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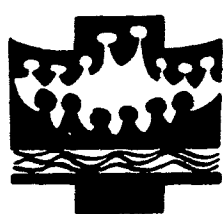
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**Insights
In Liturgy**

By Pam Schaeffer



**Purification
Thanksgiving
Prayer**

A friend has invited you to his/her house for dinner. As you arrive, you notice that others will be joining you. You enter the doorway and are greeted, introduced around, and finally invited to be seated. After a brief period of small talk, your host/hostess calls everyone to gather around the table.

During the meal the conversation is warm, responses cordial, and good food and beverage is passed and shared. When the meal is over, you sincerely feel the need to express your thanks to your host/hostess who, one would conclude, is seated with his/her guests. But, as you look to your host/hostess you find him/her standing at the table busily piling dishes, silverware, glasses and cups into soap and water. Before your eyes, you witness the meticulous washing and polishing of each plate and each piece of silver used. In fact, you are so distracted by these actions that you are not able to speak of your gratitude!

"This would never happen," you say, "I've never been in a home where such action takes place! In my home, and in those I've visited, used dishes, cups and silver are carried away to be cleaned at a later time. Guests sometimes volunteer their help in clearing the table, some even stay until later to help finish the clean-up."

In reality, however, the above is a graphic example of a scene repeated Sunday after Sunday when the Church, the People of God, gather in their house (their church) to celebrate around the Lord's table. After having come forward to unite themselves with the Lord and each other through the Eucharistic meal, the people settle back into the seating area to reflect and pray. During this time set aside for silent praise and thanksgiving, more often than not they witness the washing, drying and polishing of the vessels used for the meal they have just shared. Then, when all is cleaned and gleaming, the process continues with several variations of folding, covering, stacking and finally the carrying off to be put away.

Practically speaking, we all know that after a meal has been eaten, there are dishes to be done. This washing-up process is as real in our homes as it is in our church, however, the conflict seems to be the time and place in which it is done. What would seem obnoxious or laughable at home apparently is viewed differently in church. Or, is it?

Historically, the oldest form of purification after communion was the ablu-
tion of the mouth. In the

late fourth century, St. John Chrysostom advocated that his priests take a little water or eat a piece of bread so that nothing of the sacred species remain in the mouth after communion. Then, from the seventh century onward there gradually appeared the custom of washing the cup, originally done after the liturgy, and the cleansing of the priest's fingers. Over the years these cleansing actions and the ablution were linked. At first all was done in silence, then a number of prayers were added to encourage the devotion of the priest. In 1570, with the Missal of Pius V these rites became obligatory.

Since Vatican II these actions have been simplified. The General Instruction states: "The priest or deacon should purify the sacred vessels after Communion of after Mass, if possible at the side table" (#238). And, in paragraph #120 we are directed: "It is also permitted to wash the vessels after Mass when the people have left, especially if there are several vessels. In this case, after communion they may be covered and placed on a corporal either on the altar or on a side table."

The revised liturgy clearly calls for the Purification of the Vessels. It is also clear that this is to be done as inconspicuously as possible (i.e. at a side table or after Mass). A deacon should assist in this task, or in the absence of a deacon, Special Ministers of the Eucharist can be called upon to assist the priest. These directives are given, not out of a lack of reverence for the Eucharist, but out of a deepening of the respect that should be shown for the prayerful reflection of priest and people. Silence is out of prime importance, therefore all unnecessary movement and activity should be avoided. Occasionally, the singing of a psalm or hymn expressing oneness in the Eucharistic Lord, or perhaps soft, instrumental music can be helpful to this time of prayer and reflection. Needless to say, adequate time for deep, silent reflection should not be rare and this quiet space should not be interrupted until the president's voice invites the people to join him in the Prayer After Communion.

It is with the post-Communion prayer that the president "... petitions for the effects of the mystery just celebrated, and by their acclamation, Amen, the people make the prayer their own" (G.I., #56k). This "Amen" also marks the conclusion of the communion rite and sends us forth to love, serve and be all that we have celebrat-
ed.

**Black Family
Life Topic
Of Conference**

The United Church Ministry, in conjunction with the Office of Black Ministries, will present its sixth annual Conference on Black Family Life June 3 and 4 at the Baber Chapel Afrikan Methodist Episcopal Church, 550 Meigs St. The theme will be "Re-establishing the Traditional Strengths of the Black Family."

Among the highlights will be a series of all-day workshops June 4 on the family under such topics as youth, courtship and marriage, public education, religion and health. Other workshops will explore problems facing Hispanic, Catholic and Islamic families, and a workshop will discuss the traditional role of the settlement houses as family support units.

Dr. Andrew Billingsley, president of Morgan State University, a national authority on the black family, will be the keynote speaker at noon, Saturday.

