

CFC Has Urgent Need For New Foster Homes

Catholic Family Center last week issued an urgent plea for mature, caring parents who can open their home to Michael, a 16-year-old, who was adopted at an early age. When the adoptive parents were unable to care for Michael any longer he was placed in an institution and has remained there for seven years.

According to the center's Joyce Daley, "Michael has found it difficult to accept this rejection by his adoptive parents but is learning to cope better now. Because every youth needs a family, we believe Michael should be given a chance to form a relationship with a foster family. Michael, because he's afraid that he will be rejected again, will need to move very slowly with this new

relationship with lots of visits before finally moving in."

In addition to that situation, she said, the center is also seeking temporary foster homes for teenage unmarried mothers who are seeking an alternative to abortion. "Some are unable to remain in their own homes during their pregnancy and need a temporary place to stay until their children are born. Some may wish to return to the foster home for a short period of time with the baby in order to have time to think about what is best for the child and themselves."

The center is also looking for foster homes for Vietnamese and Laotian unaccompanied minors, mostly boys, between 12 and 17, who arrive in the United States from Asian refugee camps.

"Clothing, board, special tutoring in English and medical supervision are provided through CFC," Mrs. Daley said. "Every child will have the services of caseworker and interpreter to help in his adjustment." She also indicated that support groups for the foster parents is also available.

"We are especially looking for a foster home for two brothers, age 17 and 15, from Vietnam," she said. "Their father is deceased, but their mother, two sisters and a brother are still living in South Vietnam. These boys escaped to the Kaho Refugee Camp in Hong Kong, June 9, 1981. They both are anxious to come to the United States to continue their education and to make a new beginning. We would like to keep these boys together in one foster home. However, if we were able to find two foster homes in the same neighborhood we might be able to consider this as a possibility."

Persons interested in the CFC foster home program are asked to call Mrs. Daley of Miss Bernadette Slater, (716) 546-7220.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Praying Can Ease Insomnia

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mk. 1:29-39, (R1) Jb. 7:1-4, 6-7, (R2) 1 Cor. 9:16-19, 22-23.

Sunday's first and third readings are about insomnia and the two different responses to it — Job's and Jesus'.

Frank Sinatra has been quoted as giving this advice for getting through the night. He is alleged to have said, "I'm for anything that gets you through the night, be it prayer, pills, or a bottle of Jack Daniels."

Job had his troubles getting through the night. "I have been assigned months of misery," he moaned, "and troubled nights... I am filled with restlessness until the dawn. Job was not alone, is not alone. It is estimated that 20 to 50 million Americans — 10 to 25 percent of the population — suffer from insomnia. That's a lot of tossing and turning.

Night can be the symbol of ordeals in life. John of the Cross called emptiness, nothingness, aloneness, loneliness or feelings of abandonment, desolation, the "dark night of the senses and of the soul." F. Scott Fitzgerald wrote that "in a real dark night of the soul it is always 3 o'clock in the morning."

Well, whatever the troubled nights might be — physical or spiritual, actual sleeplessness or feelings of abandonment or despair — there is opportunity for great good.

It was a sleepless night that gave us our national anthem. On a dark night in 1814 a Baltimore lawyer and amateur songwriter sought the release of Dr. Beanes, held prisoner on a British warship off Baltimore. The lawyer had rowed out to the ship to pick up the physician. However, he was

detained temporarily aboard ship because the British fleet was preparing to bomb Fort Mchenry that night. Throughout the night of bombardment, the lawyer remained on deck, and at daybreak saw the United States colors still flying over the fort. Later that morning the lawyer, sitting in a rowboat, jotted down on an envelope: "Oh, say, can you see by the dawn's early light, /What so proudly we hail'd, at the twilight's last gleaming..."

Cornelius Ryan, the author of best-selling novels on World War II, including "The Longest Day," had cancer the last four and a half years of his life — an ordeal he labeled "The Longest Night."

Ryan said, "The most rewarding moments, the best writing, I think I've done, the love I've had for my wife and children, and the joy I have taken in their accomplishments — these have all been realized in the years I had cancer: my longest night."

Jesus, too, had a sleepless night in the Gospel, but instead of being restless till dawn. He did something positive: "He got up early the next morning, went off to a lonely place in the desert; there he was absorbed in prayer." You know, I bet many would have fewer restless nights if they planned to get up early in the morning and go off into the desert — their parish churches — and become absorbed in the greatest prayer: the morning Mass!

When I have a sleepless night, I find if I get out of bed and pray a rosary, sweet sleep sweeps right in. Sometimes I'm too lazy to get up, so I just say a few "Hail Marys" and soon I'm in the land of Nod.

I like this old Cornish prayer: "From ghoulies and ghosties, and long-leggy beaties, and all things that go bump in the night, good Lord, deliver us."

How a Poor Christian Martyr Became the Patron Saint of Lovers

By Bonnie Thompson
Religious News Service

When, on Feb. 14, we send cards and presents to our sweethearts signed "from your Valentine," we honor a saint who helped and protected Christian sweethearts in a time of severe persecution.

