

PASTORAL PERSPECTIVE By Bishop Joseph L. Hogan

The Year of the Lord -- 1978

It is the Eve of 1978 — a New Year of the Lord. As I write this column there is before me a new and fresh and unmarked desk calendar. The blank spaces after each date are to become the record of my personal use of time.



A friend once remarked, "I can no longer wish people a 'Happy New Year' when I think of what they seek to make them happy."

To wish anyone a Happy New Year is, indeed, a hollow ritual unless the greeting is accompanied by our personal resolve to sanctify 1978 so that each day will unfold as time worthy of the Lord's blessing of happiness.

What is the divine formula for happiness, and what is the grace of moments given to us, as we proclaim a New Year of the Lord? Jesus' formula for happiness has these essential ingredients: a recognition that God is our common Father; a conviction that if we ever feel abandoned, it is not of His will but ours; that the unity of the human family calls all of us to be brothers and sisters, and that the expression of our love for each other is the revelation of His love.

The Christmas story tells us that the shepherds were given angelic direction to the location of Christ's birth. St. Luke assures us that they found Mary and

Joseph and the Infant lying in a manger. Jesus was found in need of Mary for nourishment and warmth, and of Joseph for the protection of His life. Mary and Joseph were in need of each other for comfort, support and encouragement. And in this family portrait of mutual dependence, the shepherds discovered the meaning of new life in Jesus Christ. And we make the same discovery once we realize that happiness is found in our expression of love of one another. And once this discovery is made, the Year of the Lord becomes the reality of our life that it was meant to be.

New Year's Day was once regarded as an occasion for resolving disputes, healing enmities and effecting reconciliation. If we welcome the Prince of Peace, we are forced to recognize that happiness consists in forgiving trespasses, resolving disputes, effecting reconciliations and enriching friendships.

The New Year offers us the grace of precious moments to effect this reconciliation and to find the Lord who is the unique source of happiness and peace among men. The year 1978 is a great gift of the Lord to each of us, and its greatest value is the opportunity it gives us to abandon the paths of pretense and synthetic happiness, to lay aside masks of merriment which we use to hide our emptiness, and to seek Him who alone gives peace and joy to the restless heart.

Perhaps our present energy and economic crises will slow us down enough to make us more reflective on how we have been using His gift of days and years — that precious commodity of time. A great spiritual writer once commented on its value: "He who is so liberal in all of His other gifts to us, shows us by the wise economy of His Providence how careful we should be in the management of time. He never gives us two moments together."

I pray that this will be a year worthy of the Lord's blessings as we fill in the blank pages of our diary with words and deeds and events that will add up to a Happy New Year.

Insights in Liturgy

What Is A Homily?

By FATHER ROBERT KENNEDY

One of the results of the liturgical changes that have occurred over the past 14 years is a vocabulary list of new words and descriptions. We speak of "celebrating the liturgy" rather than "attending Mass," of the Eucharistic Prayer rather than the Canon, and of "liturgical ministers," which, although restored from our tradition, had no place in the liturgy of our immediate past.

These, and most of the other "new" words of our list, have helped to recapture essential elements of our liturgical rite. It is true also of the use of "homily" instead of "sermon."

The root meaning of the word "homily" is simply "discourse" or "conversation," especially to or with an assembled group. Thus, a liturgical homily is a conversation with the assembly about the Word of God that has just been proclaimed and listened to. Originally, it was a kind of "fireside chat" given by the bishop of the local community, and that familiarity should be preserved.

The Word should be explained in the homily in such a way that the hearers can grasp its meaning more fully and are invited to take that Word into their hearts and lives. The homily then is biblical and pastoral, a

nourishing exhortation rather than a commentary.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (#35:2) describes the homily as the "proclamation of God's wonderful works in the history of salvation, that is, the mystery of Christ, which is made ever present and active within us." The homily opens up the dimensions of the mysteries of faith as they are celebrated in the liturgical year, and draws out the implications of these mysteries for daily Christian living, calling us to a deeper sharing in the risen life of Christ.

This means, then, that the purpose of the homily is to bring the assembled community into a saving encounter with Christ. Through the homily the listener comes face-to-face with Christ and is encouraged to respond with a deeper faith and a more fervent action. Thus, the homily is not merely the exegesis of scriptural or liturgical texts, nor is it merely a teaching or intellectual instruction. Like Jesus' own preaching, it is meant to touch the heart and call the hearer to continual conversion. The homilist wants the people to be more deeply committed to Christ and the gospel.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (#41) indicates that the homily "should develop some point of the readings or of another text from the Ordinary of the Mass of the day." Good homilies will always have

some measure of the following elements: (1) proclamation of God's Word and wonderful works; (2) catechesis: the exposition of what we believe, preferably in scriptural and liturgical terms rather than in classroom language; (3) mystagogy: the Christian Community is led to appreciate more fully the mystery which is unfolding in the liturgy; (4) commitment: the invitation to deeper love of Christ and fuller service to those in need is made.

