



WORD FOR SUNDAY
Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday Readings: (R1) 1Kgs. 19:4-8. (R2) Eph. 4:30-5:5. (R3) Jn. 6:41-51.

Did you ever wish to die? Has your patience ever been so tried by people around you, or by failure, a long sickness, an unforeseen calamity, or by a sense of your own sinfulness or inadequacies that you wished to die? Well, this was exactly the way it was for the bold and brilliant prophet Elijah right after his great victory on Mt. Carmel over the priests of Baal.

Jezebel, the wicked queen of Israel, was not present on Mt. Carmel when Elijah had brought down fire from heaven. When told of the feat, she scorned this as a mere conjurer's trick. She contemned the cowards who had stood by while her priests were butchered by a madman. Far from quailing before the wild Bedouin, she wrote him a scorching letter that unmanned Elijah. She put a price on his head. Paradoxically, Elijah ran away, and then asked God to take the very life he was running away to save. "This is enough, O Lord! Take my life," he prayed (R1). How depression or despondency can unhinge one's thinking.

We might wonder how craggy Elijah, who towered among the prophets of the Old Testament, got into such a despondent mood.

Depression, as almost everyone knows, can be due to overwrought nerves, to sheer physical exhaustion. Surely, Elijah's tense meeting with Ahab, his contest with the priests of Baal, the intensity of his prayers for fire from heaven, the excitement of the victory, and the fatigue from his flight — all must have bankrupted his emotional bank. Trivial causes, like a sunless day or an overheated room, can annoy us. How much more would all the strain, Elijah had been through, have drained his strength to the point that he was ready to die rather than expend one more ounce of energy.

Another reason for Elijah's depression was the fact that for a moment he had taken his eyes off God and had focused them on his own problems. Once St. Peter walked on water. Imagine that! But he so walked only as long as he kept his gaze on Jesus. The moment he turned away and fixed his eyes on the winds and the waves, he began to sink. So it

was with Elijah. Up to this time, Elijah had been animated by a splendid faith that focused on God. As long as Elijah had riveted his eyes on God, all his problems became as dust on a scale — not even deemed necessary to be considered as part of the weight. But once Elijah began to dwell on the opposition and to forget God — his problems appeared gargantuan and he cast a pall of melancholy over him.

Finally, God permitted such weakness in Elijah to teach us that faithful service of God does not exclude depression and discouragement. This state is not only consistent with intense devotion but it is even necessary. For in great success, there is great peril. Too much sun withers the rose, too much rain wilts it. For our sake, then, life oscillates between prosperity and adversity, success and failure, triumph and defeat, thrill and depression.

How did God remove Elijah's depression?

First, He took care of his bodily needs. Sometimes the best remedy for discouragement is a good night's sleep. Shakespeare long ago wrote: "Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care, . . . sore labour's bath, balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course." Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who knew what sleeplessness was, once wrote: "Oh sleep, it is a gentle thing, beloved from pole to pole."

Secondly, God gave Elijah food. He miraculously supplied it. Elijah ate this "bread from heaven," and in its strength he walked to the mountain of God and, according to the Scripture, he never died.

What a beautiful type this "bread" is of that miraculous bread given by Jesus to help us in the journey of life and to the mountain of eternal glory.

Like Elijah, we too get weary on the journey and need proper sleep and food. Like Elijah, we have a long way to go to reach the mountain of God. But like Elijah, we too have a God who is also constant in His love to us, no matter how depressed we may feel. And in His constant love, He too provides us with a bread from heaven, far greater than that which the raven brought to Elijah — "the bread I will give you is My flesh. If anyone eats this bread he shall live forever."

Admit Polygamists, Fr. Hastings Urges

Dublin [RNS] — The British Roman Catholic priest who made headlines by publishing allegations of a massacre in Portugal's African colony of Mozambique, has suggested that black African polygamists be admitted to the Christian Church.

Father Adrian Hastings, an expert on African tribal marriage customs, made the suggestion in a report submitted to the Anglican Consultative Council at its recent meeting here.

The report was commissioned by the Anglican Archbishops of Capetown, Central Africa, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Father Hastings, a member of the staff of the College of the

OBSERVER RECALLED

United Nations, N.Y. [RNS] — Msgr. Alberto Giovannetti, the Vatican's observer at the United Nations, is being transferred to another diplomatic post after nine years in New York. He has been in the service of the Vatican Secretariat of State since 1944.

Ascension in Birmingham, said the polygamy should not be condemned as a form of adultery.

It is a form of marriage, he said, "which the Christian Church, especially in Africa, must come to recognize."

His report argued that if the polygamist "sincerely believes in Christ and wishes to be baptized," then the Church "should consider admitting him."

At the same time, however, Father Hastings declared that for Christians who are already baptized "the marriage of one man and one woman" should remain "unchallenged and without concessions."

An article in the London Times by the 44-year-old priest, recounting charges of Portuguese atrocities in Mozambique made by Roman Catholic missionaries who had worked in Mozambique, caused an international flurry of counter-charges and official denials by the Lisbon government.

RGE consumer news

what a difference proper insulation makes...



1600 sq ft single story ranch home
gas heat, electric cooling
No Insulation or Storm Windows

heat loss:
109,664 BTU's
annual heating cost:
\$383.82
heat gain:
54,882 BTU's
annual cooling cost:
\$91.40

Same house
3" insulation—walls
6" insulation—ceiling
storm windows & doors

heat loss:
41,292 BTU's
annual heating cost:
\$144.52
heat gain:
20,646 BTU's
annual cooling cost:
\$21.92

a difference of \$308.78 in heating and cooling costs for this home.

This is only a hypothetical example. It does, however, illustrate the relative benefits of insulation.

Most local builders are insulating new homes with 2 1/4" batt insulation in the walls and 3" insulation in the ceilings. This much insulation greatly reduces heat loss and gain, and consequently provides for lower operating costs. However, there are special circumstances where the added protection of 3" wall and 6" ceiling insulation is warranted. In the case of an electrically heated home, the additional amount of insulation is essential.

There is a lot more to know about insulating your home. Each house has its own specific characteristics; that's why your home — even if it is similar to our sample — won't have the same heat loss-gain and operating cost as listed above.

Until August 17th at the Consumer Information Center, we'll share with you what we know about insulation. The Center is located on the main floor of 89 East Avenue and is open during all regular office hours, including Tuesday and Thursday until 9 p.m. and Saturday until noon.

Questions may be referred to the Residential Department on the 5th floor. Or call 546-2700 ext. 2751.

RGE ROCHESTER GAS AND ELECTRIC
89 EAST AVENUE, ROCHESTER, N.Y. 14649 • 546-2700