

Vicar for Religious Office Offers Spirituality Program

Father Robert Doherty, SJ, will lead two workshops on spirituality next month, one dealing with the stages of growth in Christian prayer, the other an exploration of mystical prayer.

The first program, which will include an overall view of the Ignatian spiritual exercises as contrasted with the Carmelite approach of St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila, is scheduled 7:30-9:30 p.m., May 4; 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., May 5 and 9:30-11:30 a.m., May 6 at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse.

The second workshop: "A Study in Mystical Prayer, East and West, Stages of

Enlightenment, Cloud of Unknowing, Zen Practices, Ignatian Prayer, Contemplation of Scripture," will be 8:30-9:30 p.m., May 7; 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., May 8; and 9:30-11:30 a.m., May 9, at Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

According to a brochure on the workshops, Father Doherty has had six years of experience in Japan training and supervising spiritual directors and directed retreat teams. He is now working in the Orient with Maryknollers and School Sisters of Notre Dame. He is also working on ecumenical spirituality with United Methodists in Indiana.

The workshops are being sponsored by the office of Vicar for Religious and St. Bernard's Institute department of Continuing Education, Deacon Ken Scarciotta.

The fee for each workshop is \$35. They are independent of each other and participants are welcome to attend either or both.

Participants are asked to bring their own brown bag lunches. Registration deadline is April 20; and further information is available by calling Nancy Nash, secretary of the Vicar for Religious Office, (716) 328-3210.

Father Curran To Speak on Peace Pastoral

Father Charles Curran of the Catholic University of America faculty, native Rochesterian, will speak on "Ethical Issues Raised in the Challenge of Peace" at 7:30 p.m., Friday, April 13, at the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School auditorium.

His talk will center on the U.S. bishops' pastoral on nuclear war. Sponsored by the diocesan Steering Committee on the Peace Pastoral, the event is open to the public at \$2 a ticket.

Father Curran is well known in the theological world, particularly for work on the moral dimensions of sexual behavior.

THE POPE Penance Restores Dignity

Vatican City (NC) — Here is the Vatican text of Pope John Paul II's talk in English at his weekly general audience April 4.

Dear brothers and sisters,

Today we continue our Lenten reflections on the sacrament of penance by focusing our attention on the effects of the sacrament in our lives. When Christ through his church absolves us from grave sin, he gives back to us that dignity which we first received at baptism, the dignity of being children of God. Through the grace of the sacrament, once again the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in us, and we are distinctively marked in the image and likeness of God's son.

In addition, the sacrament of penance fosters in us the sentiments of true conversion, which traditionally are called the "spirit of compunction." This spirit of compunction is a special union with Christ, the conqueror of sin and death, who gives us a clearer knowledge of our own guilt. It is not a reason for anguish or fear, but rather for joyful gratitude, since it enables us to discover God's forgiveness and leads us to an almost instinctive aversion to evil. It also results in a special perception of our human weakness and in a spiritual insight into how to live better Christian lives.

My special greeting goes to the various diocesan pilgrimages that have come to Rome for the Holy Year, especially those from the dioceses of Lancaster in England, Derry in Northern Ireland, and Burlington, Metuchen, Syracuse and Trenton in the United States.

I also wish to extend a warm welcome to all the English-speaking pilgrims and visitors from England, Wales, Ireland, Sweden, Japan, the United States and Canada. May the graces of this Holy Year help you all to grow strong in your love for Christ and his church.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Passion Sunday

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 26/14-27/66. (R1) Is. 50/4-7. (R2) Phil. 2/6-11.

Next Sunday is Passion (Palm) Sunday. Today, many people might confuse "passion" with that mysterious something that afflicts passengers on "The Love Boat."

Passion is a vehement feeling in the presence of some tangible good or evil. The feeling is so intense that the body "suffers" a change; hence "passion." For instance, deep anger can blanch the face or redden it. Hate can make one livid. Fear can whiten hairs in a single night. The feeling is also so vehement that it drives one either away from or to a sensate good or evil, as hunger might drive a dog to a piece of meat. That is why philosophers have also called passions by another word "emotions" — that is, movements, away from or to the good or evil seen.

