

Fr. Paul J. Cuddy



On the Right Side

Chastity A Scandal?

A few years ago Newsweek published a survey of 100,000 readers of Redbook, saying "80 percent of the women surveyed had had

premarital sex relations, beginning at the age of 17; and 90 percent of the women under 25 years of age."

While we should be skeptical of statistics, from what we are exposed to in TV, movies, magazines and

books, this does indicate a straw in a terrible direction.

Phil Donahue, David Susskind, and that clever Irishman Dave Allen who adds a mockery of Catholic practices, and many others — all these have evolved into making adultery, fornication, homosexuality a matter of hilarity rather than a matter of evil and sadness. Worse than the shows are the audiences who sit applauding uproariously blatant evil. And thousands of Americans sit glued to the tube, brain-washed into accepting sin as acceptable morality. And many of these viewers are baptized

Christians who profess Christ as Lord.

I used to watch "The Untouchables" and "Dodge City" some years ago, and although they were violent, there was never a suggestion that evil was good or funny or acceptable. Now we have talk shows from Donahue, Susskind, Allen and other such, leering and guffawing at what should be a matter of nausea and tears.

And we have Planned Parenthood people spending millions of dollars to promote adultery and fornication and premarital sex. These are highly indignant because a law is proposed

that the parents of teenage girls should be allowed to know that their daughters are engaging in fornication.

These same people are wrathful against good people who work to save children from being killed by scalding salt solutions, knives and suction. Planned Parenthood people, so often nobles in society, unctiously consider the Mafia beneath them.

Father Hardon's "Catholic Catechism" has a section which begins: "Premarital relations have become so common in some segments of Western society that the Church's teaching their

sinfulness is a scandal to some proponents of contemporary morality." The "impurists" lambaste the Church and the pope and faithful bishops for their fidelity to Christ. The section concludes beautifully, "Young people must learn to reverence chastity so that having practiced it during their engagement, they may, at a suitable age, pass on to marriage." (Constitution of the Church) Mother Teresa of Calcutta jolted the audience at the June graduation at Harvard University with the same declaration.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

God's Word Is to Be Proclaimed

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Lk. 4/21-30. (R1) Jer. 1/4-5, 17-19. (R2) 1 Cor. 12/31-13/13.

Last week the readings pointed to God's gift to us — His word, the inspired Scriptures. Because one Spirit inspired it, His word

should unite us, not divide us; should create, as St. Paul puts it, a community of faith having a harmony like that prevailing among the members of a human body.

Next Sunday's readings focus on the proclamation of God's word. Jeremiah is called to be God's mouthpiece (R1). St. Paul says God's message is love (R2). And Jesus proclaims that He himself is the fulfillment of God's words (R3).

In spite of the many new

and sophisticated methods of communication now available in the modern world, the spoken word still remains of critical importance. This situation is not apt to change, ever. The telephone, television, radio, worship services, workshops, and classes — all depend on verbal communication.

God's word too depends on verbal communication. Jeremiah was called to spread God's word, like all the other prophets before him, orally. Paul proclaimed it thus. So did Jesus.

Almost half of all the people in the world cannot read or write — some 700 million of them. But they can all hear! That is why the spoken word is so important.

Some wiseacre once cracked that if the ability to

speak is a gift, then "someone must have shot Santa Claus." But it is a gift, a gift from God. Have you ever thought about what is involved physically for you to utter even one word? Aside from your brain which fashions what is said, and your lungs that supply the airpower for the sound, here are the parts in your throat and head that fashion your speech: the trachea, esophagus, tracheal cartilages, cricoid and thyroid cartilage, true vocal and false vocal cords, ventricle, epiglottis, hyoid bone, larynx, oropharynx, soft palate, hard palate, nasal cavity, frontal sinus, sphenoidal sinus, nasopharynx, oral cavity and the tongue.

The loss of any one of these would affect your

speech.

