



Queen of the Americas

This image of Our Lady of Guadalupe is enshrined in a basilica in Mexico City. Saturday marks the 450th anniversary of its appearance on the cloak of a Mexican peasant, Juan Diego, who was visited several times by an apparition of the Virgin. Pope John Paul II has dedicated his pontificate to Mary under the title of Our Lady of Guadalupe. She is also known as Queen of the Americas.

SBI Lists Programs

An invitation has been extended to "The Spring Experience" at St. Bernard's Institute

Nine course offerings are described in a leaflet mailed to priests, religious communities and parish educators and to lay people who have signalled an interest in SBI. Classes begin Jan. 12 and end May 1.

Registration will be taken through Jan. 11.

The institute is housed in Trevor Hall on the South Goodman Street campus of the Divinity Schools. It opened in September after the closing of St. Bernard's Seminary with teachers from the seminary faculty. It

Hunger Network To Meet

Religious and community groups interested in advocacy, education and/or direct services related to food and hunger problems locally and overseas will meet from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, at the Downtown United Presbyterian Church, 121 North Fitzhugh St. The meeting is being sponsored by the Ad Hoc Planning Committee (representatives from Action for a Better Community, Genesee Ecumenical Ministries, Peace and Justice Center of the past Share the Harvest Week observance in recognition of World Food Day.

All interested persons or groups are urged to attend. For more information call 232-6530.

continues the master's degree programs that the seminary provided and the Continuing Education program of the parent institution.

In the Spring semester, Father Sebastian Falcone, dean, will give a course entitled "Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament," 7:45 p.m., Tuesdays. His Thursday classes, from 2:15 to 5 p.m., will study early Church communities.

Father Joseph Hart will discuss "Classics of Lay Spirituality," 7:45 p.m., Wednesdays; and "Sin, Grace and Salvation," 10:11:15 a.m., Mondays and Tuesdays.

Dr. Joseph Torma has a course entitled "In Pursuit of Utopia," 7:45 p.m., Wednesdays; and one on social ministry that emphasizes "skills for local Church organization and leadership," 2:15-5 p.m., Mondays.

Father Robert Kennedy, director of Continuing Education, will talk about "Myth, Rituals, Signs and Symbols," 7:45 p.m., Mondays. Father George Hill will explore the psychology of C.G. Jung in "The Undiscovered Self," 7:45 p.m., Tuesdays.

Registration is done by contacting the institute's offices, 1100 South Goodman, Rochester, N.Y. 14620: (716) 271-1320, ext. 29. Persons interested in the Master of Divinity or Master of Arts in Theology programs are asked to call for an appointment with the dean.

We Are Asked to the Feast

Following is excerpted from a homily given by Pope John Paul II.

The Liturgy, with the words of Psalm 25, speaks of the Lord who is shepherd of his people, the shepherd of every soul, really the Good Shepherd.

It is he who guarantees his flock, which we are, the abundant and safe pastures of grace. The Lord, therefore, is the source of our joy: "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for thou art with me." Under his guidance we are tranquil and proceed easily along the way of our life and of our responsibilities.



In the letter to the Philippians, St. Paul expresses, in a way, the text of the ancient Psalm in New Testament language, when he writes: "And my God will supply every need of yours according to the riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

I exhort you, dear brothers and sisters, to live the same faith as the apostle! Let us seek these riches, which God offers men in Jesus Christ! Let us be able to repeat with the apostle: "I can do all things in him who strengthens me."

Today, unfortunately, many men appear not to have the sense of the spiritual riches that are derived from communion with the Lord. Many are won over by a materialistic and secularistic attitude, which refuses to perceive this superior dimension of man's. We must be aware of these secularistic perspectives. Therefore continual conversion of the mind and heart

is necessary. Only in this way are the riches of God, offered to men in Christ, revealed more and more fully to the eyes of our souls.

And therefore also on the occasion of today's meeting with your parish, I express the hope that each and every one of you will not behave with regard to the invitation "to the marriage feast for his son," in the way we hear in the Gospel.

In fact, the first to be invited "would not come;" others again insulted or killed the servants who brought the invitation. All those actually were "not worthy," probably because with incredible presumption and self-sufficiency, they considered the banquet useless or at least secondary to their own requirements and claims. In fact, it was the poor who accepted the invitation, those "in the thoroughfares... bad and good;" that is, those who in their humility recognized the undeserved richness of God's gift, and accepted it with simplicity.

