

FR. ALBERT SHAMON
**Word For
Sunday**



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Hos. 2:16-17, 21-22. (R2) 2 Cor. 3:1-6. (R3) Mk. 2:18-22.

In the beginning of Mark's Gospel there are five conflict stories: clashes between Jesus and the Jewish authorities. These stories explain why Christ's ministry, which was one of healing and of helping others, was met with hostility, hatred, and persecution.

This Sunday's Reading describes the third conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities. The controversy was fomented by the attitude Jesus assumed toward fasting. The Law required only one fast-day a year (Yom Kippur) in atonement for sin. But the rabbis had so multiplied this form of religious observance that a Pharisee in our Lord's parable boasted of fasting "twice in a week." Even the disciples of John fasted, not as an empty form, but as a response to his call for repentance which led to the forgiveness of sins. Thus the enemies of Jesus asked, "Why do John's disciples and those of the Pharisees fast while yours do not?"

Jesus' answer expressed clearly what fasting ought to be, namely, a true expression of inner feelings. As inward joy erupts in a smile, so fasting must spring from heartfelt sorrow for sin. Unless it does, fasting can become as false as an enemy's smile or as worthless as counterfeit coin. Hence Joel pleaded, "Rend your hearts, not your garments."

That was what Jesus implied in his reference to a wedding. Hosea saw God as approaching a wayward wife and wooing her once again in some deserted lovers' lane — a time of joy (R1). Jesus built on this image and saw Himself as a bridegroom, come to woo fallen Israel. His coming, which ushered in the Kingdom of God, signaled the breaking of the grip of sin on mankind. Therefore His coming too was a time for celebration. Sinners who have been forgiven have only sentiments of joy and re-

joicing. Such a mood called for feasting, not fasting. That was the gist of Jesus' answer.

Jesus, however, did say a time would come for fasting. In Camelot, when it was love-time, all was safety and song: "Tra la! It's May! That gorgeous holiday." But when love had proved unfaithful, then all was December and cold. "Hollow, hollow all delight!" When the beloved has been faithless or when the divine Lover seems absent, then is the time for fasting!

But fasting in God's Kingdom differs much from that of the Pharisees. It is not to be done for outward show nor as a mere display of righteousness. Neither is it to be a doing more than the law requires just "to get in good," so to speak, with God. Rather it is to be an outward sign of a heart that is honestly sorry for its past.

Jesus flatly stated He did not come to preserve the status quo of the Jewish religion. "No man pours new wine into old wineskins." He said. Old leather loses its elasticity and becomes thin from wear so that the fierce fermentation and expansion of new wine would burst it. Any man knew that. Nor would a housewife be so stupid as to patch an old garment with a piece of new upshrunken cloth. The shrinking, after the first wash, would make a bigger tear.

Jesus did not come to patch up Judaism. He brought a whole new spirit to religion which would demand an entire new form of expression. Christianity is a new covenant. When new discoveries are made in the scientific world, a whole new vocabulary, neologisms, is demanded. Fasting, as a purely external observance, had to go. Christianity controls men, not so much by laws, as by motives. Its heart is love of God and of neighbor. Its symbol is not just the fast, but a feast (the Eucharist) — for it is a religion of joy!

**Charitable Corporation
Established by Knights**

New Haven, Conn. — The Knights of Columbus have formed a multimillion-dollar charitable corporation to further religious, charitable, educational and scientific pursuits.

Supreme Knight John W. McDevitt, chief executive officer of the 1.2 million-member Catholic fraternal society, stated that the charitable corporation will disseminate Christian truths and principles, maintain facilities for the physical, intellectual and moral development of youth and provide scholarships for deserving persons. He added that the formal name of the corporation will be Knights of Columbus Charities, Inc.

The new charitable trust combines several funds which had been created by the Knights of Columbus in past years. These include the Pro Deo and Pro Patria Scholarship Trust Fund which awards almost fifty \$1,000-a-year scholarship grants at Catholic colleges in the United States; the Educational Trust Fund which provides four-year scholarships to sons and daughters of Knights killed or totally and permanently disabled in military service or as a result of criminal violence in the performance of duties as law-enforcement officers or full-time firemen; the Catholic Advertising Fund which promotes the spread of Catholic teachings and moral principles in print and

through radio and television; and the Italian-Welfare Fund which provides playground facilities for underprivileged youngsters in Rome.

Supreme Knight McDevitt announced that the initial funding of the charitable trust amounts to almost \$2.5 million.

McDevitt noted the corporation is not authorized to issue capital stock nor may any part of its earnings or assets be used for the benefit of its members, governors or officers. No substantial part of the activities of the corporation shall involve propaganda or other attempts to influence legislation nor will the corporation participate in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. He stated that contributions to the charitable trust are tax-deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code.

McDevitt stressed that the new trust will continue and expand the many social, educational and religious programs which have been carried on by the Knights for many decades.

