

FR. ALBERT SHAMON

Word For Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R1) Dt. 5: 12-15; (R2), 2 Cor. 4: 6-11. (R3) Mk. 2: 23-3: 6.

Sunday's Gospel narrates a fourth and a fifth conflict between Jesus and the Jewish authorities over the Sabbath observance.

The Sabbath was a day of rest; it was also a day of worship. The incidents about the apostles "reaping" wheat and rubbing away the chaff in their hands and the cure in the synagogue of the man with the shriveled hand were meant to teach that necessary works and works of mercy do not break the spirit of the Law. Law, after all, is for the benefit of man and not the other way around.

Paradoxically, however, with the passage of time, customs, observances, rules can assume more importance than the value they were designed to protect.

The Romans had two words for law: *lex, legis* (from which come words like legal and legislation) and *ius, juris* (from which come words like jury and jurisdiction).

The root word from which *lex* originates means "to bind," for law binds the will of man to do or not to do something. Interestingly enough, the Church does not use this word for her laws.

Ius, on the other hand, means a right or value. For law also safeguards rights. Thus the first ten laws of our Constitution are called the Bill of Rights. The Church uses this word for her laws — *canonicus ius* (Canon Law). For the Church sees her laws as protecting the great values of the Christian community.

The Pharisees took God's law regarding the Sabbath's rest and distorted it. Christians in England did the same thing with the Sunday law of rest. Sunday often came to be looked upon as a series of do's and don't's — blue laws. For some the gloom and dreariness of Sunday so colored the whole image of religion that they neglected both the Sunday and religion.

A more balanced view of the Christian Sunday is needed. Psy-

Asks High Court Hearing On Rights of Unborn

Washington, D.C. (RNS) — A Fordham University law professor who led an unsuccessful drive to overturn New York State's liberalized abortion law has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to consider his claim that abortion violates the legal rights of "unborn children."

The motion was made in behalf of Prof. Robert M. Byrn, in connection with a motion he filed last September, asking the Court to strike down New York's abortion law. He is now asking the Court to delay a motion on his original appeal and schedule a hearing on the legal rights of the unborn.

Prof. Byrn's lawyer, Thomas J. Ford of Brooklyn, said that since unborn children were not parties to the Texas and Georgia cases, "fundamental fairness" necessitates that their position be heard. In ruling on the Texas and Georgia cases (Jan. 22), the Supreme Court, in effect, struck down restrictive abortion laws in 46 states and authorized abortion during the first six months of pregnancy.

In 1971, Prof. Byrn was appointed by a New York judge to

chologists, like Toffler in *Future Shock*, insist that recurring religious ritual serves as an important change buffer in today's ever-changing society. As the sea traveler needs a compass, with its needle pointing always in one direction, so man needs a constant point of reference to cushion the shock of incessant change in a society that is running away with itself. In the 16th century the Church gave man just such a point with her law of Sunday worship.

Also, the Sunday and weekend offer an opportunity to develop those human values for which daily work leaves little or no time. In *Fiddler on the Roof*, Tevye said he could explain in one word what helped Jews keep their balance in a mad, mad world — that one word is tradition. "Why," he said, "without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky as — as a fiddler on a roof" — a pointed roof at that!

As family tradition is handed on by just living in the family, so Catholic tradition is absorbed by living in the Catholic family — by being together, by learning together, praying together, singing together, and eating together, which is done at every Mass. Of course this has to be done frequently to guarantee the passing on of tradition. Therefore Church law says we must go to Mass at least once a week, on Sunday.

As for the Sunday rest, it might be well to remember in this iconoclastic age of greedy materialism that the condition for temporal prosperity is to seek first the things of God. When legislatures are debating the abrogation of the Sunday rest, it would be well to plaster in the halls of our Senates the words of Leo XIII in his encyclical on labor:

"Christian morality, when adequately and completely practiced, conduces of itself to temporal prosperity, for it merits the blessings of that God who is the source of all blessings: it powerfully restrains the greed of possession and the thirst of pleasure — twin plagues, which too often make a man who is without self-restraint miserable in the midst of abundance" (*Rerum Novarum* par. 23).

be special legal guardian of all unborn fetuses facing abortion in New York City municipal hospitals. In his original suit, Prof. Byrn charged that the New York liberalized abortion law violated the 14th Amendment to the Constitution which holds that no state "shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law."

