

The Open Window

By Father Louis J. Hohman

The Lord Is Forgiving

Dear Father,

A few weeks ago our parish bulletin brought to the attention of the parish that they would be stressing abortion within the parish. I have not been able to go to Mass since this occurred.

Fr. Hohman I had an abortion about eight years ago. I still live with this on my conscience. At that time I felt I had no other choice. The pastor of the parish tried to discourage me, but after it was done, he helped me through the depression I was in. I began to live with it and returned to society feeling grateful that God was forgiving. I still live with this on my conscience. When the bulletin brought out this issue it all came back to me. My guilt returned and I went to a priest for a reconciliation. He refused to

allow the reconciliation to take place. I no longer have a church, and I am not sure I can live with that or face the people of my parish who are fighting this abortion problem. Is there anyone who can help me?

(Signed) K.L.

Dear K.L.,

Your situation is a good example of the sadness that attends the reality that once this particular event has taken place in a person's life there is no way one can wipe it out totally. But certainly that does not preclude forgiveness. The Lord is forgiving and there is no priest in the world who can stand in the way of that forgiveness.

I do not understand why you had to go to reconciliation a second time. Or had you not gone there in the first place years ago? If the latter is the case then I would suggest you go to another priest. On the condition that you are sorry for the sin of eight years ago (and it seems abundantly

clear that you are) then there is nothing standing in the way of your forgiveness. It is not true to say that you no longer have a church, since the church basically is the assembly of the people of God and you are not outside that assembly. There is no reason in the world for you to live as an ostracized person.

The thing we need to know about Christian forgiveness is that God does not want to look at the past. The past is valuable only in terms of our being able to learn from it and grow from it, but in terms of its sinfulness God does not want us to be there. He wants us to accept His forgiveness and His love and to be what we can be in the days and years ahead. The story of the Prodigal Son makes this very clear and there should be no doubt in our minds that this is the mode of Christian forgiveness. You cannot be asked to carry a burden which you have long since repented of. I am certain you will find a priest who will be the instrument of bringing the healing power of the Lord Jesus to your heart and soul and bring you a true spirit and feeling of reconciliation with the people of God.

St. Anne's Notes 50 Years

St. Anne's Parish in Rochester will observe the beginning of its Golden Jubilee Year on Saturday, Feb. 9, with a Mass at 7:30 p.m. During that evening, the parish will honor its former pastors, assistant pastors, school principals and original parishioners. A reception will follow the Mass.

Founded in 1930 by Msgr. George J. Schmitt, St. Anne's has served Catholics in the southern part of Rochester and the Towns of Brighton and Henrietta for the past 50 years. It has grown from a mission church to an institution serving not only parishioners but also people in surrounding nursing homes, the State Hospital, Strong Memorial Hospital, and Monroe Developmental Center.

Msgr. Schmitt served the parish for 19 years. In that time he built a wood frame church and laid the cornerstone for the present school, completed in 1949.

Succeeding Msgr. Schmitt was Msgr. William J. Naughton, who, in his 24 year tenure, completed the present parish facilities. The present rectory was completed in 1953, and the present church, a modern colonial structure



St. Anne's present church:

which seats 800, was completed in 1957.

Msgr. Naughton retired in 1973 and was succeeded by Msgr. Charles V. Boyle, who had previously served as pastor of St. John the Evangelist on Humboldt Street, and as superintendent of schools for the diocese.

The jubilee celebration will continue through the year with a "Nostalgia Night" on

April 18 at 7:30 p.m. in the school auditorium. The parish will feté Msgr. Boyle on his 40th anniversary in the priesthood with a Mass and reception on May 18.

Bishop Matthew H. Clark will conclude the festivities with a jubilee Mass on Sept. 27. Also on that day the parish will hold a jubilee dinner-dance at the Beahon Road Party House.

Insights in Liturgy

By Pam Schaeffer

Family Celebrations: Resources

All too often we feel driven by the notion that in order to convey a particular idea, event, theme or occasion and to make it completely understood, we must go to extreme measures to search out something "different," something that "fits" what we mean. We become too resourceful! Automatically we rule out the familiar, basic material at our disposal. What could have been done simply becomes very complicated. Unfortunately, this attitude affects and frustrates our efforts in all areas of our lives. The manner in which we approach planning liturgical celebrations, especially when we have a specific occasion or theme in mind, is a good example.

