



Pio Devotees

Vera M. Calandra, the director of the Center for Padre Pio in Norristown, Pa., confers with Pope John Paul II on the canonization process for the stigmatic Italian monk who died in 1968. As both a young priest, and later as a cardinal, the pontiff visited the monastery where Padre Pio lived. The pope also introduced the cause in Poland. In Rochester, Padre Pio devotees gather for prayer at Our Lady of Victory Church each Monday following the noon Mass. The group prays for vocations.

Word for Sunday

By Father Albert Shamon

'We Ought To Live To Die'

Sunday's Readings: (R2) 1 Cor. 15:12, 16-20. (R3) Lk. 6:17, 20-26, (R1) Jer. 17:5-8.

In Sunday's second reading Paul continues his arguments in proof of a resurrection of the dead.

All Christian eschatology, like Paul's, rests on the fact of Christ's resurrection. "If Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how is it some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?"

In the last century France was ravaged by the dreaded disease of anthrax. So many sheep died that the textile industry was threatened. The French government commissioned Louis Pasteur to seek a remedy. Louis worked on a vaccine. When he thought he had discovered the right one, he decided to test it. He inoculated one flock of sheep with anthrax. Next he vaccinated another flock, and then inoculated it with anthrax. All France awaited the outcome. The next morning the flock not vaccinated was found dead; the other flock, alive and well. All France rejoiced. They knew from that one experiment that anthrax no longer had power over the sheep of France. So with the resurrection of Christ. By His victory over death, all mankind knows that death has lost its sting forever.

After the resurrection question, the Corinthians asked Paul, "How are the dead to be raised up? What kind of a body will they have? Paul answered the second question first. "Christ is now raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep."

First fruits brought to mind an illustration from farming. In planting, what is sown is a seed. But the seed is not the plant. I am sure most everyone has planted tulip bulbs. How unattractive the bulbs appear. Yet after being buried they beget the beautiful tulip. So Paul likened the body to a

seed planted in the earth at death, and its resurrection to the blossoming and blooming.

As to the kind of body at the resurrection, it will be like Christ's at His resurrection. He is the firstfruits; the first fruit tells what the rest of the harvest will be like. According to the gospels, Christ's body was both the same and different from what it had been.

The same, because visible, tangible, recognizable. He breathes. He eats. He speaks. "See my hands and feet, that it is I myself" (Lk. 24:39). Moreover, it is the same Jesus. Death did not destroy His personal identity any more than sleep does. "Between our dreaming and our seeming there is one pulsing continuity of being."

His body was also different in the sense that He is not always there, visible and tangible, but that He suddenly appears—sometimes through closed doors—and disappears and ascends into heaven. One further difference is "Christ, once raised from the dead, will never die again (Rom. 6:9). Death shall be no more.

"How are the dead to be raised up?" "A nonsensical question!" Paul called that. "Is it anything great," wrote Augustine, for God to restore a body. Seeing that He made it when it was not?" Reproduction is far easier than creation.

Isaac Newton was asked, "How can God collect the millions of dust particles and reconstruct new bodies at the resurrection?"

Newton took a handful of iron filings, mixed them in a pail of sand, and said to his questioners, "Collect the iron filings." They, of course, protested. Newton swished a powerful magnet in the sand, and lightning-fast the thousand tiny particles flew to the magnet.

"If God can endow dead matter with such power," Newton pointed out, "Do you think He lacks power to raise up bodies from the dust to which they have returned?"

One might ask, "How ought we to live, then?" "We ought to live to die; that is, to prepare for the resurrection."

Second St. Mary's Sister To Minister to Refugees

Another Daughter of Charity from St. Mary's Hospital will be joining Sister Nancy Vendura on her three-month assignment to the Cambodian refugees in Thailand.

Sister Kathleen McKeown, a staff nurse in the neuroscience unit at the hospital will also serve in a refugee camp with Catholic Relief Services personnel in Thailand.

The 34-year-old sister has been working for the past year, and a half at St. Mary's. Prior

to that time she was assigned to child care institutions near Albany, the provincial center.

The native of Bristol, Pa., is "just thrilled to death," at the prospect of assisting the refugees. She had volunteered for the work.

Catholic Relief Services is the recipient of funds raised in the diocese by the Diocesan Missions Office and the International Justice and Peace Commission.

Persons wishing to contribute to the effort are asked

to send donations to:

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the annual inspection for 1980-81 school year for the Diocese of Rochester Elementary Schools for fire hazards which might endanger the lives of students, teachers and employees therein, has been completed and the report is available at the office of the individual school for inspection by all interested persons.

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