

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

Separation Of Church And State

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 22:15-21. (R1) Is. 45:1, 4-6. (R2) I Thes. 1:1-5.

One cliché that gets my dander up is the much misunderstood one of "Separation of Church and State," oft-quoted to torpedo any aid to non-government schools. I wonder if those who use this hackneyed phrase know where and how it originated.

It did not begin in America, to be sure.

It originated in Europe, believe it or not, as a reaction to the teachings of Martin Luther. Luther's revolt against the Catholic Church provided for nobles and princes the occasion to loot the

Church and to eliminate this great obstacle to their absolute power. It also occasioned the Peasants' Revolt (1525), which was mercilessly repressed with Luther's approbation. It ignited religious wars, somewhat like that in Northern Ireland. To get peace, Lutheran princes at the Diet of Speyer (1526) were strong enough to insist that each prince be allowed to determine what religion would prevail in his territory. In the international language of that day, Latin, their formula for peace was *cuius regio, eius religio* ("whose region, his religion").

At a Second Diet of Speyer (1529), the Catholic majority saw this principle as destructive of religious liberty and so rejected it. The Lutheran minority, however, protested and from this action originated the term "Protestants." The Lutherans finally won out at the Peace of Augsburg (1555). As a

result, subjects had to believe what their rulers believed. Those in Scandinavia had to embrace Lutheranism; those in Spain, Catholicism; those in England, Anglicanism.

Later, a group of Protestants called Puritans revolted against this quashing of their religious liberty. So in 1620 they came to America to be able to worship God as they saw fit.

In 1789 when our Founding Fathers drafted the Constitution the first thing they wanted to guarantee was that there be no State Church here as there was in Europe. The Congregationalists of New England, for instance, didn't want the Episcopalians of New York imposing their Church on the 13 colonies; and the Episcopalians felt the same toward the Congregationalists, and so on, throughout all 13 colonies. They wanted no Government Church, as in England or Scandinavia. So in the very first amendment they wrote: "Congress shall make no

law respecting the establishment of religion" — no Government Church! But lest this be interpreted as being anti-religion, the amendment concluded: "Nor shall Congress make any law prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

The First Amendment never, never envisioned a separation of God and Government, or religion and country. Such an interpretation has been the unsavory product of a liberal, Freudian Supreme Court — concocted within the last 25 years.

Our Founding Fathers knew that politics without religion spawns tyranny, totalitarianism and dictatorship; that politicians without religion become Hitlers or worse.

"Give to Caesar what is Caesar's" — of course! Let man give to government its due! But "Give to God what is God's" — by all means! Let government give to God His due! History is littered with nations that have reneged on this obligation!



Fr. Shamon

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THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

"As Seasons Change . . ."

By Ed Sulowski

We have all watched the seasons change year after year — and yet, each time, we are able to appreciate the beauty as though we had never seen it before. Fall — with its brilliant colors, crisp days and promise of winter, a resting period for all life. We become accustomed to the unfolding of each year — and it becomes a part of a natural life process that we expect to continue forever. And life does continue — in many forms. But perhaps a life that you loved best, that was very dear to you, has ended — and you feel the emptiness that comes with that loss. You know that you are not alone; that there are many who have experienced a similar grief that they once felt was unbearable. And the time will come when you, too, can pick up the pieces and take up your own life again. Making yourself aware of nature — its beauty and its continuance — can be a comfort during a time of great sadness. Enjoy fall — share its beauty with someone who may need your help or comfort. Helping someone else is one of the best ways to help yourself.

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On The Right Side

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

Learning Together Is Good

Letter from a parent:

We would like to tell you how much we enjoy your columns in the



Fr. Cuddy

Catholic Courier. We have a large family, by today's standards, and have been blessed with healthy and good kids. They do not have to be forced to go to Mass, as so many parents complain about today. They go on their own because they want to; but the Church today has become a confusing place for the young people as well as the adults.

We have not been happy with the CCD courses in our parish for the past few years. The kids went with no arguments, but there was no enthusiasm. This year we gave them a choice either of attending CCD or having our own religion classes here at home. They all elected to have them at home. We have had some very beautiful discussions. We have gone back to the basics of our Faith, the Ten Commandments, the Sacraments, the meaning of each part of the Mass. We have come to know what our Faith means to each one of us as an individual and to our family as a whole. We haven't set

any special night or time for this, and we found that usually two or three evenings a week someone will say "Let's read the Bible."

There are so many conflicts in the Church today, among priests, Sisters and the parishioners. We know that in the years to come the Church will emerge a stronger one but in the meantime, as a family we're going to hold on to our Faith. We don't want our children to get lost in the shuffle.

We have heard so much about Bishop Sheen's tapes, that we would like to have them to listen to and discuss. We would like to have you send us the one from Gary, Indiana. We have managed to save up enough for one set now, and later we will also get the one from Washington, D.C. Enclosed is a check for \$21. I understand they cost \$20.30. Please put the change in the poor box. Thank you and God bless you.

Grateful reply:

Thank you for your inspiring letter. Every once in a while some such letter comes this way to remind us that the Faith is being held with firmness and enthusiasm by people who are not lusting to take over the staff of the Bishop and his chancery.

God bless you for being conscientious and evidently successful parents. I quite like your method of learning

together. It certainly has the blessing of Vatican II. CCD at best must be superficial, and the lacunas in our children's knowledge are disheartening. I wish every parent and grandparent of children 16 years old and younger would ask them to recite the Act of Contrition, and the ordinary prayers. The superficiality of CCD is hardly the fault of the CCD directors or program, but the niggardly amount of time given to study of religion in a once-a-week, 40-minute program. If English and math and science were given such little time, parents would be picketing the Boards of Education in protest. Strange priorities.

The Sheen conferences you will find an inspiration. I am enclosing a bonus: 1) Mother Teresa of Calcutta — her talk at Notre Dame College, Baltimore, Md., with an exciting question period afterward; and 2) The Mass of St. Francis, sung by 100 children of Cork, Ireland. It is beautiful and edifying.

It is a privilege to add you to a list of friends whom I cherish. Thank you for this fine introduction.

The Gary, Indiana Sheen conferences have gone up to \$25, plus 60 cents postage. Mother Teresa, \$3.50 plus 35 cents postage. Treasury of Prayers booklet: four for \$1. You can get them by writing to me at Holy Trinity Church, 1460 Ridge Road, Webster, N.Y. 14580 (Phone 265-1616).

NCCW Plans Challenge

During the coming year, the National Council of Catholic Women plans to challenge the government funding of Planned Parenthood for education for family life and sexual values, its general assembly announced here.

In resolutions adopted at the group's national convention, the NCCW pledged, as an alternative, to support

programs offering an appreciation of Christian values in family life.

The NCCW continued its opposition to Equal Rights Amendment but affirmed its commitment to equality for women. The group also called for service of "women to women" in meeting special crises of battered women, the displaced homemaker, and disadvantaged young women.

Seton Sale

A special Seton Sale to benefit the neuro-science center at St. Mary's Hospital is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 28, at the Otto Shults Center at Nazareth College.

Handcrafted items, dried flower arrangements, baked goods, holiday decorations, plants, flea Market and gifts will feature the sale.

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