

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

**Suffering Brings Maturity**

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Jn. 20:19-31. (R1) Pt. 1:3-9. (R2) Acts 2:42-47.

Among the joys of the Easter season, the letter of Peter sounds a somber note. A note of joy: "There is cause for rejoicing here" — for the new life given through baptism. Then a minor chord: "You may for a time have to suffer the distress of many trials." (R2)

Finding purpose in suffering has always been a monumental problem.

Charlie Brown dealt with this problem on a baseball diamond. Charlie was pitching his team to another disaster. He called a conference on the mound with Schroeder, the catcher, and says, "We're getting slaughtered again, Schroeder... I don't know what to do... Why do we have to suffer like this?"

Schroeder, heading back for the plate, quoted Job, "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward."

Within moments the whole team is centered

around the manager and embroiled in a discussion on the theology of suffering. Lucy says, "If a person has had bad luck, it's because he's done something wrong, that's what I always say!"

But Schroeder says, "I think a person who never suffers, never matures... suffering is actually important."

But Lucy can't buy that; she retorts, "Who wants to suffer? Don't be ridiculous!"

Lucy is like the friends of Job: suffering is a return for evil, awfully unpleasant and obviously useless. Schroeder is like the author of the Peter letter in the second reading: suffering brings maturity, growth — it's a necessary part of life and our development. Life without suffering is like playing tennis with the net down. Without being tested through suffering, we do not progress or become genuine. I prefer Schroeder's (and Peter's) answer to Lucy's.

All of us are familiar with the music of the American composer George Gershwin. Many people love it very much. George Gershwin was the first serious composer of jazz in the world. He was cap-

tivated by its happy rhythms. He became famous for his song, "Swansee," as sung by Al Jolson. Later, he composed his internationally famous "Rhapsody in Blue." One year later he composed and performed his "Concerto in F." That was followed by "American in Paris." Then he wrote music for the Pulitzer Prize-winning musical comedy, "Of Thee I Sing." He was young, rich, and famous because of his happy music.

At a party given in his honor, the speaker for the evening — a man named Otto Kahn — said one element was missing from Gershwin's music: "The legacy of sorrow, the note that springs from the deepest stirrings of the race. George, you have never experienced the suffering in which the music of the really great composers is seeded. The long drip of human tears, my dear George... they fertilize the deepest roots of art."

Gershwin was not able to forget those words. He searched for a way. Then he remembered a play: a story about the love of a crippled black beggar for a girl named Bess. He knew it was right for him. He stopped work on other contracts worth a quarter-million dollars. Out of Gershwin's search for legacy of suffering and sorrow, he produced the American opera, "Porgy and Bess," now known all over the world.

All the works of Fedor Dostoevski, one of the greatest literary geniuses of all time, have one theme: redemption through suffering, not just physical, but the emotional and spiritual suffering that makes one fully human.

Nor need we fear the suffering we need. God will never permit more suffering than we can bear. He knows our frame, and will walk in the furnace with us!

**CDA Court Notes 50th**

Penn Yan — Court St. Michael of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas here will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its founding with a Mass at 11 a.m. Sunday, May 3, at St. Michael's Church.

Father Thomas F. McVeigh, pastor and court chaplain, and Father Ronald Stacy, associate pastor, will concelebrate. Following the Mass, a dinner will be held at the Dresden Hotel.

The current state regent of the group, Miss Barbara L. Hennessy from Binghamton, and her second in command, Mrs. Catherine Cramer of Albany, will be guest speakers at the dinner.

The event is being chaired by Mrs. Virginia Terpolilli, court regent, and past regents of the court. Three original

members of the group will be guests. They are Mrs. Lena Goundry, Miss Helen Barry and Mrs. Charlotte Walsh.

The present court, which numbers 111 women, is dedicated to the benefit of Catholic womanhood under the guidance of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The group is widely known for its charitable work, both local and international.

**CARDIAC PROGRAM**

The Alumnae Association at St. Mary's Hospital will sponsor a program on new techniques of cardiac care from 12:30 to 4 p.m., Tuesday, May 5 in the Bishop Kearney Education Building. The program is free to alumni. For further information those interested may call Ruth Courtney, 247-2963.

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MARKETVIEW HEIGHTS:**

**The Section 8 Moderate Rehabilitation Program is now available.**

The program provides guaranteed rents to rental property owners in 6 conservation areas in the City of Rochester, including Marketview Heights.

To qualify, each unit of the structure must be at least \$1000 below City Code standards. The unit will then be upgraded and rented to low income tenants certified by the Rochester Housing Authority.

Added to the fair market rents paid to the owner will be the cost of rehabilitation amortized over 15 years, plus monthly allowances for debt service, insurance, utilities (if owner-paid), maintenance, and contingencies.

A meeting will be held for owners of rental property in Marketview Heights explaining this program on

**Thursday, April 23, 7 p.m.**

at the  
**Housing Council**  
121 N. Fitzhugh Street  
Second Floor  
Downtown Presbyterian Church  
For More Information, Call  
**428-6917**

\*A Spanish Speaking Translation will be available