

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE

By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

In The Good Old Summertime

"Summertime, and the livin' is easy..." So goes the song from Porgy and Bess. But in our hectic, go-getter society, it can be anything but that. Were it not for air conditioning, most of us would dissolve in a pool of perspiration-from effort expended.



Summer is most beautiful when we look back to childhood. Summer was that glorious moment of liberation when the school bell rang for the last time until September. It was the freedom to take those hikes in the nearby woods, wade in the cool creek or swim in it where it got deep and wide. It was hazy and lazy days, figuring out what to do — selling lemonade (or drinking most of it), building a fort or clubhouse, getting enough guys together for a choose-up ball game, or just doing nothing.

In retrospect, it was a little bit like heaven, and maybe that isn't too far off. It was in the bleak dead days of late winter that we entered the season of Lent and were told we had to die to self. Then we watched as the dead branches turned to gray pussy willows and golden forsythia. Finally came Spring and Resurrection and new clothes and Easter, and we became alive again. Perhaps not everyone would agree (least of all those with pollen allergies) but it is a

little bit like heaven. Maybe it will remind us that life itself is a journey from bleak winter to lush summer.

What to do with summer? Well, first of all, it's a time to slow down. We've been going much too fast anyway, trying to save the world in nine months and ruining our health and disposition in the futile meantime. I found the following wisdom in a book of thoughts put out by the Salesian Missions:

Take time to think...it is the source of prayer.

Take time to play...it is the source of perpetual youth.

Take time to read...it is the fountain of wisdom.

Take time to pray...it is the greatest power on earth.

Take time to love and be loved. It is a God-given privilege.

Take time to be friendly...it is the road to happiness.

Take time to laugh...it is the music of the soul.

Take time to give...it is too short a day to be selfish.

Take time to do charity...it is the key to heaven.

I particularly like that part about taking time to think, and thinking calls for solitude. It reminds me of what Henry David Thoreau said: "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, discover that I had not lived."

And one final thing: remember that God is close to you however far you may travel. It was he who first put man in a garden of pleasure and intended him to remain there...to enjoy as well as preside over creation.

The following might be an appropriate summer prayer for all of us:

Lord, may all the marvels of your presence fill us with praise, thanksgiving and joy. May we in these vacation days of rest and relaxation be blessed by the vision of you we see reflected in sky, sun, sand and stars. May we ever adore you, the maker, the sustainer and the lavish giver of such good things. May we preserve unpolluted the glory of all you have made for our profit and enjoyment. May we enhance the flowers of the field and the birds of the air by a prompt and ready obedience to your most holy will. This crowning gift we ask through Christ, your Son and our Lord. Amen.

vatican news

Pope Exhorts U.S. Bishops to Guard Faith

Vatican City (RNS)—Pope Paul used the occasion of the canonization of St. John Neumann of Philadelphia to exhort a large body of American churchmen — cardinals, archbishops and bishops — to guard "the content of the Catholic and apostolic faith" and to exercise "great pastoral responsibility" and "absolute fidelity to Christ" in preaching the Gospels.



In a lengthy message to the American prelates, the Pope called for a strong stand by the Church leaders on doctrinal questions, particularly those being challenged theologically in some Church circles. He pointedly urged the bishops to respond to challenges to Church teaching authority and morals.

"I put this duty to you: proclaim the message, insist on its truth, refute falsehoods, correct errors, call for obedience, but do all with patience, with the intention of teaching and with the realistic awareness of certain challenges — not least of which is sexual morality," he said.

The pope spoke after receiving eight cardinals and 80 archbishops and bishops from the U.S. who came here for the canonization rites held on June 19. He later received Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin of Cincinnati, president of the U.S. Bishops Conference, in a private audience. No details of the audience were announced.

Stating that on the occasion of Bishop Neumann's canonization he wished to reflect on the episcopal office which the bishops are called to exercise, Pope Paul said he intended to speak "a word of challenge, a word of exhortation and a word of encouragement."

"We are brothers who have been chosen to continue the action of the Good Shepherd in the world. We are ministers of the mysteries of God. We have been called to preside humbly at what Vatican II called the 'table' both of the Word of God and the Body of Christ," he said.