Registration will take place at the church Friday evening and Saturday morning; a \$6 fee will cover Saturday lunch.

John S. Walker, OBM executive secretary, is the conference coordinator and is available at 328-3210 for further information.

**Life Group Plans
'Spring Celebration'**

Geneva — The diocesan Human Life Commission will host "In Praise of Life, a Spring Celebration," starting at 4 p.m., Sunday, June 5, the feast of Corpus Christi, at St. Francis DeSales School hall, 110 Exchange St.

Father Charles Mulligan, diocesan director of Social Ministries, will give the major presentation. Father James Hewes, pastor of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, and a member of the commission, will lead the assembly in Vespers, the an-

cient evening prayer of the Church.

A buffet supper will conclude the evening.

Parish contacts, regional contacts and supporters of diocesan human life efforts have been invited.

Further information and reservations are available by calling the Human Life Office, 328-6400.

**Ecumenical
Unit Praises
Martin Luther**

The Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission has commemorated the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther's birth with a joint statement praising Luther's reforms as relevant for today.

The statement also says Lutherans and Catholics should study more about each other's church as a means of reconciliation and "to see in Luther a common teacher."

"Luther's call for church reform, a call to repentance, is still relevant for us," said the commission statement.

"He summons us to listen anew to the Gospel, to recognize our own unfaithfulness to the Gospel and to witness credibly to it. This cannot happen today without attention to the other church and to its witness, and without the surrender of polemical stereotypes and the search for reconciliation," it added.

The statement was formulated at a meeting May 2-7 at Kloster Kirchberg in West Germany. The dialogue commission is composed of members appointed by the Lutheran World Federation and the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.

**Family Camps
Scheduled
By Diocese**

The diocesan Youth Retreats and Family Camp department is sponsoring six one-week camping sessions for families, beginning July 3.

Family Camp is at Kamp Koinonia on 300 acres of woods, fields and hills on Italy Valley Road between Naples and Penn Yan. Cabins or campsites are available.

Further information is available from Christian Family Renewal, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, N.Y. 14624 or by telephoning (716) 621-2638 or (716) 328-3210/ext. 54.

Blue Army

An all-night vigil combining devotions for the feasts of the Sacred Heart and the Immaculate Heart of Mary sponsored by the Rochester Chapter of the Blue Army of Our Lady of Fatima, will begin 9 p.m., Friday, June 3 at Holy Rosary Church. Leading the rites will be Father Frederick Bush, Father Frederick Eismann, Father Ronald Stacy, Father John O'Malley, Father Bruce Ammering, Father William Endres, Father John Poluikis, Msgr. Richard Burns, and Father Charles Adams.

**St. Stephen's Is Site
Of Special Communion**

Geneva — A special Communion was celebrated at the 12:30 p.m. Mass at St. Stephen's Church recently, as 23 young people who have been attending religious education for the handicapped approached the altar, many of them for the first time.

Each child brought a felt heart with his or her name on it that would be pinned to a larger heart, symbolizing their devotion to the Sacred

Heart of Jesus. In front of the pulpit was a poster with the class motto, "We Try Harder for Jesus."

After Communion, the youngsters gathered on the altar steps to sing, "His Banner over Us Is Love." The congregation gave them a standing ovation.

A reception was held immediately after Mass and each child and teacher re-

ceived a special gift.

Thanks were extended to the parish life committee for the reception, to Father John Mulligan for his blessing, to Father Paul Tomasso for his organization, to Father Paul Ryan and Sister Josette for their aid and support, to Sharon Aumick and Kathy Gunsalus who started the program, and to the parents, teacher and aides who carried the program through.

**Church Will Dedicate
Old St. Bernard Statue**

Scipio Center — A statue which once stood at St. Bernard's Seminary, depicting the former institution's patron saint, will be dedicated 10 a.m., Memorial Day, Monday, May 30 at St. Bernard's Cemetery here.

The rites will include Mass and Memorial Day observances.

The parish is the only one dedicated to St. Bernard in the diocese.

Father Paul Cloonan will officiate at the Mass and dedication rites. Father

Cloonan holds a triple pastorate which also encompasses St. Isaac Jogues, Fleming, and St. Hilary, Genoa. All parishioners have been invited to the events.

A coffee hour hosted by the parish Rosary Society will follow. In the event of inclement weather, events will be held in the church.

Bernard of Clairvaux, a Cistercian monk, was canonized in 1174. Highly influential in both ecclesiastical and civil circles of the

time, he was known for his passionate espousal of sides in several controversies of the day as a champion of orthodoxy and reform in religious life, as a wrangler in papal elections, and as the preacher of the disastrous second Crusade.

He was also known for his devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and is said to have been visited by an apparition of her.

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