

Insights In Liturgy

By Sister Nancy Burkin, SSJ



people will be caught up in it.

As lectors we give our life breath to the printed word and it comes alive. The word that is alive gathers our people, permeates them and catches them up in the experience of God proclaimed to them. Scripture is not proclaimed in our assemblies as a lesson to be learned — it is the proclamation of God in our lives. It is an actual experience of God's presence with us now. It is the lector's bearing, presence and proclamation of the Word that allow this experience to happen. And when this experience happens, the missalette is forgotten.

One of the best examples of this is taking time before Mass to rehearse short antiphons such as the responsorial psalm that the people will hear played on the accompanying instrument and sung by the cantor or choir before they are asked to repeat it. This procedure does nothing to strengthen the people's confidence in their ability to sing short, simple antiphons without practice or copies of music and text.

The presence of a cantor or song leader is a sign to the people that the prayer will be sung. As the people become accustomed to repeating antiphons of good musical quality after the cantor or choir, their ability to be comfortable at prayer which is not rehearsed increases. They will not need copies in their hands, and will develop listening and memory abilities to such an extent that they will be amazed and proud of what they are able to do musically.

Frequent Complaints

Two of the most frequent complaints I hear as I work with liturgical ministers are these: "Why should I attempt to have eye contact with the assembly; they are buried in the missalette!" and "The people just won't sing."

If I were able to give an easy solution to these two problems I would do myself out of a job. There is no easy solution to these and other difficulties we face when we stand with the people of God and attempt to lead them in

sung prayer or gather them around the Word.

However, as a help toward solving the dilemmas expressed by the complaints, I offer these reflections:

We see that the subject of each is the gathered community. Perhaps it ought to be ourselves as ministers.

At a liturgical conference I once attended, the speaker said, "We are here to learn what the people already know." Maybe the people are telling us that our proclamation must be so life-filled, so true to the message of God, so sincere that our

But there was another complaint — what about the singing?

Perhaps one of the reasons our people refuse to sing is because we insist on telling them they can do it and yet we act as though they cannot.



Trant's Dedicated

Bishop Matthew H. Clark signs the guest registry at Trant's following dedication ceremonies, becoming the first to officially do so at the store's new location at 696 South Ave., as Manager Albert G. Walz, right, and other guests look on. The store which deals in religious goods recently moved from its location on South Clinton Avenue because of the city's planned renovations. This year marks the 70th for the business in the Rochester area.

Heating Bill Help Offered

Action for a Better Community's Energy Crisis Intervention Program is taking applications for those seeking help in paying last winter's heating bills.

Caseworkers will be taking the applications from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Wednesday, July 27-29, at 700 North St. More information is available from 262-3402.

HELPING HANDS

A new Federal ACTION program in Rochester, the Helping Hands Program, is seeking low income persons 60 and over to work as senior companions to mentally disadvantaged older adults preparing to live in the community. Persons interested in the program are advised that a stipend of \$2 an hour for 20 hours a week, with transportation, meal reimbursement, training and insurance are provided. Further information is available by calling Laura Zupparo, 473-3230, ext. 367.

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