

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

Let Jesus Into Your Life

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Jn. 3:14-21. (R1) 2 Chr. 36:14-16, 19-23. (R2) Eph. 2:4-10.

Back in the 30s Marc Connelly wrote a Pulitzer Prize winning play called "Green Pastures." It was a black man's version of heaven. God was pictured as concocting one plan after another to try to win man's love. He fails every time. Finally, Hosea the prophet suggests that He try a plan He'd never tried before — namely, mercy through suffering. The play concludes with God adopting this plan.

With Noah, with Abraham, with Moses God tried to woo a people. He fails. "All the princes of Judah, the priests, the people added infidelity to infidelity" (R1). Finally, love drove God to extremes. "God so loved the world, he gave His only Son," he who would not let Abraham sacrifice his own son, let his own Son be sacrificed — so great was His love for us. He let Him be hanged on a cross, like the bronze serpent Moses hung on a tentpole. As looking on this serpent saved all those bitten by the deadly seraph snake, so all who look on Jesus crucified with faith would be saved from the bite of deadly sin. "Whoever believes in Him may not die but may have eternal life."

St. John in the Sunday gospel uses the word "believe" five times.

Belief, to help us, must be more than acceptance of a lot of truths. I believe that my nextdoor neighbor exists; but he will be no help to me, will not relieve my loneliness, nor my fears, if I don't believe in him. If a person is to affect my life, I've got to let him in — into my life! I must change mere acquaintanceship to relationship. I must move from being a nextdoor person to being a friend. Only then can there be communion, sharing, caring, helping.

The same thing is true about Jesus. It is not enough to know that He exists, to know some facts about Him — some miracle stories, some of His teachings. That is quite easy to do: simply read the gospels. Rather we must get to "know" Him, as a husband his wife — intimately, lovingly, experientially; and our relationship has to grow over the years, deepen through new experiences. This is not so easily achieved, because it demands that we let Jesus in — into our lives.

Concert

The Perinton Community Chorus and Orchestra will perform Brahms' Requiem under the baton of Sister Virginia Hogan SSJ 4 p.m., Sunday, March 17 at Church of Our Lady of the Assumption in Fairport. Featured soloists will be Sharon Harrison and John Warren. Tickets are \$4 at the door; \$3.50 in advance.

One of the biggest obstacles to doing this, I think, has been the "merit system." You know what I mean. We sort of felt we had to win God's love. That we had to pile up good deeds to be sure we got to heaven. We made salvation depend on what we did, rather than on what God does.

Haven't we often let Christ's teachings get between us and the Teacher? I have. I used to concentrate so much on what Christ wanted me to do that I was actually missing Christ. I was not letting Him in — only His teachings!

How wrong this is! Jesus pointed out God loved us even before we existed. St. Paul used the rhetoric of repetition to pound home the same truth: it is by God's mercy, God's love, God's favor (used three times), God's kindness, God's gift that we are saved. "This (salvation) is not your own doing."

John Paul I in a letter to G.K. Chesterton says many people today fight against God. What they are fighting, he says, is not the true God, but the false idea of God they have formed — a God, they think, who only asks and demands, who observes sins and punishes them, who lets people hunger and die.

This Sunday's readings show us truly who God is — One who loves us so much as to die for us. God does not want to harm us. He wants to do us great good. It is not true that He makes excessive demands of us; on the contrary, He is satisfied with little, because He knows very well that we do not have much.

Buffalo Gets Auxiliary

Washington (NC) — Msgr. Donald W. Trautman, chancellor of the Diocese of Buffalo, N.Y., since 1973, has been named an auxiliary bishop to Bishop Edward D. Head of Buffalo.

The appointment by Pope John Paul II was announced in Washington March 5 by Archbishop Pio Laghi, apostolic pronuncio to the United States.

Bishop-designate Trautman, 48, was ordained to the priesthood for the Buffalo Diocese in 1962. After parish assignments he joined the faculty of St. John Vianney Seminary, the diocese's former major seminary in East Aurora, N.Y., in 1966.

He was named secretary to Bishop Head and president of the diocesan pastoral council in April 1973.

Later in 1973 he was named chancellor of the diocese, and in 1974 he also was named a vicar general of the diocese.

Deadline

The deadline for submitting news for the Courier-Journal is noon on Thursday, preceding Wednesday publication. Items must be written. The Courier-Journal offices are at 114 S. Union St., Rochester, N.Y. 14607.

Nukes Discussion Scheduled

Dr. Joan Sobel, child psychiatrist, will lead a discussion for parents and teachers on children's fears about nuclear war at 7 p.m., Wednesday, March 20 in room 5-300 at Monroe Community College.

The program is free and open to the public.

Dr. Sobel is on staff at the University of Rochester School of Medicine at Strong Memorial Hospital.

Sponsored by the CDA MEETS Catholic Daughters of America will meet 7 p.m., March 19 at St. Philip Neri

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Rochester Committee of the Peace Child Foundation, the presentation will include the showing of a short film,

"There's a Nuclear War Inside of Me," featuring interviews with children of all ages.

For more information, contact Ruth Lubanski, committee coordinator, at 247-4569.

Joseph Shale Inc. Congratulates St. Leo's Church

On the dedication of their new three manual, 68 rank Allen Digital Computer Organ.

All are invited to attend a Dedicatory Recital by Dr. Barbara Harbach of Nazareth College on Sunday, March 17, 1985 at 7:00 P.M.

St. Leo's Church is located at 167 North Ave., in the Village of Hilton.

The installation was designed, and Dr. Harbach's appearance arranged, by Vincent S. Parks, III of Joseph Shale Inc., Western New York's exclusive Allen Organ representative.

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