

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Holiness Is Acting In Love

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 5:38-48. (R1) Lv. 19:1-2, 17-18. (R2) 1 Cor. 3:16-23.

One Lent long ago, I resolved — as a penance — to read the Book of Leviticus through. It was the one biblical book I hadn't read from first to last verse. I felt I would get nothing out of it but laws and legislation, rules and regulations. How wrong I was! Ever since that reading, the holiness of God hit me as never before.

Sunday's readings are all tied together by the one idea of holiness. "I, the Lord, your God, am holy" (R1). "For the temple of God is holy, and you are that temple" (R2). "You must be made perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect" (R3).

In the Old Testament the Hebrew word translated as "holiness" is *godesh*; in the New Testament the Greek word translated as "holy" is *hagios*. Both words convey the idea of separation and apartness. A holy God is one set apart from us; and a holy person is one set apart for

God. The danger with this concept, however, can be to ghetto religion and religious people — to confine them only to the sanctuary, to worship. The Hebrews fell into this error; and often, so do Christians.

A holy God is one who does good! "The Lord is kind and merciful" (Response). A holy people is one who perform holy deeds: "You shall not bear hatred for your brother... Love your enemies... Be perfect in loving..." (Readings).

Holiness means to love the good unswervingly. God loves the good He is; and He is the good He loves; and His love for the good is eternal, changeless. Therefore He is holy! But God's holiness erupts in deeds of kindness and mercy. So must our holiness. We must love good and love it unswervingly — no matter the climate about us. But this love of ours for the good must break forth in good deeds of love. Holiness is love coined into conduct; it is faith gone to work!

Paul to the Thessalonians wrote: "It is God's will that you grow in holiness" (1 Th. 4:3). That you grow! Holiness is not a static thing, a state of being only; it is

something dynamic, ever active. Thus Paul goes on to point out what growing in holiness means: "that you abstain from immorality... that each refrain from overreaching or cheating his brother."

The deeds of the holy are much more than do-goodism or obligatory charity. Holy deeds come from holy people — people who resist temptation, insincerity, or any other corruption that can intrude upon a good deed.

Once there was a Quaker sea captain named Gifford. He used to transport coal from Philadelphia to Nantucket. One severe winter there was a fuel shortage. When his coal-laden ship arrived at Nantucket and dropped anchor, a coal merchant came aboard and offered to buy the whole cargo at \$12 a ton. It was a tempting offer. The captain was accustomed to selling his coal at \$8 a ton and always one ton to a customer. Here was an opportunity to sell the entire cargo at a handsome profit and to one person, thus eliminating extra bookkeeping and extra days in port. The captain turned down the inviting offer, because, he felt it unfair to make the people pay for a fuel shortage. He called it acting conscientiously — we would say he was acting holily.

Holiness separates us from the crowd; for holiness is love-acting and acting in love!

'Alberto' Headed for Court

Milwaukee (RNS) — The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights has asked the California attorney general to investigate the publisher of a comic book that allegedly makes false statements about the Catholic Church.

Its complaint accuses Jack T. Chick of Chick Publications in Chino, Calif., of false advertising and consumer fraud in connection with the comic book "Alberto."

The Courier-Journal in its Dec. 31 edition warned Catholics that the comic book was being distributed in this diocese.

The 32-page comic purports to tell the true story of Alberto Rivera, described as a Jesuit priest who was assigned to infiltrate and destroy Protestant churches.

Rivera, who operates the Anti-Christ Information Center in Canoga Park, Calif., has signed a statement af-

firming that the comic is true in every detail but has not produced any evidence to back up his claim.

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Fr. Paul J. Cuddy



On the Right Side

Visiting The 'Hidden Parish'

Years ago, a "Life of St. Joseph" was published, entitled "The Hidden Saint." I recalled that, when Father Joseph Donovan invited me to take care of St. Mark's parish for a week in January. It is so hidden that diocesan ask: "Where is it? Is it a Catholic parish?" It is in northwest Rochester, one mile from Lake Ontario, and borders on St. Leo's, Hilton, and Mother of Sorrows, Greece. It is set in the most spacious parking lot in the diocese. The parish buildings include a chapel to seat 200, a large auditorium with sliding doors to open into the chapel for Sunday Mass

Rosary Society Seminar

The Rosary Societies at St. Anne's and Guardian Angels Parishes will co-sponsor a "Learning and Sharing Workshop" for all interested Rosary and Altar Societies in the diocese at 2 p.m. on April 5, at Guardian Angels, 2061 E. Henrietta Rd.

Rosary and Altar society presidents should register their groups for the seminar by Feb. 25. For further information those interested may call Harriet Beiter, (716) 334-2912.

overflow, like St. John of Rochester. There are six CCD classrooms and a fine kitchen. Adjoining the auditorium is the rectory which includes a nice housekeeper's apartment off the kitchen with a phenomenon today, a live-in housekeeper, who is the motherly Mrs. Dolores Kolb. There are quarters upstairs for Father Donovan, and a bedroom for Father Peter Bayer who is chaplain to the Sisters of St. Joseph's Infirmary, works at the Pastoral Center in the Think Tank, and is weekend assistant at St. Mark's.

The pastor gave detailed instructions to insure continuity of service, concluding with: "And be sure all doors are locked." I think it would be easier to get into Elmira Correctional Facility than into St. Mark's. After the thefts St. Salome's, St. Thomas the Apostle, St. Margaret Mary, Holy Ghost, Good Shepherd, Mother of Sorrows and St. Charles, it seems a good idea. This constant worry we have for life and property illustrates how our freedom has been whittled away by malefactors, the irresponsible and the deranged. I wish G. Gordon Liddy would be consulted for solutions.

What is St. Mark's like? Saturday/Sunday attendance averages about 800 persons. The families are mostly middle-class, with many Kodak workers. The

parishioners have common religious interests: CCD instructions, societies for men and women with emphasis on fund-raising, a concerned Retreat Group, and several competent crews for bingo.

I went into the hall to meet the patrons before bingo began. To interrupt a bingo player during a game would be almost as bad as the wretched lecturing of Pope John Paul by Sister Teresa Kane in Washington.

On the Jan. 20 Dick Cavett Show, Cavett asked Clare Booth Luce: "What did you think of that nun's lecturing the Pope in Washington last October?" Very thoughtfully Mrs. Luce expressed her opinion: that it was rude, impolitic, quite out of place and time, and a pity. Many recall the sad history of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Congregation in California, who rejected the Holy See and their bishop, evolved into a multi-faceted free-wheeling group and ended up losing most of their Sisters to "the World." It is now a Secular Institute composed of men and women, married and celibate. I saw a TV program on their involvement on the PBC a year ago and was greatly saddened.

The time at St. Mark's was profitable. With opportunity to evangelize for two Sundays, the parish is now enriched by 500 copies of "Treasury of Prayers" and 150 copies of Archbishop Whealon's "Living the Catholic Faith Today." And I am enriched by the friendship of a new community, members of "the Hidden Parish," who like St. Joseph, are zealous to care for Our Lord, His Mother and His Church.

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