

INSIGHTS On Pastoral Liturgy

Rediscovering Prayer

By MARY LOU ANDRYCHUK

Summer offers a good opportunity for liturgy committees, whether they formally convene or not, to take a look at who they are and what they might do to broaden and deepen their self-understanding and appreciation.

There are many publications available to members on the how-to of liturgy committees, organization, roles, tasks, planning ideas and various resources. But the aspect of liturgical ministry most often neglected and overlooked by planners and ministers alike is prayer. Prayer in all its dimensions — from informal and private to formal and public — is the very heartbeat and lifeblood of liturgy. So how can committees plan the prayer of others, how can ministers lead others in prayer, if they themselves are not pray-ers?

Liturgy is more than group dynamics or artistic expression. It is more than a skill, a pleasure, or an obligation. Liturgy is the privilege of the Believing Community to deepen their experience of who they are before God. But this experience of who we are before God does not happen automatically because we happen to step into a church on Sunday. It is a seed that needs to be planted in silence and cultivated in solitude in the garden of our hearts.

This means simply giving ourselves to the time it takes to be conscious of the Presence of God — individually first, then with others in committee, and finally with the total parish community. We cannot possibly pray with others if we are not comfortable with ourselves alone before the Lord. And how can we, as committees, hope to draw others in the parish to prayer if we ourselves cannot pray, if we are unable to face together the God in our midst?

The important thing to remember in praying, whether alone or in a group, is that it is not we but God who acts. To be shy, embarrassed, afraid, or bored is to assume human responsibility, to seek power over a mystery that is God's alone to reveal. Our part is to desire to know the Lord, to yearn for that relationship with God which puts our whole life in perspective. Once we begin to desire the Lord, we have exercised the only power we really possess — the power to let

PARISH BAZAAR

St. John's Parish in Port Byron has scheduled the annual chicken barbecue and bazaar for Saturday, Aug. 7, starting at 4 p.m. Miss Josephine VanAcora and Mrs. Henry Young have charge of the barbecue, and Donald Kudla heads the bazaar committee. Mass will be offered at 7:30 p.m. by Father Bernard Kuchman, pastor.

PENN YAN CANVASS

Penn Yan — Three Sisters of St. Joseph are visiting homes in St. Michael's Parish bringing information regarding the parish and the services it provides. Sister Ruth Anne Dupre, first grade teacher at St. Michael's, Sister Shirley Caster, faculty member at Nazareth Academy, Rochester, and Sister Leo Marie, a teacher at St. John's, Greece also are taking suggestions for future committee programs.

ITHACA FESTIVAL

Ithaca — Immaculate Conception's Parish Festival is scheduled for Sept. 25. Workers are needed and volunteers may call the rectory at 273-6121.

God's Spirit act in us. Here we have begun to give in to the mystery of God in our lives. We have begun to pray.

Letting God act in us is not something we necessarily accomplish on our own. God speaks to us through His Word, leading and guiding us, especially through Jesus Christ. Scripture, therefore, is our first source of inspiration and direction whether we pray alone or with others. Contemporary writers on prayer also share with us their deep and often difficult growth experiences.

Some particularly good sources for private meditation and prayer are **With Open Hands, Out of Solitude**, and **Reaching Out** by Henri Nouwen, Edward Farrell is the author of three excellent books on prayer, **Prayer is a Hunger**, **Surprised By the Spirit**, and **The Father Is Very Fond of Me**, all of which provide meditation exercises for private or group use. A small but deceptively rich volume is **Prayer From Where We Are** by James Carroll, which approaches prayer with fresh insights and offers some questions for discussion — a good way to complement a renewed effort to pray.

Collections of prayers helpful in group prayer or planning prayer services include **Your Word Is Near** by Huub Oosterhuis, **Stay With Us** by Francois Chagneau, and **Prayers** by Michel Quoist, to name a few.

Parish liturgy committees need to take seriously their ministry of calling others — committees, councils, the total community — to prayer and of working with priests and religious in the spiritual development of their people. So let us begin — in the name of the Father, with the Son, in the Holy Spirit. Amen!

Ecumenical Symposium On Eucharist Planned

Philadelphia — More than 300 theologians of 25 Christian traditions will conduct a two-day ecumenical theological symposium on the Eucharist here, Aug. 4-5.