But last July the New York Court of Appeals upheld the state abortion law, and in its 5-2 decision ruled that "unborn children have never been recognized as persons in the law in the whole sense." Prof. Byrn appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court.

In January, Justice Thurgood Marshall denied an application for a temporary restraining order against abortion in New York State. The application was filed by Prof. Byrn, who charged that New York hospitals were "inflicting death" by abortion on more than 100 unborn children daily.

At the same time, the New York Court of Appeals refused to bar abortions in the state until the U.S. Supreme Court rules on the appeal filed by Prof. Byrn.

'Family Home Evening' Works for Mormon Church

"The Mormon way of attacking delinquency and a deteriorating morality is to strengthen the family unit through the Family Home Evening program, which is peculiar to the Church's 3.2 million world membership."

So says Martin J. Siebach, bishop of the Rochester 1st Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who presides at the meetinghouse on 171 Reservoir Ave. in Rochester.

"The Family Home Evening manual, which is being used locally for the ninth year to strengthen family ties, is now being published worldwide in 17 languages," he continued to explain.

Each year a new manual is published by the Church and distributed to interested families. Overall distribution of the Family Home Evening manual since the program began in 1964 has surpassed 5 million.

President Harold B. Lee, leader of the 3.2 million Latter-day Saints located in all free countries around the world, has stated:

"The family is mankind's basic unit. The greater peace and goodwill we seek for all the world, to be realized must begin in the home. To impress the importance of the family, the resurrected Lord admonished everyone to 'Pray in your families unto the Father, always in my name

"In these challenging times," President Lee continued, "when there are so many influences which would undermine and threaten the solidarity of the home, we need to follow the words of the Lord to . . . turn the hearts of the parents to children and the hearts of the children to parents."

The Mormon church has set aside Monday night worldwide as "Family Home Evening" and counsels each family to meet together for study and recreation. No church meetings or church-sponsored activities are planned for Monday night. Children participate in planning and presenting the evening's activities. The Family Home Evening manual provides numerous and varied family activity ideas.

Recently national attention has been directed to a successful program of taking the Family Home Evening program into the Utah State Prison. The prison chaplain calls it "the most successful prison rehabilitation program in the world."

The church has also taken steps to start the family-to-prisoner program at prisons in Texas, Nevada, California, and Oregon. Federal prison authorities have visited the Utah prison to study the program. Basic family home evening techniques are used to build the prisoner's character and confidence in him-

CYO Splits Cheerleading Tournament

Since the CYO has been unable to secure a facility large enough to house its annual Diocesan Cheerleading Tournament, it has been forced into running two tournaments, according to Paul B. Schmidt, executive director of the CYO.

The high school division will compete on Saturday, March 24 and the elementary division tournament will be held on Saturday, April 7 at the CYO, 50 Chestnut St.

A special meeting of all CYO cheerleading coaches will be held Saturday, March 3 at 10 a.m. at CYO.

Wednesday, February 28, 1973

self Where prisoners do not have their own families available for these weekly visits, they are adopted by Mormon families. Over 60 per cent of the prison Home Evenings have been and are now conducted for non-members of the church.

Utah prison officials report that of 140 released prisoners given adopted families for the program during their terms, only two or 1.4% have returned to prison in the program's five years. The national average return rate is markedly higher.

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THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION AID TO THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

When are you happiest? Happiness lies in giving. You're happiest when you give yourself to the people who need you most. . . . A mother, for instance, hums with happiness when she bathes and dresses her baby. A good nurse always has time for a smile. Good fathers whistle at their work. . . . The best sort of giving involves more than writing checks—still, how better can you help the children now who need you overseas? Boys and girls who are blind, lepers, deaf-mutes, orphans—your money gifts, large and small, will feed them, teach them, cure them, give them a chance in life. . . . Want to be happier? Give some happiness to a child. You'll be happy, too!

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