

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Making Prayer Effective

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Lk. 18/1-8. (R1) Ex. 17/8-13. (R2) 2 Tm. 3/14-4/2.

In a survey conducted by This Week magazine on "Sermons America Wants to Hear," the number one choice was: "How can I make prayer more effective?" Sunday's Readings lead themselves to such a topic. Moses' prayer on the hilltop for Joshua and his fighting forces (R1) certainly show the efficacy of prayer. Even a widow in the Gospel got what she wanted when she prayed.

The ingredient in each of these instances seemed to be perseverance. The constancy of the dropping water, so goes the adage, weareth a hole in the rock. The constancy does it. A renowned psychologist, who wrote a best-selling book on prayer stated that if prayer is to be an effective force in one's life, it must be made a regular and regulative part of life.

Prayer is not a spare tire to be used only when an emergency arises. One day an extremely enthusiastic tourist, after having viewed some of the works of Rodin, approached the famous sculptor.

"Oh, Mr. Rodin," she fluttered, "is it difficult to sculpture?"

"Not at all, Madam," replied Rodin. "You simply buy a block a marble and chip away what you don't want."

Simple? Yes. Easy? No.

Prayer is simple - yes. But it is no easy art. It will never be mastered on a hit and miss basis. Prayer, like learning, must be a regular part of life. We

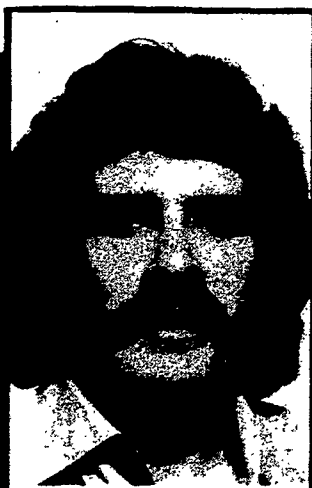
must be patient with ourselves and carry on even when we don't want to pray and when it doesn't come easily. Regularity is the first condition for effective prayer.

Another obstacle to effective prayer is our harboring of unkind thoughts and feelings, fears, resentments, hatreds, hostilities.

Our Lord, one day came to a man who had been sick for 38 years. Jesus said to him, "Do you want me to cure you?" Good heavens, how stupid such a question seems to us! Yet Jesus never asked a stupid question in all His life. He always had a good point to make in whatever He said. Jesus was not a veterinarian healing merely broken bodies. He came to make man whole and so holy. "Do you want me to cure you?" The emphasis was on the "you" - not on the sickness. The sickness, as so often is true, was only the symptom. The real malady was in the person. That was why Jesus always demanded faith before working a miracle.

So prayer isn't meant to take care of our problems, but primarily of us who are the underlying causes of all our own problems. We pray to get rid of the problem - drink, trouble at home, a fear, guilt, and so on - but we won't let go of the thoughts, feelings, hates, resentments, causing the problem.

"Lord, teach us to pray effectively." Sure, but first begin praying regularly and then surrender yourself to God. For prayer is a cup held up to God to be filled, and it cannot be filled unless first it is emptied - emptied of every thought, feeling or action contrary to the law of love of God and of neighbor.



Pressing On

Arnold Campo, 30, son of Anthony and Mariann Campo of St. John the Evangelist Parish in Greece, has begun studies at St. George's University School of Medicine, Grenada, West Indies. Campo, a graduate of Christian Brothers Academy in Syracuse, holds a bachelor's degree in biology from the University of Ohio in Dayton, and a master's in neural science from the University of Rochester. He volunteered at the Rochester Psychiatric Center and taught at the LaLumiere School for Boys. Most recently he worked as a technician for the Rochester Eye and Human Parts Bank.

Note Training Changes

The diocesan Office of Religious Education has announced that due to the Peace Rally at Seneca Army Depot, Oct. 22, the teacher training sessions in Geneva and Ithaca have been rescheduled.

In Ithaca the Oct. 22 session has changed to 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Sunday Oct. 29 and the Oct. 29 session to 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 5. Both sessions at St. Catherine of Siena.

The Oct. 22 session scheduled in Geneva at St. Stephens has been rescheduled to 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Sunday Oct. 29 at St. Anne's Christian Formation in Palmyra.