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Anglicans Speak Against Euthanasia

London (RNS) — Euthanasia has been condemned in the February issues of two Anglican diocesan journals, adding to the campaign launched in Britain by Roman Catholics.

Speaking out were Anglican Bishop Cyril Bowles of Derby and a distinguished professor of medicine, writing in the monthly publication of the Norwich diocese.

Earlier, on Jan. 27, Cardinal John Hoenan, Archbishop of Westminster, warned a national conference held at his cathedral that "unless we are extremely careful, we find a bill (legalizing voluntary euthanasia) will go through Parliament without enough people realizing its implications."

Bishop Bowles, writing in the Derby diocesan monthly, recalled that in the past five years two bills seeking to legalize euthanasia have been introduced in the House of Lords. Both failed to win support of the upper house.

"Many people are moved to support the legalizing of such homicide by sheer compassion. It seems so much more humane than allowing great pain to continue or maintaining the existence of someone who has no capacity left to communicate with others," he said.

But, Bishop Bowles continued, "The danger of euthanasia is that once permitted, it would become too general, and the obligation that human life should always be respected would very easily be ignored."

"Any action by individuals and any legislation by the community which reduces the general consensus that life ought to be preserved, however difficult it may be for us to preserve it, is likely to lead society to a situation where it became a matter of indifference or chance whether human life is respected or not."

The introduction of previous euthanasia bills was also recalled in an article in the Norwich Churchman by Sir Ronald Tunbridge, professor emeritus of Medicine at the University of Leeds.

After reporting the views of those for and against mercy killing, he wrote:

"The difficulty of any euthanasia bill is that someone has to be an accomplice. Although suicide is no longer a criminal offense, anyone aiding and abetting persons to commit suicide is liable to up to 14 years' imprisonment."

Furthermore, one of the essential features of the doctor/patient relationship, is that patients should have faith in the integrity of the doctor and also that he will do all in his power to help them. If he is to appear sometimes in the guise of an accomplice for the termination of life, it would be impossible to retain one of the essential components of the doctor/patient relationship.

"It was part of the Hippocratic Oath, 300-400 B.C., that the doctor do nothing harmful to his patient. This professional ethic, devised before the advent of Christ, is only re-enforced by Christian belief."

For the Christian neither the right to live nor the right to die

is a matter of personal decision but it is the will of the Father." Prof. Tunbridge said. "Herein lies the essential difference between the viewpoint of the Christian and the humanist."

If life is a God-given gift it follows that the Christian should do all within his power to preserve life."

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WHAT WE'RE DOING WORKS
THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION AID TO THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

In Lebanon a deaf-mute boy becomes a tailor and learns to talk!
In Gaza a girl who is blind learns to 'see' the world and people through her fingers and Braille.
In Jordan a Sister from India cleans out a lady's mouth which is full of cancer.
Youngsters and old people have blankets and books, medicines and sewing-machines in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, because you care.
In Bethlehem, after seven years of preparation, our Sisters of St. Dorothy are conducting a school for the deaf and hard-of-hearing, called "Ephphatha" (the word Our Lord used). Who are we?
We are the Pontifical Mission for Palestine, the Holy Father's aides for the 1.5 million refugees from Palestine — in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Gaza. We do our work in Jesus' name, on the basis of need.
We like what we're doing, and it works. It works because you pray with us, write to us, and share with the refugees what you can do without.
The check-list makes it easy for you to help. Please help all you can. We're profoundly grateful.
\$... For refugees, where it's needed most \$3525 Equips a clinic in a refugee camp \$2475 Buys equipment to train deaf-mutes at Ephphatha in Bethlehem \$1880 Expands facilities at the Pontifical Mission Center for the Blind in Gaza \$1125 Endows a hospital bed with full medical and nursing care at St. Joseph's Hospital in Jerusalem. \$ 950 Builds four classrooms for refugees in Jordan and Syria \$ 525 Establishes a child-care center in Jerusalem \$ 300 Enables a refugee teen-ager to learn a trade in the Salesian school in Bethlehem (two years) \$ 240 Feeds two refugee families for a full year \$ 168 Provides one year's full-care for an orphan \$ 75 Gives a sewing machine and accessories to a sewing center for village girls \$ 45 Furnishes a bicycle for a visiting nurse \$ 25 Supplies one year's medical needs for a refugee family \$ 10 Buys Braille books for a blind child \$ 5 Gives an orphan girl two dresses \$ 4 Provides a cripple with a pair of crutches \$ 2 Buys a blanket for a baby

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Cardinal Suenens To Address Institute
New York (RNS) — "Jesus" is the theme of this year's annual National Conference of Trinity Institute, which will be held on the West and East Coasts for the first time.
Major speakers will be Cardinal Leon-Joseph Suenens, the Roman Catholic Primate of Belgium, and Anglican Canon David E. Jenkins, director of humanum studies of the World Council of Churches in Geneva.
Wednesday, February 21, 1973

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