

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

God Wants Each to Do His Best

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Lk. 1:57-66. (R1) Is. 49:1-6. (R2) Acts 13:22-26.

Today's liturgy is a celebration of life: the birthday of John the Baptist. St. Luke in his gospel portrays the contrasts in the infancy stories of Jesus and John so deftly that word got around that Luke was a painter.

John's birth is announced by Gabriel to Zecharias, a priest. The place is in the glory-filled Temple of Jerusalem. A full assembly of people are there. The hour is probably the solemn one of the evening sacrifice. Zecharias disbelieves the

angel, and a sign is given him: Zecharias is struck dumb.

The same Gabriel announces the birth of Jesus—but to a virgin Mary. The place is in the offbeat village of Nazareth. She is alone. The hour, we do not know. Mary believes the angel, and a sign is given her: Elizabeth has conceived a son in her old age.

Mary visits Elizabeth and sings the great canticle, the Magnificat. At the birth of John, Zecharias also sings a canticle, the Benedictus.

John's birth is celebrated June 24, six months before the birth of Jesus, Dec. 25. After June 24, the days decrease; after Dec. 25, the days increase. "I must decrease, he must increase."

All of Elizabeth's neighbors and relatives celebrate John's birth. The birth of Jesus is the reverse, hidden and obscure while the night was in the middle of its course.

John, by rights, should have taken his place as a priest in the Temple, being the son of a priest. But when Zecharias agreed to name him John, he was accepting the new era of salvation. It was then that Zecharias was able to speak, to typify that Israel, which had been "dumb" for ages because without a prophet, now had one who would speak the word of the Lord. To indicate this break, John lived, not in the Temple, but in the desert, perhaps with the Essenes of Qumran, "until the day when he made his public appearance in Israel."

Jesus, on the contrary, was taken to the Temple. Then He went with Mary and Joseph to Nazareth where He "grew in size and strength, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him."

Every night on the Tonight Show, Johnny Carson does not just appear. Rather, he is introduced by Ed McMahon with what has become a classic introduction: "And he-e-e is Johnny!" When Johnny appears, Ed recedes into the background and Johnny takes over.

That was the role of John

the Baptizer: to introduce Jesus to the people of God and then disappear. John did just that and no more. Nor did he allow people to force him to be what he was not.

He never sought anything for himself. When the time came, he let his disciples go to Jesus—decreasing that Jesus might increase. In the end he died obscurely in a dark corner of a dungeon cell, in sharp contrast, once more, with Jesus, who died in public before the cheap gaze of an entire city.

One of the tragedies of modern life is that so many people try to do more than they can do, or to be more than they are. Tensions, frustrations, irritability, failures result.

All God wants each to do is his best. As a mother told her Olympic daughter after she had lost in gymnastics, "Doing your best is more important than being the best."

As John was not diminished in deferring to Christ, neither shall we be in being only what He desires us to be and doing all we can with what talent we have—doing our best.

On the Right Side

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

Retreatants Raise Questions

In May I gave two retreats: one to the Catholic Daughters of the diocese at Stella Maris Retreat House in Skaneateles; the other for the Women's Retreat League of the Southern Tier (Elmira-Corning area) at Villa Maria, Mt. Pocono. During a question period, both groups indicated the same thing: an uneasiness at the contradictions in teaching and practice in their particular parishes. Here are a few questions.

How do I explain to my children that the general Penance services conducted by our pastor at the Catholic school they attend are contrary to the directives of the Pope? How do I convince my pastor not to undermine the Pope's authority, and mine, with my children?

I'm a bit surprised. I know your pastor, and he is a fine priest. Sometimes, agitating and agitated members of a parish staff wear down a pastor's will to follow the guidelines of the Church. One mother told me, "How do you expect our teenagers to obey the Church and civil laws when you priests disobey them yourselves?" The only answer I know is to follow the Holy Father. American bishops usually give guidelines and follow his directives. Perhaps it would be good to tell the children that the General Absolution is a holy service, but you train them yourself to make private confessions. Few children from 7 to 17 that I know, know how to make a private confession very well.

Now that the Holy Father

has spoken, do you believe that our Sisters will return to a simple and uniform habit?

No. What is your feeling on the breaking of the host when the priest says, "He took the bread and broke..."

When I first observed this being done it did seem logical, albeit not in accord with the liturgical directions. However, most liturgical directions are logical. In May, Father Benedict Ehmann, a good liturgist and musician, sent a kind of blockbuster, through the Office of Liturgy, entitled The Breaking of the Bread. After expressing the wan hope that priests who do violate the directions do not realize what they do, he explained: "Not to break the bread at the proper moment before the Communion but instead to break it during the Consecration narrative is a serious dislocation... Strictly, the 'Breaking of the Bread' belongs to the Communion Rite of the Mass, and should not take place during the Eucharistic

Prayer, even though the words of institution declare that Jesus 'broke the bread.' They also say at that point that Jesus 'gave it to his disciples,' yet we do not for that reason proceed immediately to give it in Communion, suiting the action to the words. If we are to break the bread at this point, why not be consistent and give it in Communion right away?...

"Besides keeping the Breaking of the Bread where it rightfully belongs, there is as urgent a need for all priests to perform it as effectively as they can, making it conspicuous and deliberate enough for the people to see it. It is a powerful sign of the two profound realities in the Eucharist: Unity and Sacrifice..."