Alumnae Meet

St. Mary's Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae will have their Fall Dinner meeting, 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Nov. 9, at Dandrea's Party House, 1713 Lyell Ave. Pam Guba, oncology nurse, will speak on oncology at the hospital. A Mass for deceased members will be celebrated 5:30 p.m., in the hospital chapel. Reservations are made by calling Ruth Friday Courtney, 247-2963; Gloria Abdo Campbell, 482-0035, before Oct. 28.

Diocesan Family Office Promotes 'Peer Ministry'

By John Dash

The diocesan Family Life Office is promoting parish workshops to help develop "peer ministries," a relatively recent development in which laity act in the name of their parishes to deliver services to those in need.

Such services often involve the resolution of a shared crisis such as divorce, grief, depression and the like.

The Family Life Office, acting from recommendations in the Family Ministry Task Force Report, is promoting two workshops developed by Stephen

Ministries, 1-5 p.m., Friday, Oct. 28 at Trinity Reformed Church, 909 N. Landing Road, Rochester; and 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 29 at North Presbyterian Church, College Avenue and Irving Place, Elmira.

Stephen Ministries is a St. Louis-based, not-for-profit religious and educational organization. Its program is being used by more 650 congregations from 27 denominations.

According to Frank Staropoli, director of the diocesan office, Fairport's Church of the Resurrection

has already inaugurated the program.

"The workshop, which is designed for both clergy and laity, contains a variety of activities as well as presentations aimed at sensitizing and familiarizing participants to the great potential of a congregation when a number of its laity become involved in caring for one another," Staropoli said.

The local workshops are introductory to the Stephen Series, "a model for pastors and congregations in setting up a lay caring ministry system in their own congregations," he said.

Persons interested in the Rochester workshop are asked to contact Rev. Robert Spencer (716) 381-5330; and in the Elmira workshop, Rev. Dr. Robert Edmunds (607) 734-2978.

According to an article in the May 1983 issue of "Marriage and Family Living," Stephen Ministries is headed by Dr. Kenneth Haugk, a Lutheran minister and clinical psychologist. He developed the program to involve his own congregation in ministry, to help prevent minister burnout, and to all a behavioral sciences framework to outreach activities.

Rev. Dr. Robert Schleaf of Smithtown will lead the local workshops.

Eucharist Ministers Program Scheduled

The introductory formation program for special ministers of the Eucharist sponsored by the diocesan Liturgy Office is scheduled Oct. 29 at St. Louis in Pittsford. The office requests that all note the change in date from the Liturgy Office Calendar.

Anyone interested in the ministry of assisting the priest and deacon in the distribution of the Eucharist under the form of bread or wine at Mass or to the sick should contact their pastor regarding participation in the workshop. Eucharistic ministers who have never

participated in an introductory formation program also are invited.

The program will run from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and will include Eucharistic theology, liturgical service, spirituality of ministry and practicum for special ministers of the Eucharist both at Mass and to the sick.

Participants should bring a brown bag lunch; beverage will be provided. Registration, at \$3, should be through the Liturgy Office before Oct. 24. Further information is available from the Liturgy Office, 328-3210.

Caregiver Retreat

A Bereavement Seminar, sponsored by the United Cancer Council, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome Center, University of Rochester School of Nursing, and Family Service of Rochester, is scheduled for 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Friday, Oct. 28 at the Notre Dame Retreat House in Canandaigua. The conference, geared for health care professionals, human services providers, clergy, educators, and funeral directors, will feature Dr. Thomas Frantz, co-founder of the Life, Death, and Transitional Center in Buffalo.

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Appalachia Volunteer

Dan McNeill, son of Mac and Faye McNeill of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Hamlin, recently began a year-long stint as a volunteer with the Christian Appalachian Project, a non-profit, non-denominational program in eastern Kentucky. McNeill is working with the elderly.



Nazareth Arts Center

presents

Edward Villella

and the

State Ballet of New York

in a lecture / performance

"The Art of Balanchine"

Friday, October 21, 8 p.m.

tickets: \$12 (\$10 students)

Dinner-Theater package: \$24.50 ea.

586-2420



FINAL NOTICE:

Registration for the 1983 elections will close with in-person registration:

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15

NOON TO 9 PM

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EDITOR:

The staff Evangelist p following li Matthew H.

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