

Keeping Tabs

The Rosary and Altar Society of **Mother of Sorrows** will have a Christmas party tomorrow after church services at 7:30. Joan Stratton will direct the junior choir in a musical presentation and Henrietta Proudfoot will give a demonstration on Danish cut-outs.

The **Holy Family Rosary Society's** Christmas party will be a buffet supper at 6:30 p.m. **Wednesday, Dec. 12.** Reservations should be made by Dec. 8 with Mrs. Peter Cumbo, 328-0144; Mrs. Clarence Kick, 235-7836, or Mrs. Kenneth Frank, 328-2017. The price is \$3.

The **Rochester Harps Club** will have a roast beef dinner at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 8 at 115 Buffalo Rd. For reservations: 663-8679 or 254-6958.

Court Nativity, Catholic Daughters of America, Brockport, will have a Christmas party Dec. 10 at Lista's Restaurant. New members received in a recent ceremony are Mrs. Helen Stigliano and Miss Kathleen Donahue.

All singles are invited to the **St. Christopher Social Club** dinner

dance at the Top of the Plaza at 6:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 15. Dec. 10 is the deadline for making reservations with Tony Casa, 544-3792, or Elain Vanderbrock, 244-6826.

Christ the King Rosary Guild's annual tureen supper will be held at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 10. The Mel-O-Wives of Webster will entertain. Reservations may be made with Mary Jane Herberger, 544-4337, or Terry Salamone, 342-2118.

The **Womens Club of St. Salome's** will have a Christmas party at 7:45 p.m. Monday, Dec. 10. The children of the parish school will provide the entertainment. Reservations are being taken at 338-4583 and 266-4428.

The senior citizens of **Holy Family** parish invite their contemporaries in the area to join them at their first Christmas party, Dec. 12, from 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. Mrs. Elmer Walter is chairman.

The **Catholic Mission Guild's** Christmas luncheon will be held at the Holiday Inn Wednesday, Dec. 12. Father Elmer Heindl will

celebrate Mass for the group at 12:15 p.m., before lunch.

The **Police Wives Auxiliary** will sponsor a Christmas party for children Saturday, Dec. 15, 1-3 p.m., at the Fire and Police Academy on Scottsville Road. Dec. 11 is the deadline for making reservations with Carol Bardeen, 288-7327. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Rosarians of **St. Theodore's** parish will hold their Christmas party at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 12 at Sellito's Restaurant, Driving Park at Dewey. Reservations must be made by tomorrow with band leaders or through 227-5527.

Mrs. Ronald J. McDonald of Electric Avenue will entertain members of the **19th Seton Branch** at lunch tomorrow noon.

The **Marian League** at St. Jude's Church will hold a Christmas party in the parish center on Dec. 12, beginning with a cocktail hour at 7 p.m. followed by a ham and roast beef dinner. Tickets are available following the weekend Masses.



Sports Award

Father Gerald Dunn, pastor of St. Theodore's Church presents Tom Mandara [left] and Greg Rath with a parish Excellence in Sports award at a recent Father and Son Sports Night. Rath is a senior at Gates-Chili High School. Mandara is now attending Ashland College.

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WORD FOR SUNDAY Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday Readings: (R1) Bar. 5:1-9. (R2) Phil. 1:4-6, 8-11. (R3) Lk. 3:1-6.

It is difficult to imagine the impact the coming of John the Baptist had on the people of his time. In the past God made His will known through prophets. But for over three hundred years, no prophet had been heard throughout the land. People believed, thanks to Joel and Malachi, that prophecy would reappear when the Messianic Age came.

When, therefore, John the Baptist made a sudden dramatic appearance in the Judean wilderness, it was like a meteor flashing across the sky. Everyone read into the event that here was the prophet come to prepare the way for God's deliverance of His people. God would act decisively. Fulfillment was at hand. The End Time had come!

Luke made this clear in two ways. First, he describes John's prophetic role in the exact words of the calls of earlier prophets — "the word of God was spoken to John." Secondly, he situates John's appearance in its historical framework. Thus Luke mentions both the political and religious leaders of Judaism. First, he mentions the reigning emperor, Tiberius Caesar; then Pilate, the Governor of Judea, under whom Christ was to suffer and die; Herod Antipas, seducer, murderer of John the Baptist, and ruler of Galilee; Philip and Lysanias, rulers of the provinces bordering on Galilee; and the ecclesiastical rulers Annas and Caiaphas — Annas being the high priest emeritus. Such a list indicates the absolute and moral degeneracy of the times and the need of someone to call Israel back to her God. Little did these petty princes and prelates realize that they formed merely the background for the events that really mattered. Of deep and lasting significance was the announcement of John that the end toward which all history had been moving was about to take place — the coming of the Kingdom of God. His announcement that "all mankind shall see the salvation of God" implied that both secular history and religious history would reach their fulfillment in Him whom he proclaimed.