Would you please explain the Magisterium of the Church and infallibility?

Writing in the Courier-Journal May 23 (p. 18), Father Ehmann gave a fine article entitled The Gospel and the Gospels. He includes this: "Once the Gospels were written, the Gospel preaching continued. The written Gospels were never intended to take the place of the Gospel proclaimed. The evangelical Message is to

continue alive in the mouth of the Church. This is what we call the Magisterium. It is the ongoing preaching, teaching, clarifying, defining, carried on by the Popes and Councils, by the great Fathers and Doctors of the Church. It is the great stream of Tradition—equally important as the Scripture in the life of the Church. In fact, it includes the Scripture."

Bishop Austin Vaughan, rector of Dunwoodie Seminary, has a fine talk on cassette, entitled The Seminaries and the Magisterium. It was given to 300 priests in Baltimore, and outlines the problems from our seminaries throughout the country from contesting the Magisterium by certain influential theologians. If you want a copy, send \$3 to me at Holy Trinity Church, 1460 Ridge Road, Webster, N.Y. 14580.

Business In the Diocese

Tampa, Fla. — Rudolph E. Koletic, vice president for business and finance at St. John Fisher College for the past 11 years, has been appointed vice president for business affairs at the University of Tampa, effective Aug. 1.

An active member of the Small College Committee of the National Association of College and University Business Officers, Koletic won an Exxon Education Foundation administrative leave grant during 1977-78 to study on site about 20 colleges undergoing change.

He is a member of the Finance Policy Advisory Committee for the Rochester Catholic Diocese. He is married and the father of four children.

William E. Lee, chairman of the board of Sibley, Lindsay & Curr, has been elected chairman of the executive committee of Security Trust Company of Rochester.

Lee recently relinquished his post as Sibley's chief executive officer to Dennis Booksheter, president of the company since 1977.

In 12 years in Rochester, Lee has placed himself in the forefront of civic affairs. He serves as a director of Highland Hospital, the George Eastman House, Rochester Museum and Science Center, Rochester Downtown Development Corporation and the Center for Governmental Research.

Organists Graduate

Eleven organists serving Rochester area churches have received Certificates of Attainment from the Eastman School of Music in recognition of completing four semesters of study in the school's Organist Training Program. The program, administered through the Eastman Preparatory Department, is designed specifically for the church organist and has received the support of the Diocese of Rochester.

Certificates were presented during the department's recent commencement exercises. Four of the recipients, from diocesan parishes, are: Jean Martin, Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Brockport; Vincent Parks, Church of the Holy Spirit,

Webster; Lloyd Peasley, St. Augustine's, Rochester; Rosemarie Warcup, St. Jude the Apostle, Gates.

all aboard! ARCADE & ATTICA STEAM RAILROAD. An exciting and memorable 1 1/2 hour scenic ride.

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Class Reunion

The class of 1969 at Cardinal Mooney High School will celebrate its 10 year reunion on July 14, at the Party House 677 Beahan Road beginning at 6:30 p.m.

SAINT MONICA'S SCHOOL... A STORY OF LOVE

SAINT MONICA'S SCHOOL TEN YEARS AGO. We were just about out of money. Many believed that Saint Monica's would have to close its doors forever. All we had left was hope.

SAINT MONICA'S SCHOOL FIVE YEARS AGO. More dark days. Seven more Catholic school in Rochester's central city closed. Hundreds and hundreds of children would never see the inside of a Catholic school again. Would Saint Monica's be the next to close?

SAINT MONICA'S SCHOOL 1975-1979. We were desperately short of funds. What happened? Parents and friends contributed over 10,000 hours of fund raising efforts. Alumni rallied to the support of their alma mater. We needed massive repairs on the school's roof, but we had no way to pay for them. So, friends and supporters made \$12,000 worth of repairs — at no charge. We still couldn't balance our budget. So, parents (even the poorest of the poor) agreed to make even more financial sacrifices for their school. And, people throughout Upstate New York, people we've never met, have helped up through their financial support and their prayers. All of our hopes were met by a beautiful outpouring of love.

SAINT MONICA'S SCHOOL FEBRUARY 26, 1979. Parish and school leaders decided that Saint Monica's School would remain open. Not just for a year or two, but indefinitely. Truly, the outpouring of love we had seen was the work of the Holy Spirit. It could not be ignored.

TODAY. We are trying to serve more poor, but deserving, students. Students whose families find themselves in real poverty through no fault of their own.

Will you join us in our efforts? Your contribution to our CATHOLIC EDUCATION FUND, large or small, will help make it possible for Saint Monica's to bring Catholic education — and God's love — to more deserving children next year.

Sister Clare Francis Mogenhan Saint Monica's School 841 Genesee Street Rochester, N.Y. 14611

Dear Sister: I'd like to help. Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ to Saint Monica's CATHOLIC EDUCATION FUND.

(Your Name) _____

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Clip and mail to the address above. All gifts are tax deductible.

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Father Henry Adamski, Pastor
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27 Booths - Stuffed Animals - Plants

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Chicken Barbecue starting at 1 p.m.

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Pierogies

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Entertainment by Twin Tier Polka Tiers

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