One of seven main conferences of the 41st International Eucharistic Congress, the ecumenical symposium is truly one major religious event within another.

It will be the only theological symposium of the congress.

Group to Press Congress for Simplicity

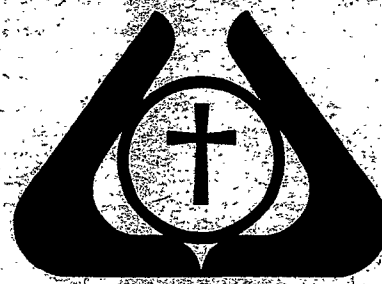
Philadelphia [RNS] — An ecumenical Christian organization concerned with world justice will urge participants in the forthcoming 41st International Eucharistic Congress here to adopt a simpler life style as befits a "poor church" and to work diligently for human rights.

The Campaign for Global Justice, made up of both Protestants and Catholics, will hold a series of "non-confrontative" demonstrations during the week-long Congress (Aug. 1-8) and hold two major petition drives at the Catholic-sponsored event expected to draw over one million participants.

The group plans to express its concerns for "Gospel simplicity and global justice" through leafletting at major congress events, "street theater" and "street speaking" in downtown Philadelphia. In addition to vigils and processions, the group will erect "tableaus" depicting torture used by some governments supported by the U.S.

AUXILIARY NAMED

Washington, D.C. [RNS] — Father John N. Wurm, 48, associate superintendent of schools for the St. Louis Roman Catholic archdiocese, has been named by Pope Paul to be an auxiliary bishop to Cardinal John J. Carberry of St. Louis.



It is the first multi-lateral ecumenical meeting on the Eucharist sponsored by the U.S. Catholic Bishops Committee for Ecumenical and Inter-religious Affairs.

It will attract theologians and ecumenists of international scope.

Attending will be Cardinal Jan Willebrands, primate of the Netherlands, president of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity; Archbishop Iakovos, primate of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Americas; Dr. Robert J. Marshall, president of the Lutheran Church in America and member of the executive committee of the World Council of Churches; and Bishop John M. Allin, presiding episcopal bishop of the United States.

At the closing prayer service the hunger for Christian unity will be dramatized in the washing of feet. Unable to share in one Eucharistic Communion because of traditional

differences, the participants will express their desire for unity by imitating Christ's sign of service to others which he gave just before he instituted the sacrament of Holy Communion.

The first full day of the Christian unity conference involves a plenary session and 10 workshops to be conducted by 300 specially-invited theologians in private meeting rooms.

The second day, the same format will be approximated before more than 10,000 persons at Philadelphia's Civic Center.

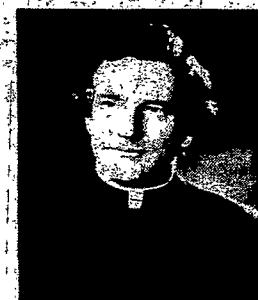
Some of the speakers for the plenary sessions include Father Avery Dulles, S.J., Catholic convert, theologian, author and son of the late John Foster Dulles; Rev. Stanley Harakas, Greek Orthodox Dean of the School of Theology, Hellenic College, Brookline, Mass.; Methodist leader, Rev. J. Robert Nelson, professor of systematic theology, Boston University, and the Rev. Dr. William H. Lazareth, author, ecumenical leader and director of the department for church and society of the Lutheran Church in America's Division for Mission in North America.

The theme of Christian unity, which dominates an ecumenical conference, will be reinforced by the official Congress themes designated for the two days.

COURIER-JOURNAL DELUXE FALL TOUR OF EUROPE with



Father Joseph Reinhart



Father John Rosse

Europe from the North Sea to the Eternal City—a superbly planned excursion highlighted by our motor route down the historic Rhine Valley and providing such sights as the canals of Amsterdam and Venice, the antiquity of Rome and Rothenburg, the arts of Florence, the picture card beauty of Garmisch and Cortina and much, much more as we travel from Europe's great river across Germany's "Romantic Road" to Bavaria and through the Alpine areas of the Austrian Tyrol and Italian Dolomites.

The escorts, Rev. Joseph Reinhart, Diocesan Director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and Rev. John Rosse, Chaplain at St. Mary's Hospital have travelled extensively and have conducted tours to Europe several times. Their helpful leadership will add much to the enjoyment of another travel group of the Courier Journal.

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