

# Daniel Berrigan: Eye of the Storm

By John Dash

To some of the more than 750 persons who crowded into Blessed Sacrament Church, the priest was an enemy. To others, a curiosity. To others, an unsettling hero, a prophet, a promise of better times ahead only if the world's machineries of war are destroyed and buried forever.

Daniel Berrigan, SJ, poet, theologian and felon, convicted recently for damaging Minuteman missile nosecones, drew both a standing ovation and bitter protest at an address last Tuesday at the church.

The lecture, sponsored by agencies of both Blessed Sacrament and its neighboring parish, St. John the Evangelist, was seen by some parishioners as a misuse of the church. "He (Father Berrigan) should be disrobed and defrocked," David Jensen, usher at the parish for 11 years, said shortly before the talk. Jensen, carrying a great ring of keys he intimated fit the church's locks, said, "I won't be carrying these by tomorrow morning."

Describing himself as a veteran, disabled, though not in combat, Jensen said his only contact with the parish in the future would be to "receive the Body and Blood of Christ."

Poised on the balls of his feet, John Ficcaro, another parishioner, disabled veteran and retired member of the Rochester Police force, described the priest as a

"Commie." Smiling as he admitted he "could get a little loud about this," Ficcaro said he objected to "a man who is a potential killer talking in a Catholic Church."

Father John Mulligan, pastor of St. John's, observed, "Frankly, I don't think people know who Dan Berrigan is and every act of violence in the past 20 years they identify with him."

At the hub of Father Berrigan's talk was that "the scow is leaking, we're all aboard and something has to be done." Describing the action in which he, his brother Philip and six others entered a General Electric plant, banged up missile nosecones and poured blood, Father Berrigan said, "In over 30 years, ours was the first act of nuclear disarmament."

"To see a nuclear weapon," he said, "is to see some forgotten horror of ourselves a forgotten part, an underdeveloped part of ourselves."

"It is to see the shining face of Doomsday," he said in his characteristically measured fashion.

He said that the recent trial in which the group, dubbed "Plowshares Eight," were convicted, was a "dance of death and a dance of life around nuclear weapons — around Armageddon."

He observed that prosecution witnesses during the trial "would not name" the



FATHER BERRIGAN

nosecones as "instruments of genocide." He said witnesses continually referred to the nosecones as "things," thus refusing to "take responsibility" for their existence.

Saying that in Genesis, God commands man to take responsibility for creation by naming it, Father Berrigan asserted the witnesses were "rolling up the Bible and rolling it over a cliff."

He said that they had "closed their briefcases and their minds" to the enormity of nuclear death.

The priest, free on bail awaiting sentencing, lives in a Jesuit community in New York City.

He is at work on three books including one describing his ministry at St. Rose's Home in New York City, a hospice for the poor who are dying of cancer.

## Business in Diocese

Thomas F. Frawley, M.D., a native of Rochester, will be installed as President of the American College of Physicians at the group's annual meeting April 9, in Kansas City, Mo.

The American College of Physicians is responsible for the setting of standards for the education and training of internists, establishment of postgraduate programs and speciality examinations and the setting of recertification criteria. "By virtue of these various responsibilities, the College is one of the most influential bodies within the American Medical establishment," according to a news release.

Dr. Frawley graduated from Aquinas Institute and the University of Rochester. He was a member of football teams, 1935, 1936, 1937 at Aquinas Institute under John Sullivan.

Following graduation from the University of Buffalo School of Medicine, he had a rotating internship at St. Mary's Hospital for two years. Upon completion of his residency, he received a Fellowship in Endocrinology and Metabolism at the Harvard Medical School and Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Mass.

Thomas T. Mooney, president of the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce and former city manager, has been elected to the Board of Trustees of St. John Fisher College.

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Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

## Making Homes Churches

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 26:14-27; 66. (R1) Is. 50:4-7. (R2) Phil. 2:6-11.

Sir Thomas More was an outstanding Catholic layman who lived more than 400 years ago. Henry VIII appointed him Lord Chancellor of England. The king had a deep personal liking for More because of his learning, wit, and friendliness. When More refused to acknowledge Henry as head of the Church of England or to condone his divorce, he lost favor with the king and was beheaded in 1535. Four hundred years later More was canonized as a saint. A play, and later, a film, "A Man for All Seasons," drew worldwide acclaim.

St. Thomas More ran a truly Christian home. Every day there were prayers and Bible readings there; at table, discussions of spiritual ideas. He attended daily Mass and recited the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary — and at times served Mass. The poor and needy were always as welcomed as the rich and learned. His home was a little church.

My suggestion is that we make our homes something like that during Holy Week. Start next Sunday. Place a tray on the kitchen or dining room table. Each day add a new symbol to that tray so that on Easter Sunday the tray will contain seven symbols: reminders of each of the days of Holy Week and each of the seven Sacraments. At the same time read the events in the life of Jesus, drawn from the liturgical readings of Holy Week.

On Passion (Palm) Sunday, place the tray on the table. In the center of it put a glass or vase in which the palm received at Mass can be placed. Draw two interlocking wedding rings and tape them around the glass or vase. Meditate on our Lord's procession into Jerusalem (Mk. 11:1-10); and think of your marriage. Do you receive each other in love and joy?

On Monday, put a medicine bottle and gauze on the tray. Meditate on the Lord's anointing at Bethany (Mk. 14 3-9). Think on the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick and how God cares for the sufferings of His children and wants to heal them.

On Tuesday, put a small dish of oil on the tray.

Meditate on Jesus' prophecy of His passion (Lk. 9 44-45). Think of the sacrament of confirmation that strengthens us to live our baptismal commitment no matter the cost.

On Wednesday, make a paper chain. On each link write the name of a family member. Place the chain around the gifts on the tray. Meditate on the conspiracy of Judas (Lk. 22 1-6). Think of the graciousness of God who heals our betrayals by the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

On Thursday, place a piece of bread and a small glass of wine on the tray. Meditate on the institution of the Eucharist (Lk. 22 19-20). Make a special effort to have the family eat together. Let the father or mother remind everyone of what took place on the first Holy Thursday: Jesus celebrated the first Mass and instituted the Holy Eucharist.

On Friday, make a cross of two twigs. Put the cross on the tray. Meditate on the cross: Jesus our high priest offers Himself to the Father for us. Pray for priests.

On Saturday, place a candle and water on the tray. Meditate on the empty tomb (Lk. 24 1-8). He is risen and so are we, by baptism. Renew our baptismal commitment.

Yes, your home is a church. Celebrate Holy Week there. It will prepare you well toward celebrating it in your parish church-family! It will steel you, like St. Thomas More, when hard decisions have to be made!

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