

# At Your Parish...

## St. Anne's, Palmyra

Thomas Driscoll, director of religious education at St. Louis Church, Penfield, will open a series on "Morality — The Church, Adults, Families, Our Youth Today," at 7:30 p.m., Sunday, Jan. 31.

Driscoll will explore shifts in religious thinking on such subjects as birth control, homosexuality, non-marital sexuality, artificial insemination, genetic screening and euthanasia.

His address will be followed Feb. 7 by Father Matthew Kawiak's presentation, "Parent's Educational Approach to Sexuality," and March 14 by Ken Rabinowitz's address, "Communicating Values to Our Adolescents."

The series is sponsored by the Education Committee of St. Anne's.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

## Satire, Irony, And Jonah

Sunday's Readings: 1/24/82 (R1) Jon. 3:1-5, 10. (R2) 1Cor. 7:29-31. (R3) Mk. 1:14-20.

The Book of Jonah takes just two pages in the Bible. Why not read it this week? It really is a humorous story, full of satire and irony. Probably the only historical thing about it is the name of the prophet Jonah. But he is not the author of the book since Jonah was an 8th century prophet, whereas the story was written around 400 B.C.

The Jews had just come back from exile in Babylon. They found that pagans had settled in Palestine. In a short time, the Jews started to intermarry with them, to the great detriment of their religion.

In the crisis, God rised up Nehemiah, who went around breaking up the marriages. As a result of this cleansing movement, the Jews got the idea that God was their particular possession and that he had no interest in other people. Theologically, this is unsound. God is the God of all men, no matter what their nation may be. If they repent, he will be merciful. "God is good and upright, he shows sinners the way." (Resp. Ps.) That is what the author of Jonah wanted to teach.

To get this teaching across, the author used a story, a delightful and fictitious one. God sends Jonah to Niniveh, the capital of cruel Assyria. Assyria had destroyed ten of the twelve tribes of Israel. Hence, for the Jew, it personified evil and enmity with God. Yet Jonah was to preach penance to the despised Assyrians. He, by no means relishes the role. In fact, he takes off in the opposite direction to escape fulfilling it. He boards a ship.

God, of course, is not to be frustrated. There is a miracle after miracle — a storm, a choice by lot, and a big fish. After a three-day retreat in the fish's belly, Jonah decides to go along with God.

Conveniently spewed up in the northern section of the Mediterranean, he goes

to Niniveh and preaches. The worst possible thing happens. He is a success. The Ninivites listen and are converted — and saved. Horrors! So Jonah sulks. God's mercy saved Jonah from drowning. God's mercy forgave Jonah for his disobedience. And yet, Jonah would deny this mercy to others. What a satire on the narrow-mindedness of those who all along have been the recipients of God's mercy, yet begrudge it to others.

St. Mark shows Christ preaching the same message as the author of Jonah. "The good news of God," which he proclaimed is the good news about God, namely, that God is the God of all men — "a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger, rich in clemency, loath to punish." (Jon. 4:2)

Only one condition is set to receive God's favors. It is the same condition set for the Ninivites — "Reform your lives." This means more than "keep the Ten Commandments." In the mouth of Jesus, it meant "believe in the Gospel." To believe in the Gospel obviously meant doing what the four apostles called by Jesus did: to follow him unconditionally and share his task of bringing the good news about God's love for men to other men.

The following of Christ is the reformation, the renewal asked for by the Gospel. This means reorienting one's entire personality so that it radiates Christ.

Without God's help this is impossible. Prayer is the request for that help. Thus every day Cardinal Newman prayed that he might become more Christlike. We can well cut out this prayer and say it daily:

Dear Jesus, help me to spread your fragrance everywhere. Flood my soul with your spirit and life. Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly that all my life may be only a radiance of yours. Shine through me and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with may feel your presence in my soul. Let them look up and see no longer me but only Jesus.

Paul says the time is short (R2). So get with it!

## St. Michael's, Newark

Newark — A four-day program of "renewal in faith" has been slated by St. Michael's Church for 7:30 p.m. Jan. 18 through 21.

The Sisters of Charity from the St. Elizabeth Seton House of Prayer in Scarsdale will present the program which includes the themes, "Experiencing the Love of God," "Jesus, Lord and Savior," "Living in the Power of the Spirit," and "God's Healing Power and a Celebration Mass."

## St. John, Greece

"The Witness," a musical account of the life of Jesus, will be presented at 8 p.m. Friday, Jan. 22, at St. John the Evangelist Church, 2400 Ridge Road West, Greece.

The youth choirs of Hope Lutheran Church will sing the libretto is taken from the Gospel of John. The narrator of the performance is identified as Peter.

The event is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served in the parish center following the performance.

## St. Joseph's, Rush

Rush — A showing of the film, "Assignment: Life," will take place at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at St. Joseph's Church parish hall here. The movie features the comments of Rep. Henry Hyde from Illinois; Jack Willke, author; James Dobson, evangelist; and Cardinal Timothy Manning among others.

## St. Theodore

The Rosary and Alta Society of St. Theodore Church will serve a dinner by Bell's Supermarket, 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 26, in the school hall. A limited number of tickets at \$2.50 per person over age 16 is available at the parish rectory or by calling 458-7846.

## St. Ambrose

The film, "Assignment: Life," will be shown at St. Ambrose 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Jan. 27, in St. Ambrose School. Peg Turiano, coordinator of the diocesan Human Life Commission, will answer questions relating to the Hatch Amendment as part of the presentation.

## St. Philip Neri

The Women's Club of St. Philip Neri Church will meet Tuesday, Jan. 26. Benediction will be celebrated in the church at 7:45 p.m. The meeting will follow at 8 p.m. in the school hall.

## Holy Rosary

Robert Maxwell Case, popular local country singer, will perform in a benefit concert for Holy Rosary School, 9 p.m. — 1 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 23, in Sacred Heart School Hall. The donation for the event is \$5 per person and tickets must be purchased in advance at Holy Rosary Rectory, 414 Lexington Ave. The school was recently destroyed by fire.

# Cathedral Sets Adult Ed.

Father Sebastian Falcone, the dean and director of St. Bernard's Institute, will, for the ninth time, present a course in the adult education program at Sacred Heart Cathedral. He will teach "A Key to the Book of Revelation." A class on "Basic Clownology," open to high school students and adults, and a special daytime course, "Paul and His Journey of Faith," complete the spring agenda.

Father Falcone's eight-week course covers the book of Daniel, related non-canonical writings, and the Apocalypse, exploring the meanings of the visions and symbols, the message of the author, and the theological and literary keys to understanding the work.

The course will be held from 8 to 10 p.m. on Wednesdays, beginning Feb. 3, in the rectory hall.

## Deadline

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

"Basic Clownology" will be offered by Richard Kirsch, member of the Clowns of America and president of Grease Paint Alley Clowns here. The course covers makeup, costuming, balloon-creation, the tradition of clowning, the uses of clowning in ministry and more. Individual attention will be given each student as the student develops a clown character. The class size is limited to 25. No registration fee is required, but pre-registration by mail or phone (647-1900) is requested. The class will meet 7-9 p.m.,

Thursdays, beginning Feb. 4, in the rectory hall.

"Paul and His Journey of Faith," a course in the theology of Paul as reflected in his writings and in his effect on the early Church and the Church of today, will be taught by Father Thomas Wheeland, associate pastor. The class will meet 1:30-2:30 p.m. on Tuesdays, beginning Feb. 2, in the rectory recreation room.

Registration for any of the courses is made by calling 647-1900.

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