

A Word for Sunday

With Father Albert Shamon



Sunday's Readings: (R3) John 6:60-69; (R1) Joshua 24:1-2, 15-18; (R2) Ephesians 5:21-32.

The sixth chapter of John's gospel is used for five Sundays during the Marcan Year (July 28 to August 25). This coming Sunday concludes this chapter. It expresses the crowd's reaction to our Lord's great discourse on faith and the Eucharist.

There always comes a time in life when decisive choices have to be made. In the first reading, God's people were asked to choose between God and Baal. In the gospel, the people were asked to choose between Christ and life without Christ. Each chose differently.

Choice is the key to the formation of our consciences. Our choices will ultimately determine our character. We can make only one of two choices: a good one or a bad one. John Wayne in "The Alamo" said: "There's right and there's wrong. You gotta do one or the other. You do the one and you're living. You do the other and you may be walking around but in reality you're dead." We need freedom to choose; but we also need the gospel and the Church to help us make the right choices.

Choice demands alternatives. If a lad says, "I'm going to leave home," the natural question is, "Well, where are you going?" Motion has to have direction. To leave one place necessitates going to another place. And that's the rub with choice. Not to choose is to choose. If one does not choose Christ, then he chooses anti-Christ. To ask "Do you choose Christ?" is really no choice, because no alternative is given. Choice means to pick one of two. St. Peter caught this when Jesus asked "Do you want to leave me too?" Simon Peter answered: "Lord, to whom shall we go?"

I think one of the big mistakes teachers can make in religious education is to present Christianity as a take-it-or-leave-it religion. That is no choice, for no alternative is pointed out. Christ did not teach like that. He said: "No man can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other or be attentive to one and despise the other" (Matthew 6:24). The other is the anti-Christ or the devil. In a nutshell, Christ was saying: "Take me or take the devil." Choose heaven or choose hell — hell is an alternative, and that should be pointed out! If we do not choose Christ the life, we choose death; if we do not choose Christ the light, we choose darkness; if we do not choose Christ the way, we choose error. But those alternatives should be clearly stated as St. Ignatius does in his classic meditation of "The Two Standards."

Peter saw that in his "to whom shall we go?" To education? Does it have the words of eternal life? To science? Does it have the words of eternal life? To culture? Does it have the words of eternal life? It's not so simple as saying: "Well, I won't choose Christ now, yet I'll be all right." We cannot remain neutral with Christ. Either we are with Him or against Him. Moses put it clearly: "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life" (Deuteronomy 30:19). So did Joshua: "Decide today whom you will serve, the gods of your fathers ... or the gods of the Amorites" (R1). To ask: "Do you want to follow Christ or not?" is to put the question wrongly. The correct question is: "Do you want to follow Christ or the devil?" There is no in-between.

Why do so many choose to leave Christ? In the gospel, the crowd left Jesus, which ought to teach us the error of Gallup Poll morality on abortion, homosexuality, pre-marital sex, drunkenness and drugs. Popular opinion, peer pressure, must never be our norm of morality.

Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen in one of his great radio talks 50 years ago thundered: "Never before has the Church been so impoverished for good, strong, intellectual opposition as at the present time. There are no foemen worthy of her steel. The opposition today (to Christ and His Church) is not intellectual, but moral. Men are no longer objecting to the Church because of the way they think, but because of the way they live. They no longer have difficulty with her Creed, but with her Commandments. They remain outside her not because they cannot accept the doctrine of Three Persons in One God but because they cannot accept the moral of two persons in one flesh; not because infallibility is too complex, but because the avoidance of artificial contraception is too hard; not because the Eucharist is too sublime, but because confession is too exacting. Briefly, the heresy of our day is not the heresy of thought — it is the heresy of action."

One outstanding moral theologian said that most of the moral-essays written in the last 20 years have been written to justify things that have always been considered un-Christian in the previous two millennia. Curious emphasis! There is almost no mention of virtue. Another curious emphasis. Seventy percent of our moral theologians are concocting systems seeking to justify homosexuality, abortion, adultery — you name it! The Holy Father called this a loss of a sense of sin. Inevitable — when one does not choose Christ.

