

Insights
In Liturgy



By Homer J. Bliss

Reflections
Of a Lector

One of the outstanding pleasures I have had in the past eight years, since our family converted to Catholicism, has been in connection with my experience both as a lector and as a teacher in Lector Workshops, which I have conducted by request in parish communities around the diocese.

In the Lector Workshops which I have conducted, I have always been impressed by the eager responsiveness to my suggestions. Those who attend come no matter what the weather, and often at night. They make it a pleasant experience for me to pass along suggestions geared to the needs of each, so that whenever they read, the words will reach out with meaning to all in church.

Thus, as a lector and teacher, I have felt a sense of joy and responsibility, and an appreciation of the fact that God has given abilities which make each of us unique and able to serve Him in a special way.

In preparing the readings for celebration, there has come, for me, a deeper understanding of the Bible. Preparing includes use of a Bible Concordance for clarification of meaning, dictionaries, and self-pronouncing Bibles for the correct pronunciation of names and places. For myself, and for those I touch through workshops, I give the following suggestions that make up the basic understanding of the ministry of lector:

1) A lector is responsible for reading clearly, and with enough volume so that everyone will hear.

2) A lector can establish a two-way communication by "proclaiming" (rather than

just reading) the inspired writings of Scripture in a warm and understandable manner.

3) A lector's phrasing and sincerity often opens a new understanding of what might previously have been unclear. Richer and deeper meanings can emerge from the reading of words in Scripture so that listeners, along with the reader, are enlightened.

The ministry of proclaiming the Word has enriched my whole life. As I read I feel the responsiveness of the listeners. It's a two-way communication, and after Mass when someone says, "I never understood those words before," I feel that I have been a vehicle for passing along something "out of this world."

As I mature in years and understanding, I appreciate more the living words of the Bible. Also, I am more and more aware of the truths expressed by words of saintly people's vision out of the past. One of these inspired sources is St. Francis whose own humble prayer offers this timeless request: "Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace."

To have been able to use my professional background as a broadcaster in my service as lector has returned to me a thousand-fold: increased spiritual strength, growth and insight. Along with my personal feelings of pleasure in sharing whenever I stand at the lectern as a reader, there is the awareness and appreciation of the part others play in participating during every part of the rich liturgy of our Church.

(Homer Bliss serves the community at St. John the Evangelist, Humboldt Street, and the community that gathers at the Diocesan Missions Office chapel for noon Masses each weekday in his Ministry of the Word.)

FCC Drops Rules
On Broadcasting

Washington (RNS) — By a 6-1 margin, the Federal Communications Commission here voted to release the nation's 8,900 radio stations from advertising time limits and from minimum requirements for public service programming.

The federal agency decided that it no longer needed to maintain tight regulation of the airwaves because rapid expansion and increasing competition in the radio marketplace would ensure wide diversity of programming.

"A total of 287 new stations have come on the air since we started this rule-making 18 months ago," FCC Chairman Charles D. Ferris said. "When we create a more competitive environment, we are compelled to reconsider our earlier proscriptions," referring to previous levels of regulation.

The FCC based its decision on a commission study which showed that the incentives of competition kept advertising levels at many stations below the previously mandated maximum level of 18 minutes an hour.

In addition, the commission lifted a rule which had required that AM stations devote eight percent and FM stations six percent of their broadcast time to public affairs, news and other information programming.

Also repealed were program log-keeping rules and a procedure which had required stations to ascertain the needs and interests of the communities they served. However, the commissioners retained rules mandating equal employment, equal time for opposing viewpoints and license renewal every three years.

Commercial radio broadcasters welcomed the advent of less regulated airwaves and the National Association of Broadcasters hailed the decision as "enlightened."

However, religious and other public interest groups denounced the move, arguing

that broadcasters would abandon news and public interest programming in favor of a more profitable entertainment format if the minimum requirement were removed.

The United Church of Christ, a vigorous foe of deregulation, asked the U.S. Circuit of Appeals to review the FCC ruling. Conversely, the National Religious Broadcasters group, representing some 900 religious radio and television outlets, welcomed the ruling as a relief from "bureaucratic red tape" and said it is groups such as the United Church of Christ "who are not in the broadcasting industry who are doing all the opposing."

NFP Info
Session Set
In Elmira

Elmira — A Natural Family Planning information session has been scheduled for 7:30 p.m., Friday, Feb. 13, at St. Joseph's hospital here.

The session is open to the public at no charge and no registration is required.

Certified instructors Norm and Sandy Pawlak will present the session.

ND Parents
Plan Dance

Elmira — The Notre Dame Parents Association is conducting a dance from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 7, at the Notre Dame High School gym.

Think Spring

The Rosary Guild and the Men's Club of Christ the King Church will "Think Spring," Feb. 28 at the church hall, 445 Kings Highway South. The "Beale Street Bandwagon" will provide music for the evening of dining and dancing. Further information and reservations are available by contacting Barbara or Richard Warth; or Mary or Michael Roach.

Entertainment

The Ladies Guild of St. Cecilia's Parish will entertain by calling 342-8428, or 467-7922 after 5 p.m. The Men's Club and their wives at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3. Reservations are made by calling 342-8428, or 467-7922 after 5 p.m.

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Fisher Prexy Installed

Even though he's been doing the job for several months, Father Patrick O. Braden was formally installed in the post of President of St. John Fisher College last week in ceremonies which drew academics from across the country and more than 1,500 well-wishers.

Interviewed a few moments before the start of the rites, Father Braden said that his plans for the college involve



FATHER BRADEN

"no great changes." He expects to follow in the "good course set by my predecessors, especially Father Lavery, in a high quality liberal arts program." He expects his presidency will be "a continuation of that distinctive program."

Father Braden accepted the post after 12 years in the presidency of the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Tex.

Most recently, Father Braden worked in Niger for a year with an agricultural program. He described his sojourn in Africa as a needed and refreshing break from the academic world. "It was an experience of rejuvenation," he said.

He quipped last week that he accepted the post of the Fisher presidency on the promise that the physical plant of the college was completed.

This year, however, by shutting and remodeling

existing space, he will have to oversee the addition of 20 to 30 more bedrooms for students.

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Vol. 97 No. 40 January 28, 1981

Courier-Journal (USPS 135-580)
Published weekly by the Rochester Catholic Press Association. Subscription rates: Single copy 25c. 1 year subscription in U.S. \$10. Canada and Foreign \$15. Offices: 114 South Union St. Rochester, N.Y. 14607 (716) 454-7050. Second Class Postage paid at Rochester, N.Y.

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