Right? Wrong: When you drop that card in the slot, you are carrying forward a custom that originated in a fertility festival as old as the founding of Rome, the Lupercalia.

In the third century, a Christian named Valentine was martyred on the day before the Lupercalia. When, in the fifth century, the church attempted to transform the lovers' festival into a saint's day, the saint became, in the popular mind, a patron of lovers.

St. Valentine is a mystery man — or perhaps mystery men, for various writers claim there were one, two, three, or possibly even eight martyrs named Valentine. The majority position is that there were two, but there just isn't enough evidence to settle the matter.

Whatever the facts were, the tradition that has come down to us is that Valentine was a Christian priest and doctor of Rome who refused to denounce his faith when arrested and interrogated, and was therefore beaten and beheaded on the 14th of February in 269 A.D.

The name "February" derives from the Latin "februa" meaning "things which purify." The Romans — and before them, the Greeks — devoted the month of February to purification ceremonies and sacrifices to the dead.

February, in Rome, was early spring, when it was crucial to placate spirits beneath the earth which might otherwise interfere with its fertility. One of the most important February festivals was the Lupercalia, celebrated on the 15th of the month.

As practiced in the classical period of Roman history, the Lupercalia began with the gathering of celebrants in a cave on the Palatine Hill called the "Lupercal," or "Place of the Wolf." A dog and two goats were sacrificed. Two young men of good family, called "luperci" or "wolf-aversers," smeared the blood of the goats on their bodies, and then washed the blood off with goats' hair dipped in milk.

Then they clothed themselves in the goats' skins, took in their hands strips of the goats' hides, and ran around the sacred boundary of the original settlement of Rome, hitting women with their thongs.

The names "Lupercal" and "luperci" make it plain that the rites were intended primarily to protect the flocks and herds within the magic circle from the wolves without. But the ceremony also included magic against the evil of human infertility.

The Lupercalian runners struck the women they passed in order to make them fertile. The thongs were "februa," or purifiers; the women were being cleansed of any evil spirits that might cause them to be barren.

Pope Gelasius I abolished it in 49 A.D., and tried to replace the festival with two Christian feast days. He declared Feb. 14 as St. Valentine's Day and Feb. 15 as the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin.

Waterloo Church To Host CERT

Waterloo — St. Mary's Church here will host level two of Continuing Education for Religion Teachers (CERT), the diocesan program, this year. Level two is entitled "Introduction to Scripture," and will be presented in five parts. It is the first time the church has hosted the program.

All sessions will be held at the parish school, 7:30-9:30 p.m. The course schedule and teachers follow:

Feb. 11, "Pentateuch, Creation, Covenant," by Father Albert Shamon, pastor; Feb. 25, "Prophets of Israel," Steven Graff, religious education coordinator, St. Joseph's, Weedsport/St. Patrick, Cato/

St. Thomas the Apostle, Red Creek; "Wisdom, Liturgy and Psalms," Graff; "Introduction to the New Testament (Synoptics)," Sister Mary Lynch, field consultant for religious education in the Southern Tier; "Jesus as Fulfillment: Christology, Writings of Sts. Paul and John," Peg Herstine, religious education coordinator of St. Alphonsus, Auburn.

The program is open to all religion teachers, aides, coordinators, administrators, and all interested in Scripture.

Registration is made by contacting Nina Duprey, 539-2025, or by writing Kathy McCutcheon, coordinator of CCD, 35 Center St. Waterloo, N.Y. 13165.

Hospital Fundraiser Gets Pledges from Staff and Helpers

Members of St. Mary's Hospital "family," the staff, trustees, employees, women's board and Seton branches, have pledged \$1,146.07 to the hospital's \$3 million modernization fundraising effort, it was announced last week.

In addition, the volunteer division leadership for the campaign was named by Sister Ann William Bradley, president, and William D. McGrath, chairman of the campaign.

Alan C. Hasselwander, executive vice president, finance and corporate development for Rochester Telephone Corp., will head the Corporate Gifts Division; Seymour M. Zivan, vice president, Information Systems Group, Logistics and Distribution for Xerox Corp., Major Gifts Division; Vito P. Laglia, M.D., Medical Gifts

Division; Henry Mundorff, director of finance at St. Mary's, Audit Division; Mrs. Donna Ortelec, Volunteer Division; David J. Metz, vice president and director of corporate communications for Eastman Kodak Co., Communications Division; Robert Mariano, senior vice president for Lincoln First Bank, NA, and Betty Farrell, past president and treasurer of the hospital's women's board, General Gifts Division; George Privitera, the hospital's director of purchasing, Family Division.

Blue Army

The monthly vigil sponsored by the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima will begin at 9 p.m. Friday, Feb. 5, at Holy Rosary Church. Fathers John Steger, Frederick Eisemann, and Dennis Bonsignore will lead the rites.

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