

# From The Pulpit

by Rev. Donald M. Clark

## ZEST FOR PRAYER

Text: "Maintain your zest for prayer by thanksgiving." Col 4:2.

All Christians would agree that prayer is a duty. It is as essential to the life of the spirit as air and bread are to the life of the body. But how many would acknowledge having a zest for prayer?

The zest for prayer can be awakened by facing up to the tremendous confidence that Jesus had in prayer and to His amazing assurances. "Ask and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find." What a wealth of unexplored territory in spiritual experience He opens up.

THERE IS NO greater incentive to prayer than the promises Christ made when He called His disciples to pray. To sit down and look with open minds at what God offers to those who pray will surely kindle our incentive provided we are sure that we want what He offers and want it enough to ask for it with all our hearts.

Paul suggests that the way to maintain our zest for prayer is by thanksgiving. It is a good starting point for prayer to think of the blessings of life which tend to become so familiar that we forget how wonderful they are.

The most ordinary fruits of nature become sacramental when we let them kindle the spark of thanksgiving.

THIS AWAKENED thankfulness will make us aware of God's care and restore to us (if we have been in danger of losing it) our confidence in life. Thanksgiving will change the color of life for us.

Thanksgiving will lead us out of ourselves into the lives of others. When the goodness and love of God are mirrored in so many ways, prayer ceases to be a duty and becomes a privilege; the very greatest of life when we think of it.

We pass beyond the stage of mere petition, which is the simplest and most natural form of prayer, to the adult stage when prayer becomes communion.

IT ALL BEGINS in the thankful heart. All that is best and deepest in Christian experience -- its joy, its peace, its compassion, its hope -- rises day by day out of a "bottomless pit of unfathomable thanks" unto Him that loved us.



REV. D. M. CLARK

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## "NEW WAY TO PRAY" NEEDED

By Emory G. Davis, D. D.

CHICAGO - (NPI)--Poverty Director, R. Sargent Shriver, called for a new way to pray, during his address to nearly 1,000 AME ministers and laymen attending the recent spring session of the AME Bishop's council.

"The clergy must find a new way to speak to God," he said, "to lead all America to God." He advised the clergy that the "hands of ordination were laid upon you not to preach to middle class only," but to know what the poverty program can mean to people in need. He said, the clergy must see that community action programming of the Office of Economic Opportunity "keeps on its toes."

SHRIVER PRAISED civil rights demonstrations, calling them "prophetic protest", but added that this only opened avenues for the church people to assume "moral responsibility" by keeping involved and seeing that the views of the poor are expressed and heard. He warned the clergymen that the goals of the anti-poverty program could not be accomplished if all "we do is preach piety." The laity, he said, can be part of a new breed of Americans that is finding an alternative to violence.

Shriver's address, given in the Great Hall of the Sherman House hotel, was the main feature of the sesquicentennial banquet of the AME Bishops council meeting in a four-day session.

In his welcome to the delegates, Mayor Richard J. Daley highlighted the activities of Chicago's Committee on Urban Opportunity (CCUO) and commended the participation of several AME ministers and churches.

GREETINGS WERE extended also by the Rev. Edgar H. S. Chandler, executive director, Church Federation of Greater Chicago; the Rev. John Hunter, First AME Church, Gary, Ind.; Judge Sidney A. Jones, Cook County Circuit court; with the introduction of the speaker given by Atty. Russell R. DeBow, administrative assistant to Mayor Daley.

Bishop Eugene C. Hatcher, Jacksonville, Fla., president, AME Council of Bishops, responded to the greetings and Shriver's address. Music was furnished by the Alpha Omega Choral Club. The Revs. Joseph Brockington, Detroit and E. P. Williams, Des Moines, Iowa, gave the invocation and benediction, respectively.

The Rev. S. S. Morris, host pastor, served as toastmaster. Prior to hosting the AME conclave, he broke ground for a \$3 million youth center. Construction began immediately following the sessions. He has been endorsed by the Fourth Episcopal District--presided over by Bishop Joseph Gomez, Cleveland, Ohio--for the office of bishop during the 1968 AME General

# ALTAR CALL

By EMORY G. DAVIS, D.D.  
NEGRO PRESS INTERNATIONAL

## INGREDIENTS FOR BLACK POWER

"Without batting an eye, baby," was the answer a potential Negro revolutionary gave to a white inquirer asking if he would pull the trigger, should he come into the Negro's gun sight. This was the ending of a recent story in Life magazine that still has many whites and Negroes trembling.

A black nationalist "pads the Watts hangouts at night--a risky job--to get the tough kids back to school," so says a more recent article in Look magazine.

Meanwhile on the Meredith march in Mississippi is the chant "black power, black power," and an SCLC leader saying "We're gonna get some of that white blood."

THESE ARE THE ominous clouds now casting gloom over the civil rights horizon. Yet, despite the power of the white backlash and intransigence, raw black power--naked and empty--is not the answer. Given its day, it would be just as vicious and anti-human as the white power that has mitigated against black America all these years.

There are certain vital ingredients essential to the kind of power that will make of these United States one nation. "One Nation, under God" is the first ingredient. The God of the New Testament is Love, and Non-violence is Love's disciple, and in both there is power--power to change the vilest bigot.

Knowledge is another essential ingredient. This is a combination of education and what we used to call mother-wit. When black America can match intellectual wits with white America, it will change, don't worry.

Unity is where we're the weakest. Have we not awakened to the fact that our disunity was planned and plotted by white America who feared what our unity would achieve? We have not yet realized the value of racial unity. United, however, not for brute force, but for skillful conformation and maneuvering with our adversary.

Lastly, we need honesty. Honesty must begin with our leadership. We ought unite against our leadership that continues to exploit us, from pulpit to politician. Honest fellowship must support honest leadership. Put these ingredients together and we'll have a kind of power that will have meaning, accomplishing our common destiny.

The Negro church, once a power force, has gone fishing, and the hordes of the street, without Godly direction, are amassing the only power they know--brute force.

Unless we hasten to the Altar of Human Power, we shall be destroyed by this insurgent "black power."

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Conference meeting in Philadelphia. The General Board of Education, the General Board, the AME Connectional council and all AME commissions, also met during the week with sessions both in Coppin AME church and the Sherman House hotel. Bishop Joseph Gomez, host prelate, was elected to a two-year term as president of the AME General Board, responsible for the fiscal operation of the denomination. He succeeds Bishop O. L. Sherman of Texas. Bishops H. N. Robinson and Harrison J. Bryant, assigned to districts in South and East Africa, were unable to attend the council.