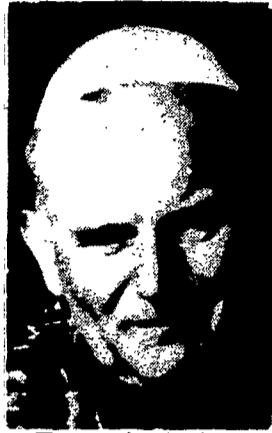


We Have the Answers Before Us

Following are excerpts from a homily given by Pope John Paul during a Mass he recently celebrated for a group of young people of Communion and Liberation.

We listened with deep veneration to the words which the liturgy of the Church dedicates to this Sunday (July 15). Now, it is necessary to stop for a little and accept these words, that is, adapt them to the hearts of the listeners. Adapt them to our lives. Here are some thoughts along these lines.



In the first place: who are we all, members of this assembly, listeners to the Word of God and, shortly, participants in the Body and Blood of the Lord?

The question, "Who am I?" conditions all other questions and all the answers concerning the subject of "What must I do?"

Today, in the letter to the Ephesians, St. Paul replies to the first and fundamental question. He replies: we are chosen by God in Christ Jesus.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved."

This is the answer that St. Paul gives us today to the question, "Who am I?"

He develops it in the other words of the same text of the letter to the Ephesians:

We are redeemed; we are brimming over with the forgiveness of sins and grace; we are called to union with Christ and consequently to unify everyone in Christ.

We are called to exist for the glory of Divine Majesty; we participate in the word of truth; in the Gospel of salvation; we are marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit; we are participants in the inheritance, while waiting for complete redemption, which will make us the property of God.

This is St. Paul's answer to our question. It gives us a lot to think about. Forgive me if I confine myself to making a few references. The words of the letter to the Ephesians cannot stop ringing after only one reading, after listening to them only once. They remain with us. They must continue with us. These are words in keeping with the whole of life. In keeping with eternity.

It would be a good thing if they could continue together with each of you during these weeks of summer rest. In whatever direction you turn: whether to some temporary commitment . . . or to apostolic work . . . Let these words go with you. The answer to the question "Who am I?"

May they mold and form your personality, inserted as we are, in the same root, in the dimension of the mystery, which Christ has imprinted on the life of each of us.

The sacrifice in which we participate, holy Mass, also gives us every time the answer to the fundamental question, "Who are we?"

What must we do?

The answer to this second question does not emerge, perhaps, from today's liturgy of the Divine Word, with the same forcefulness as the answer to the question

"Who are we?". But it, too, is strong and firm. God says to Amos: "Go, prophesy to my people!" (Amos 7:15)

Christ calls the Twelve and begins to send them out two by two (Mk6:7). And he bids them enter individual houses and thus bear witness. The second Vatican Council recalled that all Christians, not only ecclesiastics, but also laity, have their part in Christ's prophetic mission. There is no doubt about "what we must do."

The question, How are we to do it?, still remains, however, a topical one at present.

I am glad that you are looking for an answer to this question, both individually and together with your Community. He who looks for this answer finds it in due time.

The responsorial Psalm of today reassures us that "Mercy and truth will meet . . ." "Truth will spring from the earth."

Yes, truth must spring from each of us; from each heart.

Be faithful to truth; faithful to your vocation. faithful to your commitment; faithful to your choice.

Be faithful to Christ, who liberates and unites (communion and liberation).

Finally, a fervent wish for each of you and for all.

Like a ray of sunshine from today's liturgy, may the God of Our Lord Jesus Christ penetrate our hearts with his light to make us understand what the hope of our vocation is (cf. Ep 1:17-18).

May this wish come true through the intercession of Our Lady, before whom we have meditated on the Divine Word of today's liturgy, in order to be able to continue to carry out the eucharistic sacrifice.

More Opinions

Word Power

Editor:

Words can uplift or tear down; words can encourage or discourage; bring hope or lead to despair; bring sadness or bring joy; lead to self-esteem or lead to self-destruction; and we are responsible for the words we speak. Think, for example, in the beginning of time when two words were uttered by God - I AM. Think of the Word uttered by God that was wrapped in flesh and became the Incarnate Word. Think of the powerful words uttered by priests: at the time of baptism, the soul becomes one with Christ; at the time of Confession, the soul's sins are forgiven; at the time of Consecration, the Incarnate Word comes again and again in Holy Eucharist; at the time of Confirmation, the soul receives the grace of fortitude in a greater measure; at the time of Ordination, a man receives the indelible imprint of a priest forever; in the Sacrament of Marriage two people become one flesh; and at the time of illness, the sacrament of the sick brings health and peace.

Think of the words uttered by a mother which bring comfort to her children. The words of a father which bring strength and courage. The words of a brother or a sister which bring help. The words of a friend which bring support in the hour of need. The words of a teacher which bring knowledge. The words of a preacher which move hearts and bring reform.

mation. The words of prayer that move God.

Think of the words of a doctor - life or death. The words of a jury - relief or anguish. The words of a judge - a sentence. The words of a lover - earthly happiness. The kind word bringing peace; the gentle word - bringing relief. The understanding word - bringing comfort.