The Lectionary and Sacramentary contain the essential elements for planning. Yet they are probably the last place we seek assistance.

The Lectionary, with its three-year cycle of Sunday readings and two-year cycle for weekdays, plus the additional readings provided in the back sections for various occasions, unfolds the history of salvation to God's people. It was carefully arranged so that the total life of the Church, which springs from the Paschal Mystery, could be shown. We cannot presume that the readings assigned will not "fit." Prayerful reflection over the scripture and careful listening (in light of the occasion), will lead to a meaningful, spirit-filled celebration. Keeping the pattern of readings for the liturgical year in each cycle is the utmost priority!

Overlooked even more often than the Lectionary is the Sacramentary. Planners should be aware of the options offered in the Sacramentary for various

penitential rites, collects, prefaces, eucharistic prayers, blessings and dismissals. Of special note in this year of the family is the Directory for Masses with Children, found directly following the Appendix to the General Instruction. (Page 5.)

Families who are preparing for a wedding, anniversary, or even a funeral Mass would benefit from guidance in both the Lectionary and Sacramentary options available to them. Parish Liturgy Committee members well-versed in the use of these invaluable resources would be very effective in leading their "parish household" to a full, conscious and active participation in the eucharistic assembly.

With the year of the family in mind, the following additional resources may prove helpful to parish and individual households, as well as parish planning teams:

A Book of Family Prayer, Gabe Huck, 1979, The Seabury Press, 815 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

A wealth of prayer forms and rites that have been used throughout the ages is provided. Of specific interest are sections that include discussions and material for daily prayer at specified times (Morning and Evening Prayer), prayers and rites for home liturgies during the seasons of Advent and Lent, as well as prayers for other religious occasions. An ecumenical flavor is found throughout by the weaving of traditional Roman Catholic prayers and devotions with material from Protestant, Orthodox and Jewish sources. An excellent resource for the household, individual, parish personnel and liturgy committee.

Come Aside and Rest A. White, Joseph G. Kelly, ed. 1977, Paulist Press, 545 Island Road, Ramsey, N.J. 17446.

This little book was

published for people who, after a hectic day, need a few, brief moments alone with one's family to praise and thank God in a simple, prayerful manner. Included are four arrangements for Evening Prayer, additional single prayers, meditative thoughts and prayerful illustrations.

Families Bless the Lord, 1976, The Liturgical Commission, LaCrosse, Wis. 54601.

This book does not treat the major liturgical feasts and the seasons of the Church Year. It is not a book about prayer; rather it is a reflection in prayers, on the important events and lives of Christ and the Saints.

Prayer: Family Style, 1975, Green Bay Commission on the Liturgy, PO Box 65, Green Bay, Wis. 54305.

In order to satisfy the demands of the broad range of families (and individuals within families) that exist within the Church, this book was designed to embrace a wide variety of prayer sources for the major holy days and holidays of a given year. A workbook format encourages creativity and provides a flexible, workable tool for solo parent families, singles, families with children of varied ages, as well as for parish use (classroom celebrations, youth services, etc.).

Parishes and Families, 1973, The Liturgical Conference, 810 Rhode Island Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20018 (compiled by Gabe Huck and Virginia Sloyan).

These publications, as well as several others, are a permanent part of the Office of Liturgy's resource library. Though we cannot lend them out to individuals, we encourage you to visit our office to explore their contents. Also, the Liturgy Office staff is available to parishes for consultations and will be glad to help with planning.

Bishop May Going to St. Louis

Washington (RNS) — Bishop John L. May of Mobile, Ala., has been named archbishop of St. Louis by Pope John Paul II. He succeeds Cardinal John J. Carberry who retired last July when he reached 75.

The announcement also included the creation of the new diocese of Lake Charles in southwestern Louisiana and the appointment of Msgr.

Jude Speyrer as its bishop.

Archbishop May, 57, has been bishop of Mobile since Oct. 9, 1969. He is a former chairman of the U.S. Catholic Conference's communications committee. In 1978, he was named chairman of the bishop's committee on church-state relations, newly created to deal with tensions between Catholics and the government.

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