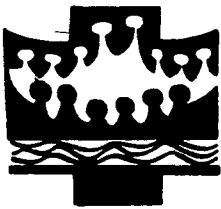
One of the ministries in the Church today is that of Lector, or reader of the word of God. And, beyond the mechanics of speech, the Lector must know the message to be communicated, and have the fire of that message burning within him or her. William Jennings Bryan, one of America's greatest orators, defined eloquence as "The speech of one who knows what he is talking about and means what he says — it is thought on fire."

At another time, Bryan said eloquence results when a speaker is "tremendously enthused about worthwhile things concerning which he is thoroughly informed."

What Bryan seemed to be saying was that the eloquent

speaker is a person of profound conviction who sincerely feels he or she can help others by conveying those convictions in such an effective manner as to inspire others to adopt them, and to mold their lives and actions in the light of these beliefs. He or she is a person with an important story to tell. Possessing this truth has helped the lector in his or her own life, and he or she has an obligation to get the story out to others. That basically is what it means to be a lector. The emotional content of the Word will help dispel the way in which we speak or the stage fright that stymies our tongues. That is what the Lord told Jeremiah.

Insights In Liturgy



By Father Thomas P. Mull

Altar, Gifts, People: Prepared!

During the Liturgy of the Word, the ambo (pulpit/lectern) is the central focus. It is from here that the living Word of God is proclaimed. God's presence is celebrated in the words of Scripture and in the lives of people and presider. Thus, prepared by the Word, the celebration moves out of the Word to Eucharist. This movement calls for a change in focus. Now, the altar becomes integral to the celebration. We move from hearing to responding and believing.

Readied by the Word, we now prepare all that will be needed to make our celebration complete. First, the people reach out to assist the needs of the poor and the Church through contributions to the collection that is received and readied for presentation by ministers of hospitality. Members of the assembly, assisted by ministers of hospitality, come forward to present the gifts of bread, wine and collection to the presider. These actions are reminiscent of the early Christian community where simplicity and informality were the rule. The early Church's collection for the poor and the Church was more likely items of produce, eggs, poultry, etc., and the bread was made by one of the members (although this is done at times today); the wine, too, was from home vineyards.

While the assembly is preparing, in the sanctuary, all movements and gestures

point to the preparation of the altar. "... the altar, the Lord's table, is prepared as the center of the Eucharistic liturgy. The corporal, purificator, chalice and missal are placed on it." (General Instructions, 49)

Historically, the preparation rites saw much embellishment: a prayer was added before the Eucharistic Prayer in which the Bishop would pray over the gifts before offering them; private prayers were added to allow the presider the opportunity to personally prepare for the Great Prayer which he would offer. Gradually,

these rites were expanded to a point where they became known as the "little canon" — contrasting with the larger Eucharistic Prayer which was called the Canon.

The revised liturgy calls for simplicity. Once more we look to the early Christian community as model. The simple procession allows for the gifts to be carried by the people and presented at the altar. Wine is brought forward and should be in vessels which allow wine to be seen as wine (preferably red wine is used). Bread is brought forward and presented in the same manner. The people's contributions meant for the support of the poor and the Church are brought forward and "set aside" (not placed on the altar); these gifts, representing the people's contribution, are a sign of the people's desire to incorporate themselves in the

sacrifice of Christ. It is important to remember that only bread, wine, chalice, and book need be placed on the altar. Other objects, as powerfully symbolic as they may be, serve only to distract from the true focus of our celebration.

Once received at the altar, the presider prays simple prayers of praise and gratitude. The gifts presented, the altar prepared calls the faithful to a spirit of

preparation and presentation for their very selves. Done with dignity, these rites assist the people's sense of unity as members of Christ's body, the Church. Understood in this sense, the Preparation rites call for the altar, gifts and gathered people to be prepared for the offering that is to come. Our gifts have been prepared and presented, the offering will be made during the Eucharistic Prayer.

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