We too must be aware first and foremost of the invitation to a transforming communion with the Lord, which is addressed to us by the Word of God and by the preaching of the Church. Furthermore, we must be able to accept it with our whole heart, with full availability, in the certainty that the Lord wants only our advancement, our salvation.

Finally, as it is suggested by the allegory of the wedding garment which ends the parable, we are also called to appear before the Lord properly attired; that consists in good works that must accompany our faith, as Jesus himself warns us: "Unless your righteousness (that is your everyday life) exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." But if this condition is fulfilled, then the feast is a full and intense one.

Alumna Returns To Share Talents

A celebrity is a faculty member at Our Lady of Mercy High School. Ms. Phyllis Contestable, "Ms. Phyl" as she prefers to be called, is teaching a new pilot course in pop commercial singing at the school and is also giving group and private lessons in guitar.

Ms. Contestable is no stranger to the musical arena. She sang with the Fred

Costello Band which appeared in many area restaurants, and had a studio in Brighton where she gave lessons. In the mid-70s she formed her own group, "Three's a Crowd," which performed in upstate New York and New England. Her husband, John McNeill, a percussionist with the Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, was a member of the group.

After "Three's a Crowd" broke up, Ms. Contestable became a vocalist for "Apple Band" and performed in Atlantic City, many of the southern states and in Montreal, Canada.

Although Ms. Contestable is more stationary now than when she was traveling, she keeps herself busy. Besides teaching at Mercy, she gives lessons at her home and sings with Allan Jones Friday and Saturday at the Changing Scene. Recently she was the narrator for "Peter and the Wolf" with the Perinton Symphony. Sister Virginia Hogan, SSJ, who directed the program, was Ms. Contestable's first music teacher in grammar school.

Returning to Mercy was a coming home for Ms. Contestable. She is an alumna of the school and while at Mercy was active in glee club, vocal groups and plays. After graduating she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy. She received her BA in interdisciplinary arts for

children with a specialization in music from SUNY at Brockport. She taught classroom vocal, guitar and chorus for grades 1-8 at St. James and Good Shepherd grammar schools. In 1969 she left the congregation to pursue a different lifestyle.

Program Needs Volunteers

A volunteer information night is scheduled for this evening, Dec. 9, at 7:30 at St. Joseph's Village, 3300 Dewey Ave. The meeting is open to new volunteers and anyone interested in learning about volunteer opportunities at the Villa. Adult volunteers are needed to be special friends to youths 12-15 years of age. Staff members will be available to discuss the program and answer questions. For more information contact Sister Phyllis Tierney, director of volunteers, at 865-1550.

More Opinions

A Warning For the Future

Editor:

This is a fable for tomorrow.

"A strange blight crept over the area and everything began to change. An evil spell had settled in the community; mysterious maladies swept the flocks of chickens; cattle and sheep sickened and died. Everywhere was the shadow of death. Farmers spoke of much illness among their families. Doctors had become more puzzled by new kinds of illnesses appearing among their patients. There had been several sudden, unexplained deaths, even among children, who would be stricken suddenly while at play and die within a few hours.

"The stillness was strange. The birds — where had they gone? Many people spoke about them; puzzled, disturbed. The few birds seen anywhere were moribund; they shook violently and could not fly. It was spring without voices. In the mornings that had once throbbed with the dawn chorus of robins, catbirds, doves, jays, wrens and scores of other bird voices, there was no sound.

"Farmers complained that they were unable to raise any pigs. Apple trees were coming into bloom but no bees droned among them, so there was no pollination and would be no fruit. Roadsides were now lined with browned, withered vegetation as though swept by fire. Also the streams were now lifeless.


"In the gutters, under the eaves, and between the shingles of the roofs, white granular powder still showed a few patches. Some week before, it had fallen like snow upon the roofs, lawns, fields and streams.

"No witchcraft, no foreign enemy had silenced the rebirth of new life in this stricken world. The people had done it themselves with highly toxic unnecessary chemicals."

Unfortunately, no American community has been free of one or more of the above disasters, and this imagined tragedy may easily become a stark reality we all shall know.

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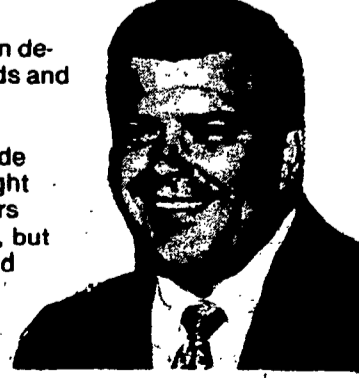
Editor's Note: The quotation in the above letter is taken from "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson.



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