

Healing Broken Parishes

BY TIM TOWNSEND '04

Zelda Kennedy

The thing that Zelda Kennedy likes about Mooresville, North Carolina is that it's ideally situated. "Mooresville is quaint, with old-town peculiarities," says Rev. Kennedy. There's an ice cream shop, a hardware store that sells Radio Flyers and the biggest game in town is NASCAR. On the other hand, just 20 minutes down the road, is Charlotte—a big city with a symphony, theater and hot restaurants.

Another thing Ms. Kennedy likes about her town is St. Patrick's, the 11-year old Episcopal church where she is a priest, and where the congregation (Ms. Kennedy says she prefers the word "community") is 99% white. Ms. Kennedy, a 53-year-old African-American who was born in the Bahamas, was schooled in a segregated system in the American south that became integrated when she was 15-years-old. Ministering to a community that recognizes her for who she is was important to her when she approached St. Patrick's. Ms. Kennedy, who graduated with an M.Div. in May of 2000, says keeping her identity was central to her decision to come to St. Patrick's, and her experience in the last year "has been awesome."

Before coming to Yale, Ms. Kennedy had lived a corporate life, working for J.P. Morgan Chase for 10 years in New York City, followed by a series of social service and human resource jobs in North Carolina.

At Yale, Ms. Kennedy was thrilled by her ability to connect and worship with students of all denominations. Those experiences opened her eyes. "There were people on campus who were not Episcopalian," she says, "and I was in dialogue with them. The most impressive part of school for me was the community."

Another aspect of YDS that impressed Ms. Kennedy was school itself. "When you have the caliber of faculty that you have on that campus, you're constantly challenged."

Ms. Kennedy sees her future in the healing of churches. Rather than creating a new church as a missionary—a goal of Ms. Kennedy's at one time—she now sees the need for someone to come in and help heal broken parishes. "I want to see churches become healthy," she says. "People have to come to the table and break bread. That's what Jesus did. He broke bread with broken people. I'd like to be the person who helps a broken church move toward reconciliation." ♦

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Tracing Christian Influences in Japan

BY TIM TOWNSEND '04

Masao Takenaka



When Dr. Masao Takenaka was at YDS in the years following World War II, he worked in the library from 8:15 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. for “the morning rush,” as he puts it. “Then I worked for just one hour at night—from 10 to 11—to kick the students out.”

Dr. Takenaka is now 76-years-old (but still plays tennis every day) and was one of the first Japanese students at YDS. He has since become one of the most respected scholars of Christian ethics in his home country. He taught at Doshisha University in Kyoto for 41 years, and has also been a visiting professor at Union Seminary (in the '60s), YDS (in the '70s) and at Harvard Divinity School (in the '80s).

Dr. Takenaka says he would like to get back to YDS some day to do some teaching. “[Yale] is very academically stimulating,” he says. “It is a very good combination of an academic challenge in a community setting.”

At Doshisha, Dr. Takenaka most recently taught Christian Ethics and Sociology of Religion, but one of his favorite subjects is how Christianity influences arts and culture in Japan. “Religion is a source of inspiration for change in the artistic community,” he says. “It breeds a creative promotion of cultural expression.”

In Dr. Takenaka’s latest book, *When the Bamboo Bends*, he continues to look at ways in which Christianity intersects with Japanese culture. “God is bread in the western world,” he says, “but in Japan this is very foreign thinking. In Japan, God is rice. We should say, ‘Give us this day our daily rice’ so Christianity is more rooted in Japanese soil.”

To illustrate his point, Dr. Takenaka quotes part of a poem by the Korean poet, Kim Chi-ha. “Heaven is rice,” he says, “When we eat and swallow rice, Heaven dwells in our body.”

Three years ago, Dr. Takenaka’s wife of 46 years passed away. He has two children, a daughter who lives nearby in Kyoto and a son who is a professor of musical composition at Berklee College of Music in Boston, and four grandchildren. ✦

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Managing Big Ideas and Big Business

BY TIM TOWNSEND '04

Clyde Tuggle

Clyde Tuggle likes to tell people that his own journey through the religious landscape is emblematic of the American religious experience itself.

Mr. Tuggle was born a Southern Baptist in Atlanta, Ga., but when he was 10 years old, his family began attending a Presbyterian church. At Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y., where he studied German and Economics, he became a Congregationalist, and at YDS, he switched to Episcopalian. Two years later, Mr. Tuggle was back at the Presbyterian church, but when his company, Coca-Cola, transferred him to Austria, he began worshipping at a Methodist church there. Back in Atlanta a couple of years later, Mr. Tuggle and his family of four returned to the Presbyterian church. But at the beginning of this year, they went back to the Episcopal church.

"I'm looking forward to the next move," Mr. Tuggle quips, "to the Eastern Orthodox church."

Mr. Tuggle grew up in "a very religious family," but it was in college that he became interested in the academic aspects of faith. He spent a year at the University of Munich and studied with renowned Lutheran theologian Wolfhart Pannenburg. His professor became a major influence on Mr. Tuggle, who until then, had not learned to question what was underneath a Sunday sermon.

"I realized how little I knew about faith," he says. "Being in his class was like taking a ball of yarn and pulling the string – the questions just starting pouring out."

In 1984, Mr. Tuggle, who is now a vice president and director of Worldwide Public Affairs and Communications for soft-drink giant Coca-Cola, was accepted at YDS, and decided it was a place where he could "flesh out all those questions." He also used his time at Yale to figure out whether ordination was in his future. The prospect had been raised in his own mind during his year in Germany.

"I got drawn into theology academically," says Mr. Tuggle. "And I got drawn into Yale as a worshipful community. There was a rhythm of daily worship that complimented the academic experience. There was almost something monastic about it."

While Mr. Tuggle, who is married and has two small children, decided not to go into ministry, he does feel that the skills he learned at YDS have served him well in his job at Coke. "Yale teaches leadership skills, it teaches people how to listen, to motivate and to inform," he says. "At Coke we don't make anything – our bottlers do that. We are an idea company. We manage a big idea, a big brand. At divinity school I learned how to put ideas out into the world." ♦

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