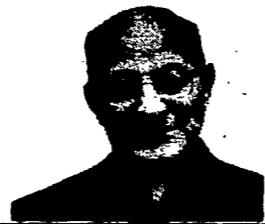


Fr. Albert
Shamon



Word for Sunday

Heeding The Word Of God

Sunday's Readings: (R3)
Mt. 13:1-23. (R1) Is. 55:10-11. (R2) Rom. 8:18-23.

The Liturgy Sunday talks of rain and snow and seed-sowing.

Snow and rain are characterized by gentleness which merges into force. A raindrop hits the pavement and splashes into nothingness. But when raindrop follows raindrop in a river, bit by bit the river grows, till all at once it overflows and none can resist its onward rush. The noiseless snowflake, soft as swan's down, touches the hand and melts away. But flake falling upon flake can snowbound cities, even entire states.

Rain and snow seem so helpless, yet they become such blessings. What can a drop of rain do for man? Or even a flake of snow? Almost nothing by themselves alone. But steady raindrops can make the earth laugh with grain and can provide "food for the service of men." (Ps. 147) Like the circulation of the blood in the human body, rain keeps the earth alive. How good is the rain that loves all leaves and discriminates against none. And snow? The Psalmist also sang, "He spreads snow like wool." It envelops the earth in warmest ermine, preventing the permafrost that could snuff out the seeds of life nestled in the earth. The pity of the snow heals and hides the scars of earth and takes old familiar sights and transforms them into a fairy land of delights.

Man has nothing to do with the coming of rain and snow. It is God "who covers the heavens with clouds and provides rain for the earth." As for the snowflake, Francis Thompson once asked, "What heart could ever have thought up a snowflake?" He answered, "It is past man's devising — fashioned, as it is, so purely, fragility, surely. Only God could have shaped it — so purely, so palely, timidly, surely, mightily, frailly, insculped and embossed, with His hammer of wind and His graver of frost."

The prophet, Second-Isaiah, likened the word of God to rain and snow. Like these elements, God's word comes from above. It is freely given, but it must be freely received. Man has nothing to do but receive it. God's word, seemingly as weak and insignificant as words can be, is power. In the beginning God said, "Let there be light," and light was made. God's Son said to a leper, "Be clean," and the leper was cleansed. Other Christs say everyday, "This is my body," and dead bread becomes the body and blood of the risen Christ. Only a word, but almighty when it is God's word. His all-powerful word rains blessings — "Peace be to you."

Only one thing can bind God's word: the resistance of man. This was what the parable of the sower was meant to teach. Early Christians recalled this parable of our Lord to explain why so few people had listened to the teachings of Jesus and why so many of those who had heard them had fallen away. Rain will not make sea-sand fertile. Rain will not cause seed to sprout even in rich soil if no seed has been sown. Nor will seed sown grow to harvest if it is choked by weeds.

If God's word returns void and does not achieve the end for which He sent it, the fault is man's. Man is free. He can turn God off — for God's word is gentle as the rain and soft as snow and dependent on man as the seed on soil and rain.

Some will not listen to God's word. Blithely, they skip Mass. Others are too busy for Sunday Mass. The cares of the world have choked out their time. They have none for Mass, that is. Others go to Sunday Mass — but they are always late. Their attitude is the Liturgy of the Word does not much matter. It is only the word of God! How sad! So God sends rain He sends snow. Every year man has to sow seed in the earth. It is His way of constantly reminding us of a greater sowing going on at every Mass and every time we read the Bible — and of a greater harvest that will one day be reaped — if, if only, we would pay more attention to His word each Sunday.



Southern Tier Auburn-Geneva

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Notre Dame Coach, Athletes Honored

Elmira — Two Notre Dame High School athletes and one of its winningest coaches were honored by the Elmira Kiwanis Club at a luncheon recently.

Jim Frisk, the undefeated first-singles player on the ND tennis team, was named the "athlete of the month" for his third consecutive sectional championship.

His coach, Sister Beatrice Curran, was named the female "Coach of the Year" for leading the team to its

fourth consecutive league championship.

Another ND athlete, Betsy Potter, who has competed in cross country, basketball, winter and spring track and softball at Notre Dame, was named the female "Athlete of the Year."

The ND tennis team, just now getting home courts on which to play, has posted a 37-7 record during the four championship seasons, including an 11-0 record this year.

Frisk has compiled a 37-6 record in four years on the team, including three as first-singles player. He also has won three sectional championships.

Frisk also has a 95.4 average, and will be in the premed program at the University of Rochester in the fall.

