



### Nursing Home Meeting

Sister Marie Michelle Peartree, administrator of St. Ann's Home and president of the State Association of Homes for the Aging, recently conducted a discussion meeting on professionalism in nursing homes at St. Ann's. Administrators and trustees representing all voluntary and non-profit homes in the Rochester region attended the meeting.

### Farewell Party

Newark — A Farewell party was given in honor of Father William M. Barrett recently at the Roundtown Motor Inn here. Father Barrett, who served as chaplain at the Newark Development Center for the past nine years, was named pastor of St. Monica's Parish on Sept. 12. Guests included his parents Mr. and Mrs. John F. Barrett and relatives and friends from the Newark Center, Clyde, Nor Rose, Phelps, Geneva, Hornell, and Newark.

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## Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamor

### We'd Better Travel Light

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mk. 10:17-30. (R1) Wis. 7:7-11. (R2) Heb. 4:12-13.

Jesus not only comforted the distressed, but He also distressed the comfortable. In the gospel story of the rich man, Jesus brought distress to a man who was comfortable, because rich and because he believed himself virtuous.

The man must have been a moral person, for he kept the commandments and Jesus had looked at him with love. Also, he must have surmised that Jesus was more than an ordinary teacher, because he used the title "Good Teacher." It was not customary to add the epithet "good" to the title Teacher. God alone is good. So Jesus asked, "Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone." It was as if Jesus were trying to clarify the rich man's suspicion. "You feel there is something divine in me, don't you?" Jesus was hinting. Regardless, the man was comfortable with himself and his lifestyle. Jesus, however, quickly distressed him by challenging him to sell all he had and give to the poor and follow Him. The man's face fell. He went away sad.

The rich man acted like most sinners. If a wife complains to her husband that he drinks too much, he will start defending himself. He will say, "I may have a drink or two before I come home, but I don't chase women. I earn a good living for you and the kids. I've put a good roof over your heads." And he will go on and on telling his wife all the good things he does. But he isn't willing to discuss with her the fact that he may be an alcoholic.

It's so true of most of us. Our good points we'll talk about, but our sins? Why the decline in going to confession? Like the rich

man we are eager to broadcast how good we are, but when confronted with our responsibilities — say to the poor, church support — our faces fall, we get sad, and we go away.

And that is the problem: we go away. We may go away sorrowful, but we go away. We go away sorrowful-but not sorry enough to change. We wrap ourselves in our virtues and refuse to face the sin or sins that may be our undoing.

If a person is to be made whole, he cannot hide behind his virtues — real or imaginary. He must face sin. Forgiveness must be found. Only then can life be begun again anew!

One of the obstacles blurring our vision of our sinfulness can be our possessions. The Latins called riches "impedimenta." "Impedimenta" is also the Latin word for the baggage of an army. An army too concerned about its supplies can lose the war. Hitler took over Europe by blitzkrieg — lightning war. His panzer divisions moved like lightning — the baggage came later. So riches, like army baggage, are necessary. But overconcern with possessions can impede the gaining of life eternal. Possessions were an impediment to the rich man's following Jesus.

This incident of the rich young man caused Peter to say, "We've left everything for you." The unspoken question was, "What are we going to get out of this?" St. Gregory remarked, "What did Peter leave — a rotting boat, a stinking net, and the drudgery of a fisherman's life?" Still, Peter left everything — all "riches." Jesus promised everlasting life in return.

"I prayed, and prudence was given me; I pleaded, and the spirit of Wisdom came to me" (R1). Shouldn't we so pray and plead? Don't we in a sensate, materialistic, secularistic culture need now more than ever the wisdom to deem riches as nothing and gold as sand that we may like Peter, win what no riches can buy — everlasting life?



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