

Reconciliation a Gift to World

Following is excerpted from Pope John Paul's address to the Council of the General Secretariat of the Synod, meeting in Rome discussing "Reconciliation and Penance in the Mission of the Church."

It is clear that from the beginning of his preaching, Christ insisted on the necessity of penance. His purpose in doing everything that he did was to make men realize that the foundation of his teaching and of his activity on earth was the reconciliation of the whole of mankind with God the Father and of men with one another. Jesus accepted and made his own the maxims of the Old Testament about the infinite love of the Father which conquers all sin. At the same time he pardoned men's sins and in this he illustrated his deep desire for reconciliation with God and with his fellow man — something which no one who is not human can have at heart. Finally, by his death on the cross he showed the entire justice of God and to some extent his more abundant mercy. Therefore, Christ has taught us once and for all how we can obtain mercy and how we should bestow it. He has taught us also in what way we can overcome dissension, hatred, excessive self-love, in order to devote ourselves freely with all our strength to the construction of a more just and human world.



But Christ, the teacher of penance and the author of reconciliation, not only laid down these principles for living by his example and his words, even now he continues to do and to teach the same things through his Spirit working in the Church especially through us, the pastors chosen to take the place of the apostles to lead the people of God on a clear, safe path. The Church, our mother, which we love so much, serves the Lord continually and brings his pardon to men by bestowing his divine grace through the ministry of the word and of the sacraments of salvation, especially the Eucharist and Penance. On the other hand, we who are also sinners carefully guard these treasures of

evangelical teaching and divine grace which we share with our brothers and sisters for the sake of the Lord. This is indeed that "ministry of charity" of which our esteemed brother Cardinal Zoungana and the Secretary of the Synod, or esteemed Brother Jozef Tomko — faithful sharers of our thoughts — spoke in the pleasing telegram which I was very happy to receive from the Synod Hall. I know that your one consideration is the will of Christ, the community of the universal Church, the advantage to all the faithful, the success of genuine conciliar renewal, while even today you are completing your consultations and deliberations about the proposed theme of penance and reconciliation in the mission of the Church. Certainly from this synod a new and keen awareness of the harm which we do to our baptism by sinning can arise among men and of that continual pardon and divine mercy which we always need so that we can fulfill our Christian mission on earth. But likewise, outside the Church this salvific message of pardon and brotherly reconciliation can be of very great help to all men. For the anxieties of this time and the errors affecting the minds of the same people, even the doubts and despair will be greatly relieved and lessened, if men have regained true liberty of spirit, if they recognize that their own nature is inclined to evil and at the same time the sure hope that help and salvation can come from the God of mercy.

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Brockport Catholics Slate Special Talk

Brockport — Sister Helen Goschke, SSJ, pastoral assistant at the Church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, will be the principal speaker for a discussion, "Searching the Advent Scriptures," jointly sponsored by the parish and the Newman Center at SUNY.

The event will be 7-8:30 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 6, at the Newman Center, 101 Kenyon St.

While there is no fee, persons attending have been asked to bring a plate of favorite snacks to pass during the fellowship time following the discussion.

Wanted: Parents For Showtime

The stage call has gone out for the annual Bishop Kearney Kabaret. BK parents will gather for an informational meeting at 7:30 p.m., Monday, Dec. 7, in the school band room. All parents interested in performing in the '82 Show of Shows, under the direction of Ray Shahin, or helping with scenery, costumes, staging, lighting are requested to attend. First rehearsal meeting will be at 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 15. The Kearney Kabaret began in 1967 with the dinner/theater that features dinner, cash bar, performance,

and dancing, beginning in 1977.

The curtain will go up on the '82 Show of Shows Feb. 5-6, and proceeds will benefit the school's tuition assistance program. For further information call Mrs. Peg Gillen at 342-4000.

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FOCUS ON EUCHARIST

The Focus on the Eucharist devotions open with evening prayer at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 3, at St. Cecilia's Church. Father Robert Doell will preside that evening and celebrate Mass at 8 p.m. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament follows Mass.

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On the Right Side

Archbishop Sheen Tapes In Kenya

To: His Eminence Michael Maurice Cardinal Otunga.

Your Eminence:

During October I escorted a group from the diocese of Rochester, N.Y., to Kenya. Our purpose was mostly a picture-taking safari to the game reserves, and to see beautiful Kenya. But we also had an interest in the works of the Church. Our Propagation of the Faith Director, Father Joseph Reinhart, sent an exuberant letter to you and to several bishops and priests, announcing our coming. We did meet many on our safari.

Now, Eminence, I come to a special point. In the past six years I have sold and donated over 42,000 Sheen conferences on tape. Five years ago I had a request for a set of his earlier conferences from the Mother Superior of a Carmelite Convent in South Africa. Afterward, she wrote: "We rarely have conferences from priests, since there so few. The conferences of Archbishop Sheen are a God-send to us. Are there

any more?" And one of your young Kenyan priests told me Abp. Sheen's books were a source of confirmation of vocation for him and others at the seminary.

With these memories, I went to your impressive "Catholic Book Store" near the Cathedral of Nairobi, run by the Italian Daughters of St. Paul and asked for the Sister who did the buying. I do not know if it was a language problem, but I tried to explain that I had some Sheen tapes to GIVE her, and hoped she would find them of sufficient value to order more from the States to stock the bookstore. Her reply was brief and blunt. "We need cassettes in the local languages. No one would buy these." A bit piqued, I replied, "Then why don't you have them?" She gave an Italianesque shrug of the shoulders and was called away from the office.

However, two Dominican Sisters of the Rosary from the Philippines were at the phone in the same office while the conversation was going on. They were distressed at the difficulty in getting back home to Ngong. "We waited over two hours to get a bus, but it was always full. So we are trying to reach Bishop Davies to get a ride with

him." I said, "Here, Sisters. Take these tapes along with you." One was a handsome Sheen album, "Seven Burdens of Sorrow," one of Sheen's best. The others were single cassettes from Ampico Sound Company in New Jersey. They were ecstatic. "Oh, this is why, God had us miss the bus! We heard Abp. Sheen in the Philippines. He was wonderful. These talks will be a blessing to our Community." They left praising God for having missed the bus to come upon the Sheen cassettes.

Yesterday I ordered 200 cassettes from Ampico Sound to be sent directly to you. They are a gift. Will you distribute them among your missionaries? And please include Father Gleason, the Maryknoll Father teaching at the seminaries outside Nairobi. He comes from Phelps in our diocese. And also Sister Misericordia, RSM, the administrator of Misericordia Hospital in Nairobi. She gave us a good tour of the hospital which is so great a witness to Our Lord and the Church among your people.

Perhaps you might encourage the Daughters of St. Paul to stock some of them. I am confident that these conferences will be an inspiration among the English speaking priests and Sisters and Brothers.

Please give Rochester's greetings to all the fine priests and other religious whom we did meet on our safari to Kenya. And we ask your blessing.

Deadline

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

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