But God's action always demands our reaction. When oriental kings journeyed to remote parts of their realms, road engineers preceded them to fill the valleys, level the hills, and

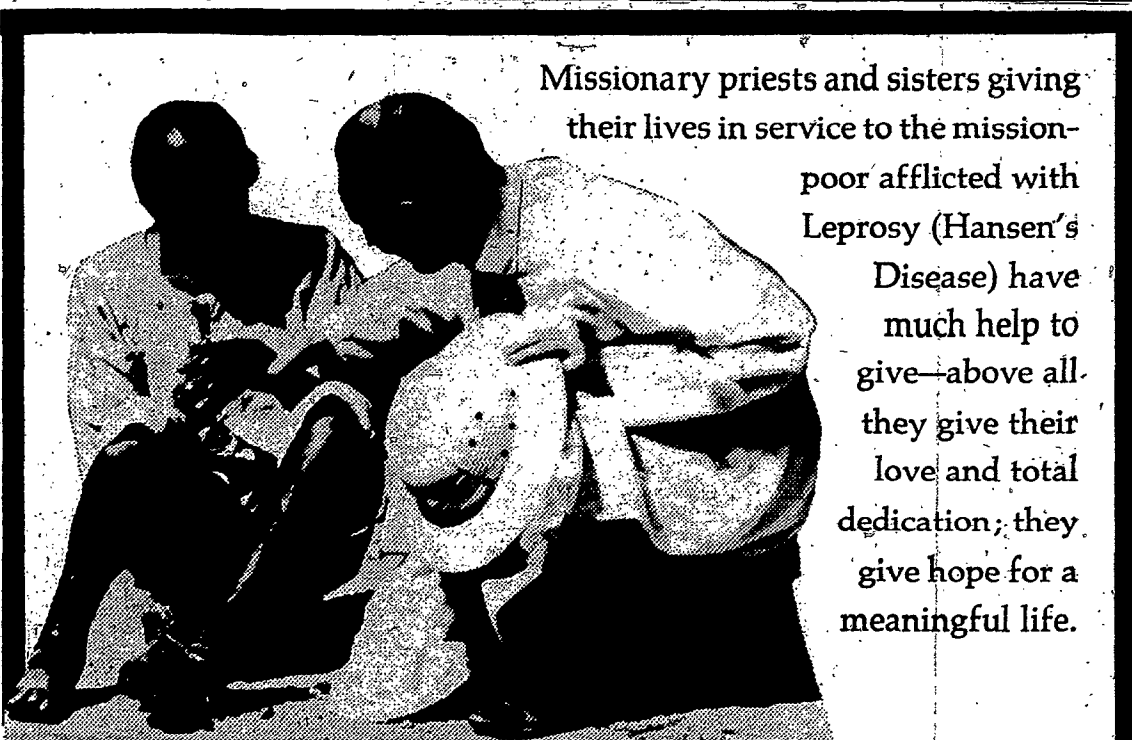
straighten and make smooth the roads. So, the sequel to John's message "The King is coming!" was "Prepare the way!" How was this to be done? "By a baptism of repentance" — by a radical change of heart — a change evidenced by a public sign, namely, that of baptism.

For the Jews of John's day, repentance meant a break with what Jerusalem stood for at that time. It meant turning one's back on formalistic religion or mere lip-service. That was why John appeared, not in Jerusalem, the center of official Judaism, but in the Judean wilderness. John demanded an immediate and decisive break. The rite of baptism dramatized all of this. A man was born a child of Abraham, the sign of this was circumcision. John demanded that now a man confess that Abraham's children had failed, that he acknowledge that his only hope for entering into the coming Kingdom was God's merciful forgiveness and cleansing from sin.

For us repentance means a return to sincerity, to honesty and integrity in our serving God. By being what we are called to become at baptism, we shall find our wholeness and fulfillment in Christ.

Fulfillment is something everyone looks for. Fulfillment is what life is all about. Some needs are satisfied easily enough, but the deeper needs of man's personality are not so easily met. Man is always moving towards something and the ultimate frustration would be if he never got there. The Christian message to man — proclaimed again at Advent — is that man can find fulfillment only in friendship with God. Like John, our mission is to prepare the way for His coming, for He "comes" continually. The coming of the Lord is no mere historical event, but an ongoing, expanding reality. The coming of Christ continues from Bethlehem — to the now — to the fullness of the Kingdom of God. During Advent we are especially aware of His many comings, concentrating this week on making room for His advent into the now of our lives.

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CJ 12/5/73

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