

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

We Are The Branches

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Jn. 2:1-12. (R1) Is. 62:1-5. (R2) 1 Cor. 12:4-11.

Jesus began His public life with a banquet and ended it with a banquet. In both banquets wine played a major part.

The first banquet was at Cana, four miles northeast of Nazareth. John viewed this miracle as a first sign of the divinization of man. Present at it was the woman, foretold in Genesis (3:15). According to John, the miracle took place "on the third day" — a clue to interpret it in the light of the resurrection. Thus the hour theme was also brought in. Whenever Jesus spoke of "His hour," He referred to His passion. His passion was the hour when His power was, so to speak, shackled. Herod branded Him a fool because He would work no miracle. Jewish leaders taunted, "He saved others, Himself He cannot save." His hour was the night come when no man can work (Jn. 9:4). Therefore Jesus' remark to Mary, "What to me and to you" (as it is in the Greek) could mean, "So you want me to get involved in this problem of yours, do you? (He said this no doubt with a smile.) Alright, I shall, for my hour has not yet come — the hour when my miraculous powers will be circumscribed. I can still work my works." Mary so understood and instructed those waiting on table, "Do whatever he tells you."

Lastly, there was the wine! Wedding feasts usually lasted from three days to a week. In Aramaic, they were called "drink festivals." Hence a wine lack would have been catastrophic. "Where there is no wine," went a rabbinical saying, "there is no joy."

In the ancient world, wine was an essential part of the economy. Depending as it does on the rhythm of the seasons and man's careful, ingenious labor, wine came to have a religious significance. At the presentation of the wine at

Mass, the priest alludes to this in the words "fruit of the vine (God's gift) and work of human hands" (man's cooperation) to remind us that salvation is the work of both God and man.

As Jesus was about to celebrate the banquet at the end of His life, He said, "I am the real vine" (Jn. 15:1) — not a false one, like fruitless Israel. His chosen vineyard. By shedding His blood for all men, He produced the wine of universal love. Thus the old wineskins of Judaic exclusivism and privilege could not hold the new wine.

We are the branches. Grapes grow from the branches and wine is squeezed from the grapes. To enable us to produce the wine of universal love, wine is taken at Mass and becomes the blood of Christ so that His love can get into our blood!

One of the great old time entertainers was Ted Lewis. He used to sashay onto the stage with a stove-pipe hat and a silver-knobbed cane, do a little soft-shoe, get everyone laughing, and then ask, "Is everybody happy?" Christ came to make everybody happy — to spread joy. He certainly could not have, shown this better than by a wedding gift of more than 150 gallons, or 800 bottles, of wine!

I often wondered what would have happened had Jesus not been at Cana. I bet there would have been a regular donnybrook. The groom would have blamed his bride for the wine shortage, and the bride her groom. The parents of one would have impugned the parents of the other. In any event, it would have been a sorry beginning harbingering a sorrier ending! But the problem never materialized because Jesus was there!

Marriages today will continue to flounder and fracture until we learn that Jesus must be invited — must be the third party in every marriage. "On the third day there was a wedding at Cana... Jesus... had been invited" — and that invitation made all the difference!

Workshop to Offer Teachers Basic Computer Know-How

By Joan M. Smith

Nazareth Academy's faculty and administration this Summer will share their expertise in the technology that has revolutionized virtually every aspect of society — the computer.

This Summer, Quest '83, a computer workshop program for diocesan elementary school teachers, will be offered at Nazareth starting July 18 and continuing to the end of the month.

Registration will be May 15 to June 1.

The course will cover the fundamentals of computer language, correlation of computer use and existing courses of study, writing programs, and a discussion of computer hardware and software.

Participants will receive diocesan in-service credit.

The program will consist of three-hour sessions, 9 a.m. to noon, with optional lab workshops in the afternoons.

According to Sister Carol Cimino, director of

development at Nazareth Academy, the course instructors, Sisters Ann Xavier Gantert and Patricia Sullivan, have offered to stay as long during the sessions as the participants wish. Sister Patricia is chairperson of the Nazareth math department, and Sister Ann Xavier was instrumental in designing the sequential math course now sanctioned by the New York State Education Department for secondary schools.

The idea for the project, said Sister Carol, came in November, and tasks and goals of the program were set in December. After discussing it with Sister Edwardine Weaver, superintendent of diocesan schools, Sister Janice Morgan, assistant superintendent of curriculum, and the Federation of School Principals, Nazareth received the go-ahead to offer the workshop.

"We're really excited," said Sister Carol, who explained that Nazareth is the first diocesan high school to offer such a program.

Also on the Nazareth computer horizon are plans to offer computer literacy for every freshman, and a computer program for

students completing the second year of math.

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THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER



EDWIN SULEWSKI

Can drugs be used to manage grief?

Grief is best managed by talking about it and expressing our feelings to those we trust. Drugs, including alcohol, limit our ability to face grief openly and serve only the non-productive goal of hiding or masking our feelings. There is no question that feelings of grief are painful and will often be difficult to face. Instead of drugs find good friends who will listen and support you as you express your feelings of grief. If you have been taking drugs and you feel you cannot go on without them, see your physician, or a mental health worker who knows about grief. If you find yourself drinking more than usual or suffering severe stress seek help from professionals.

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