

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

Real Failure Is Failure To Try

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 25:14-30. (R1) Prv. 31:10-13, 19-20, 20-31. (R2) 1 Thes. 5:1-16.

As the Church Year winds down to a close, we are being constantly and urgently reminded to use our time, our talents. The day of the Lord is coming like a thief... let us not be asleep... but wake and sober. (R2) Why? Because after a long absence the Master comes and settles accounts with us. "It is appointed that men die



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once, and after death be judged." (Hebr. 9:27) This is the particular judgment.

This Judgment lies not in the future, but in the present. Jesus said "Now has judgment come upon this world." (Jn. 12:31) Since Jesus has come, we know what we have to do. And what we do with our lives determines the judgment—our rise or fall.

Some Catholics live good lives but fear death, because they fear the Judgment. "What dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil gives us pause." Yet they need not feel that way. The gospel makes it clear that the only one who failed the Judgment was the man who didn't try.

So the first question of life is this: "Do we try?" Are we trying to make the best use of God's gifts to

us? He has given us life, personality, freedom within and without, His life, the Holy Spirit, plus countless natural talents and abilities. Different, of course, for each — yet all of us are talented! What are we doing with our talents for God, for the Kingdom? Are we building up the Church? Is it true that the Communists have the zeal, but not the truth; whereas we have the truth, but not the zeal?

Can this be so because we are afraid of risk? Of failure? God wants us to take chances. Life is a gamble. We may fail, so what? The just man falls seven times a day. God has given us ways and means to recoup our losses.

Scripture is filled not only with the triumphs, but also with the mistakes of God's people. David kills Goliath, but is overcome by Bathsheba. To teach us that we can pick up the pieces and rise to greater achievements.

Invariably, we learn more from our mistakes than from our successes.

The five-talented man in the gospel went right ahead, risked everything, invested, worked hard and doubled his talents.

But the one-talented man risked nothing. Frozen with fear, he did nothing and became a good-for-nothing. The little he had, he lost. For loss is the penalty of neglect; the reward of exercise is growth.

Does fear of failure paralyze us? Or wrong thinking, like "What can I do?" Or, "I have no talents." We are all endowed and greatly! We can't do everything, but we can do something. We may not have the talents of others, but others do not have our talents. We may make mistakes. We may fail. But these God will forgive. Only one thing He will not forgive — our burying our talents, our not trying.


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All in the Family

By Sarah Child

No Cabbages Or Kings

About anniversaries, newspaper strikes and the weather of Virginia...



We are celebrating our fifteenth wedding anniversary. Ten years ago when I first started writing this column I remember doing a piece on our fifth. I can't recall what I wrote now except to say that my husband was my best friend. He still is. I'd hate to think what those 15 would have been like if he weren't.

The New York Times is back on the scene after the three month strike. The first issue off the presses didn't make it to Upstate New York but we had two copies of the second, his and hers. I am happy, I think, to report that garbage is still a number one topic and that skirts shown in recent spring collections are just below the knee, just above the knee and thigh high. It is comforting also to learn that "Volunteer Firefighters Flourish in Long Island Communities" and Idi Amin of Uganda is

celebrating the birth of his 34th child.

For years I've been threatening to move to Virginia in order to enjoy mild winters. This fall Virginia came here or at least its weather did and I'd happily settle for three more months of the same.

If for some reason you are not an apple eater this may be the year to become one. The apple growers tell us that they have never had a better crop or a more delicious one. We have to agree at our house. We already worked our way through several varieties. And we have come to the same old standoff. The head of the house insists McCoun is the best. I think it's the Mutsu (a cross between a Japanese strain and Golden Delicious.)

The beech tree at the far end of the yard is completely bare now but there's a bright side. We can once again see the row of boulders underneath, a favorite spot for the pheasants to sun themselves.

It might not be nice to fool Mother Nature but it is possible. At the side of the house a Gloriosa daisy is in full bloom after a two month hiatus and on the other side one perfect pink Hollyhock rose from the bush already cut back for the winter.

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Villa Alumni

The new St. Joseph's Villa Alumni Association will meet at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 6, at the villa, 3300 Dewey Ave. Membership is open to former residents of the villa and the institutions which preceded it — St. Joseph's Home, St. Patrick's Girls'

Home and St. Mary's Boys' Home. Formation of the group was an outgrowth of a September reunion. Benjamin Lucitti is president; Jon Wohlrab, vice president; Pat Du Rocher, treasurer, and Connie Knoefler Schmeer, secretary.