

Liturgy Week Slated in Boston

"Self and Society: Recovery of Visions" will be the theme for this year's annual North American Liturgical Week, Aug. 7-10 at Boston University.

The program, sponsored by the Liturgical Conference, is designed for parish liturgy committees, clergy, musicians,

educators, seminarians, artists and pastoral counselors of all denominations." And "includes presentations on various dimensions of the theme, seminars exploring how these dimensions weave through aspects of church life, small groups, impromptu discussions and participant feedback," according to a

news release.

Featured speakers for the event include Max Thurian, Mary Collins, Bryan Hehir, Robert Hovda, Robley Whitson and Virginia Sloyan.

For further information interested persons may contact Liturgical Week 1978, Box 231, Boston University Station, Boston, Ma. 02215.

Insights in Liturgy

The Communion

Rite, Part I:

The Meal

By DAVID E. NOWAK

While the entire Mass is a "communion rite" in its truest and most fundamental sense, that part of the eucharist which begins with the Lord's Prayer and concludes with the Prayer After Communion can be seen as the heart and climax of the entire eucharistic liturgy. Many of our attitudes about the mystery of the eucharist and the mystery of the Church which gathers to celebrate it, are most clearly expressed in the Communion Rite of the Mass.

Since the Second Vatican Council a renewed emphasis upon the eucharist as a meal has emerged. Although many contemporary adult Catholics view the eucharist solely as a sacrificial offering, representing Christ's atoning sacrifice for the world's sin, the Church has made continual efforts to

clarify and broaden our appreciation of the eucharist as both the memorial of our Lord's death and resurrection, and a meal.

Today, beyond the narrowing perception of the eucharist in solely sacrificial terms, we have the opportunity to reintegrate the significance of a festive meal into our commemoration of the eucharistic mystery.

In the past, several circumstances led to the suppression of the "meal" dimension. Most important among these was the growing separation of the clergy from the laity, and the consequent loss of awareness of the Church as primarily the gathering of a people into holy fellowship.

Further, in our reverence for eucharistic presence as an objective fact, we gradually lost a sense of eucharistic presence for the sake of eucharistic communion.

Clearly, once the concept of holy fellowship,

or "holy communion," shifted from the prayer activity of all the people to an unapproachable wafer, safely locked away and revered from afar, it was unavoidable that the symbolism of a shared meal would also shrivel.

Nevertheless, the Church is insisting once again that without a fully developed communion action the eucharist is an impoverished rite. And the fundamental structure of the eucharist which comes to its fullest expression in the communion rite is a ritualized meal.

It is under the sign of a meager meal of bread and wine shared among those who come to the Lord's table in the spirit of faith and great hope that we are caught up in the selfgiving of Jesus.

The Mass is a sequence of ritual actions which culminates in the communion of the body of Christ, the Church. Those who eat and drink become what they eat. The great mystery we share, in the words of St. Augustine, "is your own mystery... it is to what you are that you reply Amen." (Sermon 272).

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

Prayer Is Antidote To Fear

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 10:26-33. (R1) Jer. 20:10-13. (R2) Rom. 5:12-15.

One feeling that peeps out of the first and third readings of next Sunday's liturgy is that of "white fear." Jeremiah speaks of "terror on every side." Three times Jesus says, "Do not be afraid." The question here is not of fear in general, but the particular fear a Christian feels at the moment he must confess his faith. A fear that tempts him to keep quiet.

Jesus did not say there will be no reason to fear. On the contrary, He spoke of persecutions, even of murder — both very good reasons to fear.

Such fear is understandable, but what Jesus meant is not to let fear keep us from making public proclamation of our faith. Since the "good

news" can be known only by our witness, Jesus urged his apostles (then and now) never to let fear keep us from doing our duty. "Speak (the 'good news') in the light, He said. Proclaim it from the housetops. Do not fear those who deprive the body of life."

When I reflected on Jesus' words, "Nothing is concealed that will not be revealed, and nothing hidden that will not become known," I thought of Corrie ten Boom and St. Maximilian Kolbe. How careful the Nazi lackeys were to hide the atrocities in their concentration camps. Yet it all came out. Corrie ten Boom lived to write *The Hiding Place*, in which are revealed the horrors of Ravensbruck. Father Maximilian Kolbe, who died at Oswiecim, was canonized a saint, which necessitated searching and researching every detail of his life.

They, and we, have had the beautiful example of Jeremiah to emulate. Jeremiah was missioned by God to preach. This involved challenging and accusing kings, priests, false prophets and the whole nation. All were guilty of forsaking God, turning to sins, especially against social justice

The hostile reactions to Jeremiah's challenges and accusations were constant and painful for him. Jeremiah would have preferred to preach a message of peace, a message acceptable to his hearers. As a man of God, he could not ignore the sinfulness of his people and the divine compulsion to denounce it. As a man, he was torn apart by the role he was compelled to play as a "trouble-maker," a prophet of gloom and doom.

In trying to live the mission God had sent him on, Jeremiah experienced fear and deep despair. But he rose above it by prayer — prayer that was honest and simple (R1).

Today we are called, like Jeremiah, to stand up and be counted. Those who espouse the side of the Church on abortion, artificial contraception, divorce, pornography, homosexuality, invite taunts and insults not unlike those suffered by Jeremiah. "For your sake I bear insult and shame covers my face."

The antidote to this fear of human opinion is the same one Jeremiah used: prayer. "I pray to you, O Lord," said Jeremiah. The Lord answered him. He will answer us too, for are we not of much more value than the sparrows for whom He also cares?

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