

WORD FOR SUNDAY



Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Lk. 21:3-21. (R1) Eccl. 1:2, 2: 21-3. (R2) Col 3:1-5, 9-11.

Last week we saw that homosexuality is generally something acquired and that objectively, as a lifestyle, it is a depravity always to be condemned.

What solutions are being offered to this problem? Basically two: one by liberals, the other by the Church.

The two solutions differ radically. Liberals zero in on the generality of homosexuality. Sexual preference, they say, is of no more significance than being right-handed or left-handed. They would, therefore, legalize homosexuality as something normal.

The Liberal solution, as always, is simplistic: pass a law and the problem will go away. To solve unsuccessful marriages, Liberals long ago legalized divorce, which is no solution. To meet the great difficulties of pregnant women, they legalized abortion, which too is no solution. To meet possible discrimination and the difficulties homosexuals may encounter in fitting into society, they would legalize homosexuality, which is again no solution.

The serious error here is that homosexuality is an evil no law will ever make right. Homosexuality lacks "an essential and indispensable finality"; that is, it has no lasting value or real purpose. It is the misuse of the sexual faculty — a pathetic little substitute for reality, a pitiable flight from life. The practice deserves no encouragement, no glamorization, no rationalization, no fake state as minority martyrdom, no sophistry about simple differences in taste — and above all, no pretense that it is anything but a pernicious abnormality.

Legalization would give homosexuality a status of normality; would discourage, as useless, the efforts of those who resist temptation; and would in effect do nothing for the homosexual himself, but confirm him in this perversity.

Even ancient Greece, when homosexuality was rampant, regarded it as abnormal, and there it was never legal! One of the last

books of Plato was the Laws. In it he, himself a homosexual, banished homosexuality from his ideal state. The most homosexual society in history regarded it as the act of a madman to legalize homosexuality.

The Church offers a different solution. Her focus, as always, is on the person. For instance, she is more concerned with the drunkard than with the addict than with drugs. So in this matter of homosexuality, she would deal with the homosexual, the person. It is significant that the title and the first words of the Vatican Declaration on Sexual Ethics (12-29-76) are "the human person" (Humana Persona). It reveals that the thrust of the document and of the Church regarding sex is to be, not from the viewpoint of sex acts, but from that of the person.

Thus the Church, which condemns homosexuality, does not condemn the homosexual. He is a person, and, as such, a child of God, worthy of every consideration. But more important, he is redeemable! Freud thought the homosexual incurable, but the Church does not. She is no defeatist. Her position is one of optimism. Can we have faith without hope? As Jesus looked beyond the sinful acts of the prostitute who washed his feet in the house of Simon and saw in her heart the capacity to love (Lk 7:36 ff), so the Church looks beyond the sinners against sexuality to their hearts as still capable of love, and so of redemption.

She advises her priests, therefore, who meet homosexuals' deemed to be incurable to treat them "with understanding and sustain them in the hope of overcoming their personal difficulty and their inability to fit into society." (Humana Persona, 8)

To quote Dr. Hatterer again: "Disappearing, too is the idea that an individual who engaged in homosexual practices cannot lead a normal heterosexual life. He can — if he wants to!" Men and women by the hundreds of thousands have negotiated their way into normal sexuality by a combination of resolution, psychological help — and a social sanction! It can be done, as once it was done even in Greece, through the preaching of Paul (Col. 3:5). "In weakness power reaches perfection" (2Cor. 12:9).

FESTIVAL SET

Rexville—St. Mary's Church has scheduled its annual chicken barbecue and parish festival for Sunday, August 7 on the parish grounds. Everyone is invited.

ALL IN THE FAMILY



Sarah Child

"Know thyself," charged any number of ancient Greek philosophers.

And I'm trying.

But, frankly, it isn't easy.

Obviously I'm not the woman I think I am.

There was a time when I looked down my nose at diamond rings as being vulgar, dull and not particularly pretty. Then I was offered one and miraculously my whole attitude changed.

Next was the matter of gray hair. I pooh-pooed the panic portrayed in commercials as thirtyish females woke up one morning to discover the first silver thread and were emotionally wiped out. Gray heads were distinguished and beautiful.

My first gray hair sent me into a tailspin. I plan to cover them up as soon as they begin surfacing in the front where I can see them unaided by a second mirror.

A couple of weeks ago vacationing in an idyllic spot I learned something else about me. I discovered that sitting around a sparkling lake in Maine with a beautiful beach three steps from a snug, spacious cottage under towering pines is not for me. At least not after the first 24 hours.

Actually the locale was fine. It was the activity, or rather the inactivity, that did me in.

It was fine at first. We explored the surrounding countryside. We read. And we made conversation. Then the conversation deteriorated into questions such as, "Who's for an ice cream cone?" and "Isn't that a home bakery ahead?"

The kids and their father had no conflict. The absence of routine was terrific — for them. And why not? They'd just put in a full year at office and school. But for a housewife whose quiet day is punctuated with the arrival of the school bus, the occasional phone call and the 5 o'clock "What's for dinner?" peaceful isolation is not the answer.

MUSEUM FILMS

The Classic Film Series offering tomorrow at Rochester Museum will be Spellbound, a 1945 production starring Ingrid Bergman and Gregory Peck. Showings are at 2 and 8 p.m. Next in the Science Fiction Series is Westworld, at 8 p.m. Saturday, July 30.

Kiwanis Lists Scholarships

Kathy Desiderio and Michael Curnick of Bishop Kearney High School and Lucille Cardella of Eastridge High have been awarded 1977 Kiwanis scholarships in honor of deceased members of the club.

The scholarship winners, their parents and guidance counselors will be honored at an Irondequoit Kiwanis dinner July 27 at the St. Paul Exempt Firemen's Hall. Thomas Licata, club president, will make the awards.

Joseph Siconolfi is chairman of the Irondequoit Kiwanis Club.

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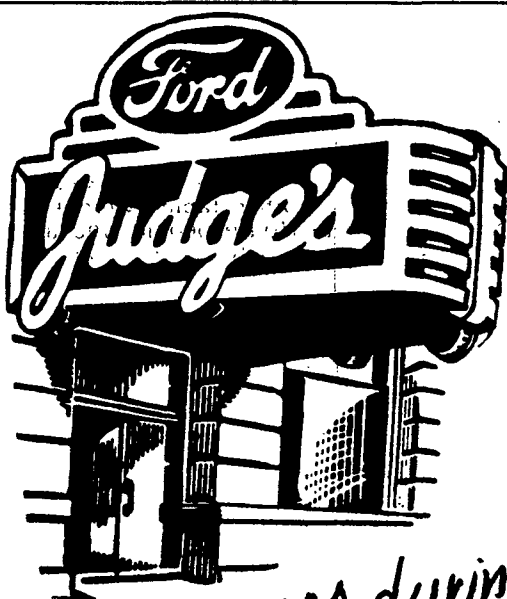
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