

Insights In Liturgy

By FATHER
BENEDICTEHMANN

Fathers Of the Church

"It is a good rule, after reading a new book, never to allow yourself another new one till you have read an old one in between. If that is too much for you, you should at least read one old one to every three new ones."

C.S. Lewis, that wise Oxford don, gives this advice in an introduction he was invited to write for a new translation of Saint Athanasius's "The Incarnation of the Word of God." The old books he would be particularly recommending to our notice are obviously the writings of those men—Athanasius and many others—who are known as "The Fathers of the Church." And these are really old—genuine antiques. As with antiques in arts and crafts, they are precious. They deserve a good "market" in our Christian community.

Our liturgy has much to do with them. Most of these "Fathers" are on the Calendar of the Saints, and their memorials are kept evergreen during the Church Year. It is especially in the daily Liturgy of the Hours when they are given their turn

center stage, in the Second Lesson from the Office of Readings: nine out of ten times it is one of them the Church has us hear.

This is where I have gotten to know and love the "Fathers" so well. Their style, wisdom and marvellous insight into the Scriptures are a daily refreshment of the spirit.

Unless one is conversant in Latin or Greek, one has to rely on the available translations. Don't struggle with poor or archaic ones. Such will only make you give up and turn you against the "Fathers." A prime exhibit here could be "The Confessions of St. Augustine," of which there are more than a dozen translations into English—some of them archaic now, like the century-old Pusey, others quite freshly modern, like the Rex Warner, which conveys the nobility of Augustine's style in the idiom of today.

Let's show you who these "Fathers of the Church" are. In the Apostolic Age, Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp; in the second century, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria; third century, Origen, Cyprian, Hippolytus; fourth century, (the "golden age"), Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, Basil, Gregory Naziazen, Gregory of Nyssa, Eusebius, John

Chrysostom, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome; fifth century, Pope St. Leo the Great, Cassian; sixth century, Pope St. Gregory the Great; seventh century, Isidore of Saville, the Venerable Bede; eighth century, John Damascene (last of the Greek Fathers.)

This span of eight centuries is, by consensus of Church scholars, the age of the "Fathers." Yet, four centuries later, there arose another luminary of such brightness that he too is named in the great honor roll: Bernard of Clairvaux.

Contemporary with all these is a host of lesser names venerated for their valuable witness to Christian doctrine. Add these to the imposing list of the great ones named above and you find how impressive is the array of Christian wisdom and scholarship, like Olympic runners carrying the flame of the Gospel down the centuries.

Lewis urges us not to be scared away, as if these great men were "over our heads." More often than not, it's just the opposite. They are simple and delightful. For a starter, try "The Confessions of St. Augustine" in the Rex Warner translation (Mentor Classics paperback). May you have happy voyaging with the "Fathers," and make good discoveries, like Columbus.

Rectory Burglarized

Addison — St. Catherine's Rectory was the scene of a break-in Thursday, July 6. Stolen was more than \$400 in cash and sterling silverware.

rectory, home of Father pastor, doing damage in every Francis J. Erb, St. Catherine's room.

Steuben County Sheriff's deputies reported that the burglar apparently gained entrance to the rectory by digging a hole in a stone wall into the basement. He was seen exiting through a front window of the rectory, and is believed to be a male in his late teens.

The burglar ransacked the

Festival Aug. 6

Rexville—St. Mary's Church's annual chicken barbecue and festival will be Sunday, Aug. 6, beginning at noon on the church grounds. There will be a sale of hand-made items.



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Jack Nicklaus Golf Clinic & Exhibition

Monday, August 14 — Bristol Harbour Golf Club
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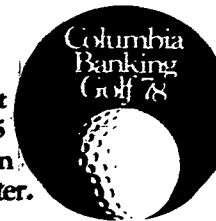
On Monday, August 14, Jack Nicklaus will appear in person at Canandaigua's Bristol Harbour Golf Club. At 10:45 AM he'll conduct a special golf clinic, followed at 12:30 PM by 18 holes of exhibition play with host pro Brian Connelly, LPGA touring pro Cathy Morse, and Bristol Harbour club champion Jim Kuntz.

Tickets are \$10 in advance, \$15 at the gate.

Advance tickets are available now at all Columbia Banking offices, most area pro shops, and directly through the American Heart Association's Finger Lakes Chapter (191 Parrish St., Canandaigua, N.Y. 14424). For further information, call (716) 394-1240.



In the event of unplayable conditions, the event will be postponed until Tues., Aug. 15 at 10:45 AM. All net proceeds benefit the American Heart Association's Finger Lakes Chapter.



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