For instance, in the garden of Gethsemane, the feelings of our Lord — His passions — were so intense that they caused a bloody sweat and moved Him to ask that, if possible, the cup of suffering might be removed. When our Lord kneels in the garden, His beloved disciples sleep, but His enemies are wide awake. He feels beforehand the physical pain and suffering awaiting Him: the kicks, the mockery, the face blows, the scourging, the spittle, the crowning with thorns, the crucifixion — which even the calloused Romans called "horrible tormentum." Then the sins of the world, from Adam to the end of time — hatred flung in the face of love — parade before His mind's eyes. Three times He seeks consolation from His favorite three. Three times He finds them asleep. He feels abandoned. The intensity of His anguish is almost enough to kill Him: "My heart is filled with sorrow to the point of death." The betrayal by a friend,

the denial by another friend, the abandonment by all — these generate an agony so intense that His sweat became as drops of blood. Man that He is, He feels he has nowhere to turn but to His heavenly Father. Like a little child, He cries out, "Abba, Papa." He prays and prays and prays. His Father sends an angel, not to remove the suffering, but to strengthen Him to bear it.

Jesus lived in the shadow of the cross. He seemed preoccupied with death. Three times, like the tolling of a funeral bell, on His last trip to Jerusalem from Galilee, He predicted in detail His sufferings, death and resurrection. Then, after the Last Supper, He said, "When a woman is in labor she is sad that her time has come..." (Jn. 16/21). She is sad at the prospect of the pain which nature will demand of her. He meant this comparison to be a picture of what His agony. But then, suppose that the pregnant woman had also been told by a reliable doctor that the moment she gave birth she would die. Can you not imagine her anguish of heart? Yet that is but a feeble comparison of Jesus' agony.

The beauty and uniqueness of Jesus' passion or suffering, however, is that He freely chose it. He went like a lamb to the slaughter — but freely. "I lay down my life of myself. No man takes it from me." Because He freely accepted His sufferings, they were redemptive.

The message, then, of Passion Sunday is that we freely join Jesus in His sufferings. O. Henry wrote that "life is made up of sobs, sniffles and smiles with the sniffles predominating." Yet if we accept the sniffles, the heartaches, the heartbreaks, the misunderstandings freely, like the good thief, our sufferings, like Christ's, will also become redemptive and help fill up what is wanting in His sufferings. Our sufferings, freely embraced, like His, will help Love be loved!

Martin Luther King Topic at SBI Forum

"Martin Luther King Jr.: Prophet of the Beloved Community," will be the topic for the last of three presentations in the Spiritual Life Forum this year, sponsored by Colgate Rochester Divinity School and St. Bernard's Institute.

Dr. Kenneth Lee Smith, who taught the civil rights martyr at Crozer Theological Seminary prior to its transfer to Rochester in 1969, will deliver the lecture, 8:30 a.m., April 16 in the auditorium of the Divinity Schools, 1100 S. Goodman St. The event is free and the public is invited.

In 1974, Prof. Smith co-authored, with Ira Zepp, "The Search for the Beloved Community: The Thinking of Martin Luther King, Jr." The Spiritual Life Forum is

a spring semester program which explores the relationship between ministry and spirituality.

This year's series is entitled "Prophetic Voices in a Technocratic Era." Two earlier presentations in the series were on Thomas Merton and Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

A devotional, based on Martin Luther King's ideals, will be led by Rev. Dwight Webster, interim director of Black Church Studies at the school and doctoral candidate at Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley, Calif.

Correction

Last week's account of Father Joseph Fitzmyer's address in the Otto A. Shults Lectureship in Spirituality for St. Bernard's Institute carried an incorrect date. Father Fitzmyer's talk was given yesterday, April 11.

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