"By its very nature," he affirmed, "our ministry of word and sacrament is placed under the sign of fidelity, absolute fidelity to Jesus Christ." According to God's infinitely wise plan, the pope continued, "our vocation is one of spiritual leadership and pastoral

accountability to guide God's people in right paths for His name's sake."

Pope Paul said God's word is not only the "criterion of our preaching" but a light and direction for the people and the only source of valid solutions to the problems of our day.

He told the U.S. bishops that the "faithful preaching of God's word — in all its purity, with all its exigencies, in all its power — constitutes the highest priority of our ministry because all else depends on this." The pope added that church leaders must not hesitate to preach the Gospel "with apostolic seriousness, and with great simplicity and confidence before God."

In urging the bishops to strongly defend the purity of Church teaching and doctrine, he told them to "make preaching the Good News a thoroughgoing service...in a whole program of apostolic charity" which constitutes a "great pastoral service to our people."

Pope Paul reminded the bishops that they "represent fidelity to Jesus Christ and to all his words which are indeed spirit and life." He said they must show the pastoral understanding and deep human compassion which only exist in that fidelity to God's words.

"There is no division, no dichotomy, no opposition between God's commands and our pastoral service. If all exigencies of the Christian message are not preached our apostolic charity is incomplete. As bishops of the Church of God, we must humbly ask for strength so as not to be lost and carried about by every wind of doctrine..."

The pontiff challenged the bishops to "exercise personally and with ever greater energy," their teaching mission with "sensitivity and fidelity to Jesus Christ, his cross and his resurrection."

Quoting from St. Paul's advice to Timothy that God has bestowed "a spirit of power, love and self-control," Pope Paul said that with this "let us face the challenges of our ministry. The true good of God's holy people is at stake and on the basis of God's word we must lay down our lives, like John Neumann, in persevering service to our brothers, in all their sufferings, anxieties and problems."

The pope called on the bishops to "guard the

content of the Catholic and apostolic faith. Speak about it often with your people. Discuss it with your priests, deacons and religious... fulfill with lifelong personal attention your great pastoral ministry to seminarians. Encourage all to love the word of God and never to be ashamed of the seeming folly of the cross."

Cambridge Honors Mother Teresa

Cambridge, Eng. (RNS) — Mother Teresa of the Congregation of the Missionaries of Charity, Calcutta, who has devoted her life to caring for the poor and destitute, received an honorary doctorate of divinity from the Duke of Edinburgh soon after he was installed as chancellor of Cambridge University.

The Duke was installed in the 750-year-old office of chancellor on his 56th birthday. Before the installation ceremony, Mother Teresa met him to give him a spiritual bouquet for Queen Elizabeth in honor of her silver jubilee. The bouquet of prayers was compiled by co-workers of Mother Teresa in Britain.

She was first of eight persons, professors, including two from Harvard and from the University of Illinois, who received honorary degrees.

Later, Mother Teresa addressed students of the University Church of Great St. Mary's. She also visited the East End of London to open a new house established by her order.

Courier Calendar

- Vigil, Mass—Focus on the Eucharist, 7:30-11:15 p.m. Thursday, July 7, in McQuaid's student chapel, 1800 S. Clinton, Mass. at 8:15. Everyone invited.
Seton 80—Meeting at 8:30 tonight with Mrs. Samuel Caruso, Fisher Road.
Festival—At St. Mary's, Canandaigua, 6-10 p.m. Friday, July 8, 6:30-10:30 July 9.
On Stage, Please—Musical revue by Rochester's Packet Boat Crew, this weekend at Bristol Valley Playhouse, RD3 Naples, Curtain time 8:15 p.m. July 1 and 2, 3:15 Sunday, July 3.
Miracle in Milan—Matinee for senior citizens, 1:30 p.m. Thursday, July 7, Dryden Theatre, Eastman House.
Dial M for Murder—1954 film in Classic Film Series at Rochester Museum, 2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, July 7.
Gift from the Gods?—New Star Theatre show through Sept. 11, Strasenburgh Planetarium deals with Bermuda Triangle, pyramid power, UFO's, other mysteries.