Then think of the words of evil that bring destruction. The embittered word that brings despair. The angry word that brings hatred. The obscene words that bring frustration and fill the mind with garbage. The careless word that hurts. The biased word that poisons. Think of the idle words that bring confusion. Think of the icy cold calculated word that injures and maims. Yes, words are powerful and we are all responsible for the way we use words . . . they are sacramental.

Ann Christoff
154 Crittenden Way
Rochester, N.Y. 14623

Help Those Starving

Editor:

I hope readers will consider helping people who may very soon be dead if they are not helped.

Catholic Relief Services provides help for people on the basis of need. A tax deductible, charitable contribution to it enables it to get tools, seeds and food to people who otherwise would die or be handicapped

throughout life by retardation, or blindness, etc., from malnutrition.

Each of us should ask himself or herself: Will I now be willing to help those people whose starvation I can prevent? Although in this life we may not know the names of those whose starvation we can stop, they are individual human beings, each with a name.

We can, for instance, volunteer to help in a fund-raising project; we can send donations - for example, in honor of a family member or friend at that person's birthday, anniversary, etc.

Catholic Relief Services
address is 1011 First Ave.,
New York, N.Y. 10022.

Richard Byrd
Box 7628
St. Petersburg, Fla. 33734

More Data On Taiwan

Editor:

I am from Taiwan and would like to add a few words to the letter of Aug. 15, "Taiwan Control." I appreciate Mr. Strombeck's concern on the Taiwan issue, but there are some mistakes which I have to point out.

First, the term "Taiwanese" is very confusing. There are no ethnic differences or cultural differences among the people on Taiwan. But, if one talks about the "Native Taiwanese," things are very different. The native Taiwanese, the offspring of Malayo-Polynesians, total less than one percent of the entire population, not 16 million as mentioned in Mr. Strombeck's letter.

Second, Taiwan has belonged to the Chinese Empire since 1206 A.D., except for the period between 1895 and 1945, when it was occupied by the Japanese as a consequence of the Sino-Japan War of 1894.

Third, the election scheduled for Dec. 23, 1978 was not cancelled. It was simply postponed to this coming November, according to a Chinese official report.

In a congressional hearing on June 14, 1977, Burton Levin, director of the Republic of China Affairs of the Department of State, said:

"It is only in the past 25 years that the Republic of China (Taiwan) has developed a regular pattern of elections. These are at the provincial, municipal, county and village levels. . . For the first time in China, elected local government has been instituted, and taken reasonably firm root. Western legal forms, based on continental European models, have been strengthened."

I hope your readers notice that:

• People on Taiwan have the best chance for education. More than 27 percent of the population is now enrolled in schools, nine years of free public education. There are 189 institutions of higher learning, including universities and colleges. Both the standard of living and the national economic growth are the highest in Asia other than Japan.

• People on Taiwan live in a free society. The political system becomes

more and more open. Taiwan has one of the highest political freedom indices among those Asian countries which are fighting against Communism. As Time magazine has stated, "Taiwan is one of the best-run and least corrupt countries in Asia."

• People on Taiwan need a strong government to

protect them from being attacked by Communist China. The present government seems to be the best one. Besides, the government is very well supported by the majority.

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Deaths

Mrs. Cloonan, Mother Of Priest and Sister

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated for Catherine A. Cloonan on Aug. 14, 1979, at St. Louis Church, Pittsford. Mrs. Cloonan was a St. Louis parishioner for 23 years. She died Aug. 11.

She was the widow of Michael Cloonan and the mother of the late Thomas Cloonan. Her surviving children are Capt. Joseph Cloonan, USN Ret., John Cloonan and Father Paul Cloonan; Mrs. Jerome (Margaret) Scheg, Sister Catherine Cloonan, SSJ, and Mrs. Lee (Anne) Jehlen.

There are 13 grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and a brother, Neil Murphy, as well as several nieces and nephews.

Father Cloonan, associate pastor of St. Patrick's in Victor, was principal concelebrant of the funeral Mass. Msgr. Richard K. Burns and Fathers Theophane Larkin and Donald Murphy joined him for prayers at the grave in Holy Sepulchre Cemetery. Bishop Dennis W. Hickey presided at Mass and gave the final absolution.

Peace Corps Fair Slated

Rochester's Peace Corps/VISTA recruiting office is trying to locate area volunteers who have served in the program, to participate in a Peace Corps/VISTA Fair, slated for Sept. 15.

Former volunteers who wish to display artifacts, clothing, slides or photographs from their time in service have been asked to call Dianne Scarborough, (716) 263-5896.

Perez Vega

The exhibit A Call to My People, paintings by Angel Luis Perez Vega, is on display at the Agueybana Gallery of the Puerto Rican Arts and Cultural Center, 946 Clifford Ave. Perez Vega, a 32-year-old native of Puerto Rico is president of the Comerio Cultural Center, and the Federation of Teachers there. He is also vice president of the Committee for the Day of Puerto Rican Nationhood.

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