## **Big, Big Festival**

Traditionally, one of the greatest events in Charlotte's recreational season has been the annual Holy Cross Parish Festival, and from the size of this crowd of parishioners working to make it a success, this year's event, slated for July 18-20, should be one of the biggest ever. Left to right, from the front row to the back, are Father John P. O'Malley, Bill Ryan, Sheri Ryan, Henry Davis, Joan Powers, Kay White, Ceil Christie, John Powers, Dorothy Favasuli, Joe Nicolosi,

Adele Seeger, Tony Inzana, Pat Webber, Tony St. George, John Owens, Connie Goonan, Dean Prevost, Mary Jane McCortney, Michelle Butterworth, Monica Gilbert, Mike Lochner, Caroline Pecoraro, Dick Flánigan, Rocky Ardino, Mario Fusco, Amelia Adams, Tony Rosati, Tony Pecoraro, Peg Roach, Tommy Masters, Jim Hogan, Lucy Rosati and Judy Peterson. The festival runs from 6 p.m. to midnight on Friday and Saturday, and 6 to 11 p.m. Sunday. Featured are homemade food, crafts, "famous" sausage sandwiches.

Wednesday, July 2, 1980

## **Insights in Liturgy** singing of the birds are but His

## Sacramentals By Father

Benedict A. Ehmann

Jesus tells us: "Look at the birds of the air. Consider the lilies of the field." If we see them as they truly are, they make us think of God. So many simple, down-to-earth things of our experience Jesus gathers into His parables to unlock for us the vistas of His. Father's way with us: seas and earth, living water, bread and wine, salt, light and darkness, sheep and lambs; the mother hen with her chicks, the nets and gear of fisherman. When He became Incarnate Son of Man, nothing human was alien to the Son of God (except sin, St. Paul reminds us). All things were made by Him. He is the Word who called them into being. His "word" continues to speak in them and through them. We find them all around us, everywhere, redolent and

everything."

voice — and carven by His power Rocks are His written words. "All pathways by His feet are worn, His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea, His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn, His Cross is

every tree." Jesus says: "He that has" ears to hear, let him hear." And, by the same token, he that has eyes to see, let him

My theme is sacramentals, which is the name the Church uses for all those many things, both natural and artificial, which she blesses for our use on the journey of grace ---water, palms, ashes, crosses, medals, scapulars, pictures. But if we are to use them in a healthy, holy way, we must not lose sight of the basic fact 

Reality, silent speakers of God's beauty and goodness. But when the Church blesses them, they are raised into the orbit of grace. The Church, the Body of Christ, makes them Christocentric, sharing in the dynamics of the Incarnation, elevated into that redemption for which, as St. Paul tells us, "all creation groans and is in agony even until now,"(Rom. 8:22)

This, and nothing less than this, is the context of sacramentals as the Church offers them to us for our devotion and use. By them we are to be reminded simply of the intersection of our time with God's eternity and the grace of His Son. They are not charms, amulets, fetishes, talismans, good luck pieces. Any such use of them and attitude toward them is superstitious, bringing not blessing but an occasion of sin. This danger is never far from infecting us. There is still a pagan deposit lurking in the

Yet, to counteract such an eliminate or ban them. Such an extreme would be un-

natural, counterproductive. We have a flagrant instance of such polarization and prudent decision of the Church in the seventh century controversy about the use of statues and icons: the heresy promoted and fought to the last ditch by the Byzantine emperor and most of the Eastern Church, was called the Iconoclast heresy

All the more urgent reason, therefore, why we of the Catholic faith should employ our sacramentais, not negatively as superstitious objects, but positively as mementoes of grace and truth, channels of heavenly blessing and communication, even as the Gospels show us that Jesus did:

(For the poem quoted, Joseph Mary Plunkett, Catholic Anthology ed. Thomas Walsh. Thanks to the Macmillan Co., N.Y.)



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