The balance of these elements will vary from

week to week, depending on the readings provided and the needs of the community. It is important to note that the homily is "an integral part of the liturgy and a necessary source of the nourishment of the Christian life" (General Instruction #41). Homilies must, therefore, be given on Sundays, holy days of obligation, and at sacramental celebrations. They are strongly recommended at daily eucharists as well.

Next week we will discuss the value of good preaching in the Christian assembly

Regional Highlights

Southeast Region

The Southeast Region is now in the process of preparing amendments to, or comments about the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) proposal which calls for a liturgy director for each of the 10 diocesan regions.

Parish staffs or parish councils who may have questions or reservations to the proposal have been asked by the region to respond at this time. Remarks may be submitted to Father Richard Hart, regional coordinator, Guardian Angels parish, 2061 E. Henrietta Rd. (14623), regional

representatives to the DPC. Clement Bayer, 82 Oakland St. (14620), Samuel Gia ra, Monroe Community Hospital (14620), and John Kennedy, 191 Vassar St., (14607) or directly to the Diocesan Director of Liturgy, Father Robert Kennedy, 1150 Buffalo Rd (14624)

The February Regional Assembly has been scheduled for 7:30 p.m. on February 5 at Guardian Angels Church. The assembly will discuss Bishop Hogan's "Focus on the Year". All interested parties are welcome.

Bishop's Public Appointments

JANUARY

- 10 — Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, with Priests of the Diocese, St. Mary's Church, Canandaigua — 12:00 N.
12 — Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, Congregation of the Irish Christian Brothers, Bishop Kearney High School, 5:00 p.m.
13, 14, 15 — Charismatic Renewal Retreat, Notre Dame Retreat House, Canandaigua.
21 — Diocesan Pastoral Council Meeting, Sheraton Inn, Canandaigua — 11:00 a.m.
21 — Radio Message, Family Rosary Network — 7:00 p.m.
22 — Confirmation, St. Mary Our Mother Church, Horseheads — 3:00 p.m.
24 — Regional Coordinators Meeting, St. Mary's, Canandaigua — 10:30 a.m.
29 — Celebration of Eucharist and Homily, S.U.N.Y Catholic Community, Geneseo — 11:30 a.m.

COURIER-CALENDAR

- Kearney Parents — New Year's Eve buffet catered by Valley Echo at school, 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 31, followed by dancing until 1:30 a.m. Friends invited
Holy Ghost — New Year's Eve party at school hall, 220 Coldwater Rd. begins at 8:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 31, with open salad bar, dinner at 10, dancing until breakfast, 1:30 a.m. Tickets through 594-4616
St. Augustine's — New Year's Eve gala sponsored by Parish Life Committee, 9:30 p.m. buffet Saturday, Dec. 31, dancing, breakfast. Reservations with John and Sheila Palmer, 235-0560. Larry and Kathy Aman, 436-2439
80th Seton — Holiday party Friday, Dec. 30, at home of Mr. and Mrs. Paul Miller, Brooklea Drive
Catholic Kolping Society — Christmas Mass in German, 3 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 8, St. Anne's Church, 1600 Mt. Hope
Rochester Community Players — The King and I, 11 performances between Jan. 1 and 15, Harley School's Wilson Arts Center, plus champagne opening Dec. 31. Box office, 473-4320, open noon to 5 p.m.
Classic Film Series — Loretta Young, Joseph Cotton, Ethel Barrymore in The Farmer's Daughter, 2 and 8 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 5, Rochester Museum
Strasburgh Planetarium — The Sky This Month, 7 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 5, Star of Christmas, through Jan. 8. Box office 244-6060, ext. 56
Seniors' Matinee — Intermezzo, 1939 drama starring Leslie Howard, Ingrid Bergman, 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 5, Dryden Theatre Eastman House
Memorial Art Gallery — Illustrated lecture on Iran by John B. Christopher, history professor at U. of R., 8 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 3. Free
Irondequoit Squares — Instruction in square dancing starts Thursday, Jan. 5, Brighton Reformed Church, 805 Blossom Rd. Information: Bob Cunningham, 624-3039



1,000 Toys

More than 1,000 toys were distributed this year to the Hillside Children's Center, the Lewis Street Center and the Al Sigi Center by the People's Cable TV corporation. This is the first year for the project. Above are (back row) Peter Prozeller of the Al Sigi Center and Bruce Ferguson of People's Cable TV; (front row) Paula Barton, Pinny Cooke, Tara Puht and Ingrid Hanson of the Al Sigi Center.