

Pastoral Column:

"If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it." Mark 8:34-35

The Lenten message of self sacrifice is a hard one for us to swallow. We feel that the road to self fulfillment lies in piling things up, protecting what we have and not

taking any chances. It may seem perverse to find a reward in taking up a cross, in losing one's life, in denying oneself. And so these words of Jesus are widely ignored by many who call themselves followers of Christ.

They are also widely misunderstood. The Lenten discipline of giving something up may be a useful symbol, but Jesus is clearly speaking of a life change, not giving up ice cream for forty days. Secondly, the cross that we are called to bear is not a unique burden, a sickness, or an ornery relative. Finally, denial of self is not self hatred.

As persons created in God's image, we develop a healthy self esteem.

What does it mean to take up one's cross? Most of the first disciples quite literally followed Jesus down the path to crucifixion. For us, it means that there will be a cost to our discipleship. Jesus was not afraid to stand up to the powers of his day. He was rejected, misunderstood, and betrayed. We are also called to take a stand in a world where anything goes.

Too often, being a Christian today is spineless and painless, just one more thing

to do in a world full of options and commitments. Denial of self calls for a realignment of values and allegiances away from self and towards Christ. The orientation of our life is toward Him. We serve one God, not many.

The commitment to follow Christ and take up the cross will lead us to choices that may not be glamorous. Sleeping in on Sunday morning is the easier choice.

But surprisingly, in losing our life, we save it. The more we give, the more we get. We learn that by giving cheerfully and generously of ourselves is not a loss -- it's a gain.

During this time of Lent, may each find the blessing of carrying a cross and losing our lives for the sake of the gospel.

The Rev. Larry B. Bell is pastor of the United Church of Genoa.




Robert S. Molesky, 80, of 36 Horizon Drive passed away Sunday, Feb. 23 at home after a long illness. Funeral arrangements will be announced by the Lansing Funeral Home.



J.D. Franklin, 81, of Route 90, King Ferry died Feb. 13 in Auburn Memorial Hospital. Services were held last Monday at the King Ferry Presbyterian church with the Revs. Robert Godbout and James Hughes officiating. Internment will be in West Genoa Cemetery in the spring.



Henrietta Anderson, 90, of 526 Savage Farm Dr. died Sunday, Feb. 23 at Cayuga Medical Center. Arrangements will be announced.



Lawrence A. Bell, 87, of 22 Sheraton Drive, died Feb. 13 in Lakeside Nursing Home. He was born in Ulysses on Aug. 30, 1909, a son of the late Aleck and Mary Martin Bell.

He always lived in Tompkins County where he joined the brokerage business on graduating from high school. He retired in 1975 as vice-president and branch manager of Loeb Rhoades, now Smith Barney.

He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Virginia Bowen Bell and children Stephen A. Bell, of Colden, NY and Jean Bell David of Ithaca as well as numerous grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by a sister Mary E. Gunn and two brothers, Charles F. Bell and George W. Bell. Internment will be in Hayts Cemetery. Donations may be made to Gadabout or Cornell Plantations.



John W. "Whimp" Donahue, 63, of Lansingville died Feb. 12 at his Florida home after a short battle with cancer. He was a son of the late Dorothy "Dot" Spencer and William "Bill" Donahue of Ithaca.

He lived and worked in Tompkins County throughout his life at his father's body shop, at Cayuga Motors and for the NYS Dept. of Transportation.

He is survived by two sons, Thomas and John Jr. of Trumansburg, and daughter Gingerlyn Mosher, of Newtown, N.J.; his sister Dorothy Hile, of Ithaca; five grandchildren, aunts, uncles, a niece and nephew and his companion, Sharon Clark.

Funeral services were held on Feb. 17 and private burial will be in Calvary Cemetery. Memorial donations may be made to the American Lung Association.



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