



WORD FOR SUNDAY
Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday Readings: (R1) Acts 3:13-15, 17-19. (R2) 1 Jn. 2:1-5. (R3) Lk. 24:35-48.

The first token our Lord gave on Easter to convince the disciples that it was really He Himself whom they saw was the spoken word. Faith comes from hearing. Before the Passion, Jesus' last words were about peace. After His resurrection "Peace to you" were His first words. Incredible as it might seem, the disciples' reaction to His appearance and greeting was panic, fright, "they thought they were seeing a ghost." That Jesus would rise from the dead was a thought furthest from their minds.

They needed more evidence. So, our Lord offered visual and tactile aids: "Look at My hands and feet"; "Touch Me, and see"; and, as a final clincher, to prove the solid reality of His body, He "ate in their presence." In this way, our Lord revealed some of the marks of a great teacher.

A wise Master was once asked, "What is the first condition of successful teaching?"

"Patience," he answered.

"And the second?"

"Patience."

"What is the third?"

The Master paused momentarily, then answered, "Sympathetic understanding."

How indulgent our Lord was that first Easter! The disciples should have recognized Him. After all, they had been with Him since His baptism. They had witnessed the limitless range of His power. Our Lord Himself seemed a bit disappointed at the dejection of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. And yet — how gentle, how tender He was! "Why are you disturbed?" "Have you anything to eat?" "Recall the words I spoke to you." They were wrong in thinking Him a ghost; He set them right. But oh, how kindly, how patiently! Might not some of the problems in religious education and in ecumenism be due to a want of courtesy, consideration, patience, understanding?

A great teacher realizes that truth is something objective. If trees begin to look blurred to me, the fault is in my eyes, not in the trees. I correct my vision with glasses. Our Lord did not let the disciples turn in on themselves. He refused to allow them to indulge in and analyze their doubts and their fears. He did not say their disturbances were mental disorders or neuroses due to overfatigue from the last few days, that all they needed was a little rest and then things would look brighter. Oh no, He said instead: "Look at Me"; "Touch Me"; "Recall My words." He said, in effect, focus on Me — the Truth — not on yourselves.

The truths of our faith are outside us. We do not create them. We can only accept them in faith. No matter what we think, our Lord's death, His resurrection, His remission of sins are absolute truths. They stand independent of our doubts or questionings. Regarding His truths, man's incredulity and blindness matter

not at all. But for each of us, whether we have faith in them or not is what really matters.

A final mark of a great teacher is that he builds on experiences. He leads one from the known to the unknown. One of the problems of modern man is disincarnation or angelism, that is, treating man as though he were just an intellect. An overemphasis on the truths of faith (doctrinal content) can impede the experience of faith. That is why the Liturgical Renewal is so all important. Liturgy engages the whole man.

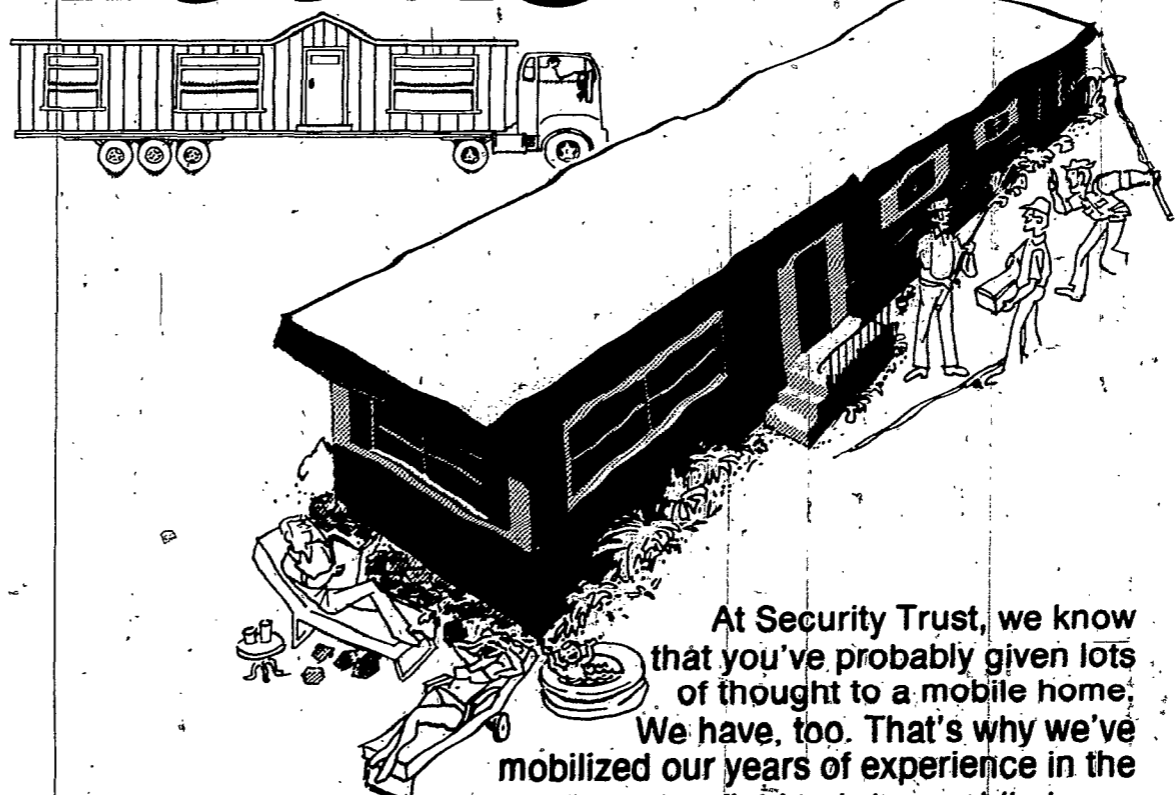
Liturgy, for instance, is not just an affirmation of faith; nor is faith simply the condition for liturgy. Rather, liturgy helps faith to become an "act"; faith finds expression in the words and rich symbols of liturgy. Only after our Lord let the disciples celebrate the liturgy of hearing Him, looking at Him, handling Him, did He open their minds to the understanding of the Scriptures. Liturgy is experiential faith — the kind of faith that made it possible for disciples to become witnesses.



'Clowns'

McQuaid High School's Parents Club presents its third annual musical, "Here Come the Clowns," May 10-12, 8 p.m., at Bishop Kearney High School Auditorium. The show, directed by Father William O'Malley, SJ, and Sister Margaret Mary Ganley, SSJ, features a cast of 100, with 30 show-stopping songs and dances from Broadway musicals, and will help raise a scholarship fund for special student aid. Appearing "Clowns" will be (l-r) Rosemary Bayer, Jim Lane, John Donovan, Joan Donovan, Phil DiPasquale. For tickets, call McQuaid, 473-1130.

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RECEIVES PREMIER

Vatican City [RNS] — Pope Paul received Australian Prime Minister Gough Whitlam in private audience on April 26. No official communique was issued after the one-hour meeting, but it is generally assumed here that the two men discussed the establishment of full diplomatic relations between Australia and Vatican City State.