

Advisory Board Named at Becket

An advisory board to work with Becket Hall, the college seminary for the diocese, has been formed.

The board will work closely with the priests in charge of Becket Hall, Father John Hempel, rector, and Father Gerald Connor, spiritual director. The board will advise on matters concerning the goals and aims of Becket Hall, and will help to develop programs aimed at improving general awareness and communications between it and various groups with which it is associated.

Chairman is Larry T. Eiler of Pittsford; Robert Tucker of Pittsford is vice chairman. Other members are

Thomas Banaszewski, business manager of the diocesan seminaries; Father Joseph Brennan, rector of St. Bernard Seminary; Roger D'Aprix; Larry Oberlies; Dr. Ronald Proud; John Ritzenthaler, comptroller of the diocese; Edward John Roder; Michael Sullivan, student at Becket Hall; and Father John Zimmerman.

WORD FOR SUNDAY

Sunday Readings: (R1) Jer. 17:5-8 (R2) 1 Cor. 15:12, 16-20. (R3) Lk. 6:17, 20-26.

The main theme of the "Sundays of the Year" is that of God's Kingdom. Christmas celebrates the Incarnation of Jesus. Lent-Easter-Pentecost celebrates the Redemption. The remaining Sundays use the Readings to instruct us in the meaning of belonging to God's Kingdom.

This Kingdom was born within us at Baptism and continues to grow in us with every prayer and every truly human action. It is a Kingdom that is not of this world. In fact, many of the values of the present world are just the opposite in the Kingdom. This Kingdom of love and truth and justice is precisely the world Christians are trying to create with Christ.

The third reading gives us a glimpse of what this Kingdom can do for man. Often, I think, we have been accustomed to considering the Beatitudes as describing the conditions necessary for a man to enter the Kingdom. Are not the Beatitudes looked upon by many people as goals to be achieved before they can be accepted into God's Kingdom? Have not we ourselves fallen into the trap of feeling that holiness achieved is the condition for membership in the Kingdom? Such a conception is wrong as wrong can be.

The Beatitudes do not qualify us for the Kingdom of God. Rather they describe the blessings that the Kingdom can and will bestow on those who have already chosen to belong to it. The spirit of the Beatitudes, the lofty goodness they express, is the effect of the work of Christ in our lives. All we need do is open up to the Spirit of Christ desire, decide to follow Him. Following Him, we shall become like Him. For "the man who trusts in the Lord is like a tree planted beside the waters" (R1). As it is the water that makes the tree grow and bear fruit, so it is the Holy Spirit who beatifies the just man.

No doubt the Beatitudes with which we are familiar are from St. Matthew's Gospel. Matthew has eight; St. Luke gives only four. Matthew sees the Beatitudes as the Christian version of the Old Testament, and he therefore addresses them chiefly to the Jewish people. Luke, on the contrary, has no interest in drawing parallels between the Old Testament and the New. His main concern is to show that Jesus came to bring all men into His Kingdom. So Luke has the sermon on the Beatitudes take place on a flat plain, in contrast to Matthew who situates the same sermon on a mountain, because Moses gave the Old Law from a mountaintop.

These contrasts are not the important things. What is important is for us to understand what Jesus was doing in giving

the Beatitudes. Jesus was saying in effect, according to Luke, that the Kingdom of Heaven is nearer to the poor, the hungry and the sorrowful than to others. Our Lord did not mean to pronounce the poor, hungry, and sorrowful blessed in-virtue of their poverty, hunger and tears. Rather He wanted the poor, hungry and sorrowful—who constitute so large a portion of mankind—to know that they have a friend in Him, that He cares for them, sympathizes with them and desires with all His heart their well-being. Their needs cry out louder to Him than the riches of those who have no needs.

Even from a human viewpoint, Shakespeare could write, "Sweet are the uses of adversity." It is a curious fact that nearly all the great music of the world has been produced by those who knew what it was to be poor. Sebastian Bach was the son of a hireling musician. Beethoven's father was a dissipated singer. Cherubini came from the poorest ranks of life. Gluck was a forester's son. Haydn's father was a wheelwright and his mother, previous to her marriage, was a cook in the kitchen of Count Harrach. Mozart's father was a poor musician. Rossini's father was a strolling horn-player. Schubert was the son of a poor schoolmaster. Verdi was the son of a Lombardian peasant.

While Mary carried Jesus in her womb, she sang of the basic Beatitude, hunger, not the hunger that comes from lack of food, but the hunger that craves for the love, truth and justice of the Kingdom of God. To such hungry ones, she said: "He has given every good thing." They are the best. Try Him and see!

Justice Forum Spotlights Farah

The Forum on Justice of the Judicial Process Commission will be focusing on the Farah controversy today and next week, in its February luncheon series. Presently over 2,000 Mexican American clothing workers are on strike against the Farah Manufacturing Co. in El Paso, Texas.

The luncheon series is held Wednesdays, from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church, 101 S. Plymouth Ave. Admission is free; beverages are available.

Topics for February include: Feb. 13, Can Justice Be Included in the Price of Farah Pants? Feb. 20, What Will It Cost Local Churches to "Put On" Farah Pants? and Feb. 27, The "Game" of Arrest.

Further information may be obtained by calling Marcia Kramer, 482-3572 or the Judicial Process office, 325-7727.

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