On the Right Side

With Father Paul J. Cuddy



From Father John Burke Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

"Greetings from Yucatan and from this growing city of 700,000. I am recovering from a mild viral infection and thus can catch up on some correspondence. Perhaps it is not too late to congratulate you on your 50th anniversary of priesthood. As for myself, I am learning not to be concerned about quick results. I like Mother Teresa's saying: 'God called me to be faithful, not successful.'"

People here are great, both the poor whom we serve and the good middle-class Yucatanos who help us. I am chaplain (no elaborate setup) in a hospital for people who don't have government insurance and can't afford the private clinics. Also I go to four poor colonias for Mass, instructions and home visits. I thank God for my VW Bug which a local priest has given me to use. Here, most priests have 10 or more chapels to cover, and often say three and four Masses a day. Many of the people are well-instructed.

Again my congratulations. For the good you have done, let us praise God."

Comment: Father John Burke is from St. John's Parish, Ridge Road, Greece, but belongs to the Erie diocese. His mother and brother belong to St. John's, and a sister, Mary Jean Rowan, is at Mother of Sorrows. Father Burke was a student at Sampson College when I was there in 1946-49. It delights my soul that we had four students from Sampson College who became zealous, happy priests. After ordination, Father Burke got a Ph.D. at Fordham University and taught at Gannon College, Erie. But he is a congenial missionary, and his compassion for the less-chance people has marked his priesthood with a special devotion to the poor and disadvantaged. There is a tendency among some who work among the poor to resent the middle

class and the wealthy. Isn't it good to find Father Burke's appreciation of those people. And how limited would his work be without transportation and their assistance.

From Father Charles Young CSC Dacca, Bangladesh

"It was thoughtful of you to help out in our disaster-prone country. The victims in the south are suffering from the 'surge' in the Bay. Now the rivers in the north are overflowing, entering the villages and towns, making life miserable and dangerous. Scorpions and snakes are making for higher ground, and an inability to dry clothes or crops, etc., are among the results the high waters bring.

Our Catholic Charities, Caritas, has a finger in the relief and rehabilitation work. Friends in the States and Europe have responded, pledged the \$1.5 million we need to take care of Manpura Island in the Bay. The Lord is still keeping me mobile, not only on foot but also on the Vespa. What a blessing to be able to get about. Best to cousin Florence Cuddy and Nan, and all the members of the clan you meet in the future."

Comment: Father Young's mother died when he was young. The father entrusted their three children to the Sisters of St. Joseph at St. Mary's orphanage, which has evolved into our present St. Joseph's Villa. For many years, Harold and Marie gave six months working with the missions in East Africa and also in Mexico; and six months home in Rochester. There are many lay people, including Rochesterians Mark Kavanagh and Valerie Smith at our Tabasco, Mexican mission, involved in the care of the less-chance people, both in the missions and in the States, but they rarely receive much recognition. Nor do they care. They do what they do for the glory of God and the good of the needy. So let us bless God.

Catholic Physicians' Guild

The Catholic Physicians' Guild of Rochester will celebrate their inaugural dinner and dance on Saturday, Sept. 7. Dr. Robert Joynt, dean of the University of Rochester School of Medicine, will be the keynote speaker. His topic is "How to Complete the Physician."

Bishop Matthew H. Clark will begin the evening at 5 p.m. with Mass at St. Mary's Hospital. The festivities will follow immediately at the Genesee Plaza Holiday Inn.

Tickets are available for \$15 per person by contacting the guild by phone at (716)464-3592 or in writing at: Bishop Kearney Building, Room 2715, 89 Genesee St., Rochester, N.Y., 14611.

St. Catherine's Festival

A rummage tent, white elephant, plant boutique and book corner are some of the features at St. Catherine of Siena's 25th Anniversary Family Fun Festival, Friday and Saturday, Sept. 6-7.

Festival hours are 10 a.m.-8 p.m. inside and 3-9 p.m. outside on Friday, and 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Saturday. The rummage tent will be open 10 a.m.-noon on Saturday and a chicken barbeque will be served from 4:30-7 p.m. Dinner costs \$4 per adult and \$2 per child under 12. Tickets are available at St. Catherine's and serve as your dinner reservation.

The Classifieds

COURIER-JOURNAL

To place a classified ad, call 454-7050 between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Classified ads cost 50 cents a word with a \$7.50 minimum. If you mail your ad to us, you may enclose payment or include a billing address.

