

# WORD FOR SUNDAY

Father Albert Shamon

**Sunday's Readings:** (R1) Am. 6:1-4:7 (R2) 1 Tm. 6:11-16 (R3) Lk. 16:19-31

Sunday's Gospel is certainly a study in contrasts. The rich man is exceedingly rich. His clothing is the costliest — purple and linen. Canaan means "Land of Purple." It owes its name to a product of the country which was highly prized in older days. From earliest times the inhabitants had extracted from a shellfish (the Murex snail) which was native to these parts, the most famous dye in the ancient world, purple. It was so uncommon, so difficult to obtain and therefore so expensive, that only the wealthy could afford it. Purple robes were throughout the ancient East a mark of high rank. The Greek called the manufacturers of purple and the purple-dyers of the Mediterranean, Phoenicians. The country they called Phoenicia, which meant "purple" in their language.

This purple-robed man "feasted splendidly." In a country where food is hard to come by and meat eaten at most once a week, he banqueted every day. The basic teaching of the Law was "six days shall you work" — a law so universal that even God Himself is shown as following it (Gen. 2:2). Yet this man banqueted every day.

The poor man is exceedingly poor. The scraps that fell from the rich man's table were not the crumbs that fall from table; they were the pieces of bread on which the rich man wiped his hands in that pre-knife-and-fork day.

Lazarus was so weak from starvation, he did not have strength enough to chase the dogs away that licked his sores caused by malnutrition. These dogs were city scavengers, not pets.

Jesus draws the contrast — no praise, no blame. He merely states the facts.

Then the roles are reversed. Lazarus is at the heavenly banquet. He reclines in the place of honor — so close to Abraham that he can rest his head on his bosom as John once did on Christ's at the Last Supper.

**COURIER DEADLINE**

The Courier-Journal deadline is noon Thursday for articles intended for the following Wednesday edition.

The rich man, on the contrary, is in the abode of the dead, the spiritually dead, and in such torments that he yearns for a drop of water.

What is Jesus teaching? Not that wealth is a sign of God's favor and that poverty is a sign of His disfavor. Not the doctrine of retribution in the afterlife — most of His hearers take this for granted. Not that there is a hell. Not that wealth is evil in itself and that poverty is good in itself.

What, then, is Jesus teaching?

He is addressing those who have and neglect the needs of those who have not. The rich man is not condemned because he is rich, but because he is blind to the needs of another — the beggar who lay at his gates. He is punished, not for what he did, but for what he did not do.

It was this same kind of indolent, luxurious, uninvolved living that brought down the house of Israel. In the first reading the prophet Amos does not envy the rich — He contemns them. His words crackle with scorn as he roars at them: "You fools, sprawled on your divans, devising lewd songs, quaffing wine, not from cups, but from bowls, you cannot see the handwriting on the wall — the collapse of Joseph. And sure enough, within that generation, the descendants of Joseph, the entire Northern Kingdom, were led into exile by cruel Assyria. And for what reason? The neglect of the needy.

Dom Helder Camara, Archbishop of Olinda and Recife in Brazil, in a conference to a group of young people in Manchester, England, listed the seven capital sins of our day. Four of the seven are racism, colonialism, war and fear.

**The fifth is paternalism:** the attitude of the rich man who thinks that the economic injustices of the day will be solved by foreign aid and personal generosity — the distribution of "the crumbs that fall from his table."

**The sixth is pharisaism:** this sin is in special horror today — the distance between what one preaches and what one lives — on the economic, social, political or religious level.

**The seventh is evasion:** not looking at the actual sufferings and crises of our day to find a solution.

## Parishes Name Joint School Board

The parish councils of Holy Apostles and Holy Family have appointed three lay people each to the school board that will run their newly consolidated schools.

Miss Mary Salipante, Richard Klein and Mrs. June Lopa are the Holy Apostles members. Mrs. Rose Grisaneli, Mrs. Carol Lomedico and Dan Lupiani represent Holy Family. The two pastors and principals are ex officio members of the joint board.

Both school buildings in the neighboring parishes are in use, with Sister Ambrosine Casey serving as principal of grades K-5 at Holy Apostles and Sister Rita Marie principal for grades 6-8 at the Holy Family building. The

### Elmira Monastery Pilgrimage Set

The Monastery of Mary the Queen, in Elmira has special one-day status as a place of pilgrimage on Oct. 7, and the Dominican Nuns of the Perpetual Rosary cloistered there invite their friends to take part in the celebration.

Bishop Dennis W. Hickey will be principal celebrant of a 7:30 p.m. Mass in the chapel at 1310 W. Church, Elmira. The Jubilee Indulgence may be gained under prescribed conditions by all who attend the Mass or visit the chapel during the day, the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary.

principals point out that the reorganization allows for concentration of materials and physical education programs and assemblies geared to the separate age groups. They find also that there is a better teacher-pupil ratio, allowing for more individualized instruction.

