many Storeys and Last Days of Thomas Merton*, a one hour documentary by director Morgan Atkinson, is the story of Merton's last year of life, during the turbulence of 1968. It's a story of adventure and discovery that leads him from his home at the Abbey of Gethsemani, across America, and finally to Asia to meet with the Dalai Lama and other spiritual seekers. As always, Merton was seeking a fuller union with God, and believed that serving as a bridge between West and East was one way in which his call could be lived out. The film celebrates the triumph of all that was gained by his journey, reflects on the tragedy of what was lost with his death, and considers why Merton's life and work challenges us today. The screening is co-sponsored by All Saints and the Southern California Parliament of the World's Religions. Suggested donation = \$10. Information = Debbie Daniels at 626.583.2750 or ddaniels@allsaints-pas.org.



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Events and Opportunities

• Summer Choir •

This exciting adventure continues through September 6. All tune-ful voices are welcome to sing any or all of the Sundays. Simply come to the Choir Room (downstairs in Regas House) promptly at 10:00 a.m. to prepare for the 11:15 a.m. service. For more information call Debbie Daniels in the Music Office, 626.583.2750 or ddaniels@allsaints-pas.org.

• Where's My Name Button? •

Our button box is bursting with unclaimed name buttons. When you request a name button, we make it for you that week, and it is available the next Sunday at the Welcome Table. Please pick up

your buttons and take them home to keep them from rusting, and please wear them when you come to church! If you need a new one, please fill out a name button request form at the Welcome Table.

• Lay Counseling Ministry •

The Lay Counseling Ministry is a Pastoral Care program to assist parishioners who are experiencing stressful life events, such as divorce, unemployment, death of a loved one, or relationship conflicts. While supervised by licensed mental health professionals, trained lay counseling ministers work with clients in a confidential setting to help them manage their problem situations and accompanying emotions. The Lay Counseling

Ministry is a free short-term program, limited to ten sessions, and is not intended for parishioners with serious psychiatric problems. Please call 626.583.2706 to leave your name and telephone number. The intake coordinator will call you back within 24 hours.


• Interested in Children and Youth Choirs? •

Do you know someone in PreK - 12th Grade who loves to sing but the idea of auditioning for a choir makes them too nervous to get involved? Did you know that we have 6 children's and youth choirs at All Saints and they are all non-auditioned? The program is thriving with 150 choristers from All Saints and the greater community. Come join one of our choirs! Registration Day is Sept. 13 from 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. in Sweetland Hall. Information = Jenny Tisi at jtisi@allsaints-pas.org.



Praying for Others

If you are interested in praying for others, please call the Prayer Line at 626.583.2707 or prayers@allsaints-pas.org.

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