

Insights
In Liturgy



Pamela K. Schaeffer

Centering
In Prayer

Standing out in the alternate Opening Prayer for the Third Sunday of Lent are the words: "... you bid us to turn to fasting, prayer, and sharing ..." three very basic practices we associate with the season of Lent. It is interesting to note the order in which these words appear, telling us in a not too subtle way what we should already know — that, whatever else happens in a Christian's life, prayer should be central. Everything else we do is nourished by this prayer. Or, seen another way, prayer acts as a catalyst that affects every other action we take.

Prayer, strengthened through private, interiorized meditation, becomes our public and communal response to the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Day-to-day struggles diminish that response; we are left worn out, dying, as it were, from within.

We need a time that reminds us, calls us back, and the Lenten season gives us that time.

Unlike Jesus, and the Old Testament prophets and people before Him, most of us no longer have

the "luxury" of a desert wilderness close at hand. It is indeed very doubtful that even those who live near our Mojave Desert have a life-style that would allow them to drop everything to go out to the desert to pray. But Lent allows us the "luxury" of a prayerful journey with Christ into the desert. During our lenten "desert experience" we face the harsh, brittle, dry, barren truths in our lives. We are made more aware of the shallowness, and even the emptiness of solitary human endeavors. Our need for prayer surfaces, almost shouting at us from the stillness of the vacuum into which we have settled.

Prayer provides us with "eyes of faith." The lenten "desert" when viewed with faith's eyes bids us look further. Faith turns our hearts and minds away from the harsh desert, with its barren sand and brittle weeds. Dryness bids us search once again for our sustenance. Like the Samaritan woman we seek the Well-Spring of Living Water. The desert's candor, and honesty, has broken through our masks, illusions and deceptions.

Gradually, our lenten "desert experience" emerges as a positive journey that began with brittle pieces of life's disappointments reminding us of our frailty, our need for that which is

beyond human capability. Like the man born blind, we too are given renewed vision. Through faith's eyes, what was a harsh, barren place now abounds with life and color. Deepened in prayer, having died to self, we can see clearly now through "resurrection eyes." Strengthened with new life we rise prepared to be an "Alleluia People."

But what of fasting and sharing? How are they hinged to our prayer?

Fasting, the discipline that enables us to move more freely, more quickly — unencumbered. In our emptiness we sense the fullness that we receive. Through prayer we are filled to overflowing. Fasting becomes a part of our desert adventure where we find greater freedom to run not toward the plastic mirage of the unreal, but toward a land of growth and nourishment where life may be lived to the full.

Sharing, also known as almsgiving, calls us to a deeper openness and responsiveness to persons. Giving "alms" calls us to live with compassion, to "suffer with." Suffering, however, does not only mean pain. One can also "suffer" or undergo joy or any other deep emotion. To "suffer with," therefore, means to bear with others not only their physical pain, but their joys and hopes as well. This is not a token thing we do for Lent, but a way in which we live each day.

Growing from prayer, we share what is the heart of Jesus' life and ministry among us. "... You bid us turn to fasting, prayer, and sharing."

Two Holy Family Sisters
Share 120 Years Service

Two School Sisters of Notre Dame will be feted at Holy Family Church Sunday in celebration of religious jubilees totaling 120 years in their congregation.

Parishioners and friends of Sister Mary Alverus Riehl and Sister Mary Rosalita Heilmann will gather for a Mass of thanksgiving at 2 p.m., March 29. A reception will follow in the school faculty room.

This year Sister Mary Alverus celebrates 70 years a sister and Sister Rosalita 50 years.

Sister Alverus has spent most of her religious life at Holy Family.

Sister Rosalita was born in Germany. When she was two years old, her parents moved to the United States and settled in Holy Family Parish. She attended the school and traces the source of her vocation to the inspiration of the School Sisters teaching here.

She attended the Baltimore Motherhouse, and a community in Walden, Mass., prior to taking her vows, in 1931.

Sister Rosalita has served in Roxbury, Mass. (19 years); Pittsburgh, Pa. (five years); and Trumbull, Conn. (six years).

She has been at Holy Family for the past 18 years. She is widely known as an



SISTER ROSALITA



SISTER ALVERUS

accomplished gardener and each year cares for the grounds around the convent.

her in touch with many former pupils."

Sister Alverus is a Baltimore native. After her training in the congregation, she served one year in Philadelphia before her arrival at Holy Family in 1911. She has spent 69 years in service to the parish community.

For most of that time she taught first graders. She "retired" in 1971, assuming responsibility, however, for a remedial reading program, teacher assistance, faculty room maintenance and stationery supplies. She retired fully in 1977.

Her fellow School Sister of Notre Dame observed that "one of her great pleasures is to observe the students at play in the school yard." Sister Mary Antonio also said that "her constant interest and remarkable memory have kept

AUCTION

'81

Bishop Kearney High School Cafeteria

Saturday, April 4

8:00 P.M.

Silent Auction 6-8 p.m.

BENEFIT:

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E. U. A. D.
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At Your Parish . . .

St. John,
Greece

A recital of Lenten music for voice and organ is planned at St. John the Evangelist Parish, 2400 Ridge Rd. W. for 4 p.m., Sunday, March 29. Maryann Paris, soprano, and John C. Herrmann, organist, will perform selections by Mendelssohn, Bach, Faure, Barber and Alain.



Spring Fling

Making final arrangements for the Spring Fling IV fashion show and luncheon sponsored by the Parish Life Committee of St. Joseph's Church in Penfield are Jean Prinzing and Mary Kay Hintenach. The event will be held March 28 at Oak Hill Country Club and will feature apparel from Jennels, Polliwogs and Pigtales; hair fashion and makeup by the Hair Zoo.

St. Jerome,
E. Rochester

A Laetare Sunday Breakfast is planned at St. Jerome's Parish after the 8, 9:15 and 10:30 Masses on Sunday, March 29. Reservations may be obtained by calling Teresa Willette, 381-5491. All parishioners are invited.

St. Philip Neri

The Women's Club at St. Philip Neri Parish will sponsor a bake sale on Saturday, April 11, after the 5 p.m. Mass and on Sunday, April 12 after all Masses.

St. Jude,
Greece

Registrations for nursery school at St. Jude the Apostle, 4100 Lyell Road, are now being accepted. The nursery school will accept registrations each Monday through Friday until all spots are taken.

The bake sale will be in the school hall. All contributions of baked goods, crafts or money will be "deeply appreciated" by the parish. For further information those interested in helping may contact May Wright, 544-2688 or the rectory, 482-2400.

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