The two schools are about half a mile apart, and most of the children walk to Holy Apostles at Austin and Lyell and Holy Family at Jay and Ames. This is the

second school consolidation in Rochester, outside of the inner city. There are others in Auburn, Elmira and Corning.

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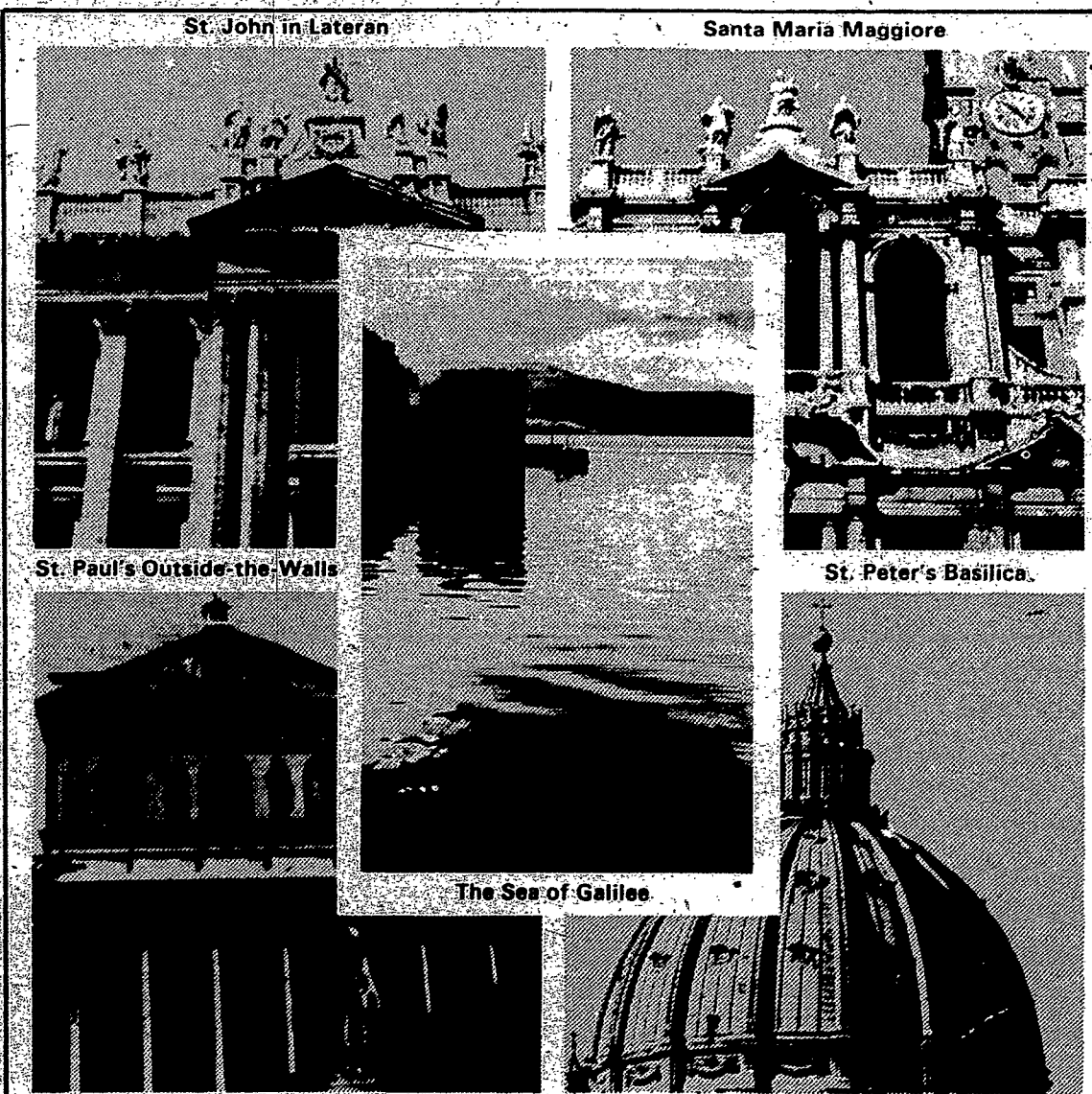
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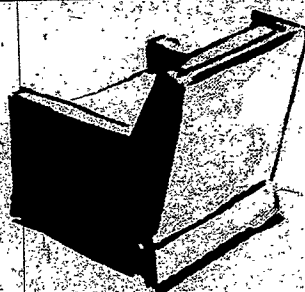
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