General

Care of Thanks 2
IN THANKSGIVING to St. Jude, St. Theresa, Holy Spirit, Sacred Heart, Blessed Mother and St. Anthony for a favor received. B.M.K.

Announcements 7
MORTGAGES WANTED If you took back a mortgage when selling your property and would like cash CALL Al Overacker 594-8287

Employment

Help Wanted 14
CHILD CARE 3 month infant, 2 days week beginning September. Hours flexible. Call evenings 586-1919
CHOIR DIRECTOR for St. Louis Adult Choir. Experience necessary. Send resume to: B. Hack, 60 S. Main St., Pittsford NY 14534.
LIVE-IN AIDE/housekeeper for semi-invalid woman either weekdays or weekends. Room, board & salary. References. 544-5577

Part Time Opportunity

Major U.S. Company needs reliable persons with car, phone to assist manager with customer services in NY area. Can average \$7-\$10/hr. Flexible hours.
For interview call 396-2585

OCCASIONAL BABYSITTER for first-grader. Call 381-7223.

Situations Wanted

16
CONVALESCENT CARE by certified aide. Superior qualifications and references. 984-9275

Business Opportunities

18
GET IN on the ground floor of two exciting new growth companies. Call Mr. Grego for an appointment. 865-0028 after 5 p.m.

Buy/Sell—General

Office Equipment 20
AB DICK MIMED model 525; Spirit-master model 228 with cabinets and some supplies. Excellent condition. Call Becket Hall 461-2880

Merchandise for Sale

28
DISCOUNT TARPS Heavy duty, Nylon, reinforced. Sizes 8x10 thru 30x80. Sample price, 12x25, \$25.00. Shipped UPS (518)27-5637. Windy Ridge Distributing, Rt. 145, Middleburgh, NY 12212 (nyscan)

Wanted To Buy

27
DON'T THROW IT AWAY—Sell it! I will buy your accumulations or manage your household sales. Nancy Flaherty, 533-1746.

FURS: Any kind, good condition - cash. Connie's, 544-3331 Tue. thru Sat. 11-6.

Household Goods

Appliances 28
VIKING Sewing Machine. Recently traded, mint condition with guarantee. The Sewing Machine Shop, 467-3100

SINGER CREATIVE TOUCH 1036

free-arm, all modern stitches, self-winding bob bin. \$449 when new. Excellent condition, 3 yrs. old. \$125. The Sewing Machine Shoppe 467-3100

HOOVER DIMENSION vacuum

with 4.0 h.p. Newest model, retail \$399.95. Have 3 at \$259. The Sewing Machine Shoppe, 467-3100

KIRBY CLASSIC with attachments.

Excellent condition, recently overhauled. \$75.00 The Sewing Machine Shoppe, 467-3100

Household Sales

41
FABULOUS FINDINGS Let our friendly staff manage your estate or household sale/garage sale. Experienced, fully insured. Marian Swertz, 467-5101.

Property

Acres/Lots 48
TWO FARMS. Steuben County, 308 acres, free gas, near Alfred University. Call (807)478-8480

Homes for Sale

51
GOVERNMENT HOMES from \$1. (U repair). Also delinquent tax property. Call (806)887-8000 Ext. GH-1467 for information.

Services

Driveways 92
DON WARNER BLACKTOP, sealcoating. Driveways, parking areas. Free estimates. 24 years' experience. 254-7461 or 458-1357.

Electricians 83
ELECTRICAL WORK - No Job To Small. Free Estimates. CALL Frank after 5, 225-8475.

Firewood/Fuel 88
FIREWOOD (Dry) 5 Cords-\$45.00 each; 1 cord-\$48.00 Call Woody 584-9267

Painting/Papering 113
PAINTING & PAPERHANGING textured-swirl ceilings. Free estimates, quality work. Dan Burgmaster, 663-0827

Plumbing

110
ACCU-PLUMBING Service Today! Free estimates, senior citizen discount. John Vies, 342-0816, Near Ridge Rd.

Roofing/Gutters

121
GUTTER CLEANING \$24.95. Fully insured, friendly service. Call 533-2280 or 334-0701

PAINTING, roofing, gutters and chimneys. Complete improvements and repairs. Free estimates, fair prices. J. Kress, 286-6103

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