Sister Beatrice, who has taught history at Notre Dame since it opened in 1955, was drafted to coach the team in 1972 by some students who wanted to play.

In 10 years, the team has won 61 matches and lost 57, while winning five league titles, including the last four years. The tennis team has gone from rags to riches: the combined record of those five championship years is 49-9; the record for the other five is 12-48.

Sister Beatrice enjoys her voluntary tennis coaching, calling it "another fascinating facet in working with young people in the area that tests and develops mental and physical agility, coordination and skill."

Betsy Potter was named "Female Athlete of the Year" following an undefeated regular season in 800-meter and 1500-meter races. She also anchored the 1600-meter relay team, and totaled 38 first-place finishes on the 13-0 girls' track team. She also batted .600 on the girls' softball team this spring.

She holds the upstate record for 1500 meters, 4:56.0.

Girls' track coach Greg Grund noted that Betsy competed in races ranging from 400 to 3,000 meters, and that "not many runners, not many at all, are capable of doing so well at such divergent distances."

Winter track coach Dan Hurley describes her as a "fierce competitor, an inspiring team leader, and an example for younger kids. I wish we had 20 more like her."

Betsy earned 10 letters at Notre Dame: three in softball, two each in spring and winter track and cross-country, and one in basketball. In the classroom, she tallied a 93 average, and plans to study computer science at Lock Haven State College, Lock Haven, Pa., next year.



Polka

Dancing the polka was one of the major events at Elmira's St. Casimir's festival this year.

Sr. Anne Konopa To Head X-Ray Unit

Hornell — Sister Anne Konopa, RSM, has been named head of the radiology department at St. James Mercy Hospital, where she has been serving as acting department head.

She succeeds Wayne Mosher who resigned in April. William Connors, associate administrator, has announced.

Born in Rochester, Sister Anne is a 1965 graduate of Our Lady of Mercy High School; she entered the Sisters

of Mercy the same year. She received an associate's degree in 1968, and graduated from the Upstate Medical Center's School of Radiological Technology in 1971. She received her certification in nuclear technology in 1974.

Sister Anne joined St. James in 1971 as a technologist, and in 1975 was named nuclear medicine supervisor and assistant supervisor of the radiology department.

Charity Horse Show To Be July 9-12

Horseheads — St. Joseph's Hospital Auxiliary, in conjunction with the Chemung

Educational Director Named

Hornell — Patrick J. Rogers has joined St. James Mercy Hospital as educational director of the School of Radiography, succeeding Sister Margaret Ann Lawson who will be moving to Rochester in August. William Connors, associate administrator, has announced.

A native of Jamestown, Rogers was graduated from Women's Christian Association Hospital School of Radiologic Technology, from Jamestown Community College, and Buffalo State, from which he received his bachelor's and master's degrees.

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Valley Horsemen's Association, will present what they are billing as the "equestrian event of the year."

The "Elmira Charity Horse Show" will run from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily from Thursday, July 9, through Sunday, July 12, at the Chemung County Fairgrounds.

The event will have three competition divisions. Awards will include trophies, coolers and ribbons.

Refreshments, horse-minded gifts and other items will be on sale through the efforts of the hospital auxiliary. Programs describing the activities each day are available in the Volunteer Services Department at St. Joseph's.

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Home-School At St. James Ends Year

Waverly — The St. James Home-School Association's annual social was conducted recently. The event honors outgoing officers, welcomes parents of new students who will be attending St. James in the fall, and is a show of appreciation to volunteers who contributed to the school during the past year.

Father Edward Foy, pastor, welcomed the new parents, and spoke of the importance of parent participation in the school. He commended the association for its efforts.

Sister Anne Pfrang, principal, expressed her gratitude to the volunteers.

Colleen Talada, chairperson, presented the outgoing officers, Sharon Mente, Milt Emery, Colleen Talada, Jean Steed, Elsie Fraboni, Val Emery and Sandra Fraley, with gifts.

The officers for the 1981-82 school year are: Colleen Talada, president; Lynda Isbell, vice president; Sandra Fraley, secretary; Sondra Casterline, treasurer; and Sharon Lynch, public relations.

Memorial Mass Planned

Elmira — A memorial service will be conducted at 7 p.m., Wednesday, July 15, in the Dunn Chapel at St. Joseph's Hospital.

The Pastoral Care Department at St. Joseph's, sharing in the grieving of those who have experienced a death in the family, plans the worship service every two months for those who have died at the hospital in that period. Families of the deceased are invited to the service, and to a small social gathering following the Mass.

Deadline

The deadline for submitting news to the Courier-Journal is noon on Thursday preceding the following Wednesday's publication.

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