

Money Problems

Mr. Bernie Bromka of Christ the King Parish, Rochester, is a zealous Knight of Columbus. He makes an avocation of trying to get printers and bulletin writers to print "Mass" with a capital M, instead of a lesser "mass." He wrote recently from Florida.

"Dear Father,
"Merry Christmas. Well, over the years I get all kinds of requests from charitable organizations for donations of money. Many of them I've never heard of, but some, to which I donate periodically, are good.

"In doing my exercise program while in Rochester, I visit Durand-Eastman golf course to get in some rugged walking. It is also a touch course for golfers, and many lose their golf balls daily. I know how to ferret them out, and every day I bring home my quota. Prior to this year, I gave all the balls to friends.

"However, this year, I decided that I would sell as many as I could and send the money to Mother Theresa in India. Sad to say, the check was never cashed. I also sent a check to the church in Medjugorje, Yugoslavia, where Our

Blessed Mother has been appearing to seven children. This check was also not cashed. Can you tell me where I should have sent the donation? I know you have some very worthwhile organizations to which you contribute, so to get my (sidetracked) donation in this year, I am sending you \$75 to funnel the money where it will do the most good."

"Dear Bernie,
"I smile to think of your trouble in giving money away. That's a rare event. However, mailing to many foreign countries can be precarious. Thievery of the mails is a kind of profession with some. Fathers Welch, SJ, and Kraft, SVD, both from our diocese and both in the Philippines, have asked that money be sent through their Jesuit or SVD headquarters, through relatives who act as agents for them. I wonder if we appreciate the postal system in the States. Some criticize it, but my experience has been very good.

"People are deluged with appeals from many organizations: religious, health, patriotic, philanthropic. If you get two or three in January, you are likely to be on 10 or 12 lists by

On the Right Side Father Paul J. Cuddy



September. I think some sell their lists. We can't donate to all, nor are all equally worthy. So I suggest to people, 'Choose a few you like and drop the other appeals into the wastebasket, without qualms of conscience.'

"I sent you \$75 check, along with a few other checks, to Connie Welch in Webster, to bank for her Jesuit brother, Father Leo, who has a poor parish in the Philippines. (He is also the brother of Sister Christina Welch, SSJ.) Despite poor health and his 78 years, he is vigorously running a parish that also has several out-missions. Last summer his nieces, Sister Diane and Barbara Dennie, visited him and brought back interesting pictures of his work. It is wonderful to see a man so frail yet so unflagging in his work.

"There is no end to the number of worthy charities. Father Nacca of Auburn has for many years collected

funds from friends and established several chapels in Africa. Sister Pat Flynn, who runs that remarkable St. Michael's Workshop for training underprivileged youths in carpentry, wrote, 'I have writer's cramp from sending thank-you notes. Over \$1,000 has been donated as a result of your article in the Courier-Journal.' Local needs all over the diocese abound.

"So, Bernie, when you return north, I will pray that the golfers will lose more golf balls, that you will keep ferreting them out, and that you will bless some needy project with your kind contributions. My love to wife Jennie, and I hope the K. of C. in Florida are using your good services. Our Friday fish fry at the K. of C. in Webster continues to be very popular. People get to meet one another in a happy atmosphere."



A Word for Sunday Father Albert Shamon

Sunday's Readings: (R3) John 2:1-12; (R1) Isaiah 62:1-5; (R2) 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

The miracle at the wedding feast of Cana is familiar to everyone, yet its significance may elude many of us.

John speaks of the miracle of changing water into wine as a sign — "the first of His signs." John used the term "signs" for the miracles of Jesus; for, to John, the miracles of Jesus pointed to some deeper theological truth. He saw a spiritual symbolism in these miracles. Thus the changing of water into wine symbolized for John the abundant gifts and blessings Jesus would bring through His death and resurrection — His "hour."

At this hour, the hour Jesus hung on the cross, He gave true wine: the Holy Spirit. Just before Jesus died on the cross, John wrote, "He delivered over His spirit" (19:30). When on Pentecost Sunday, Jesus poured out the Holy Spirit on the Church, some people said, "They have had too much new wine" (Acts 2:13).

Throughout John's story of the miracle at Cana are pointers leading to this deeper symbolic meaning. The miracle takes place "on the third day," and Jesus rose from the dead on the third day. The miracle occurs at a marriage feast; the prophets of the Old Testament always used a marriage feast to symbolize the happiness and abundant gifts the Messiah would bring (R1).

Also, Mary is called "the mother of Jesus" and "woman" at Cana. The only other place in John's gospel where Mary is similarly addressed is the scene at the foot of the cross, during "His hour." John writes that the mother of Jesus was standing there while Jesus said from the cross, "Woman, behold your son."

Obviously, John meant to tie together the two incidents of Calvary and Cana. When we keep that in mind, the puzzling dialogue between Mary and Jesus becomes a good deal less so.

When Mary observed to Jesus, "They have no more wine," Jesus responded with those startling words, "Woman, how does this concern of yours involve me? My hour has not yet come." That may sound discourteous and harsh, until we remember that this is a translation. In the original Greek, Jesus' question reads, "Woman, what to me and to thee?"

In effect, Jesus was saying, "Woman, what's our relationship now?" It was not a refusal, for she had asked nothing. It was not a reproach, for He does indeed work a miracle. It was an insight given to His mother about the change of relationship that had taken place since He first left her to go to John to be

baptized in the Jordan; that explanation would become fully clear when His hour had come.

As when she had questioned Him after finding Him in the temple as a lad of 12, He had said He must be in His Father's house, so here He was telling Mary that now He was taking orders, so to speak, from the Holy Spirit. "I must do the will of Him who sent me," He explained to her. Mary's motherly concerns could no longer direct His life. And still she would have a motherly role, one that would become clear when His hour eventually did come.

That hour, of course, came when He hung on the cross and called her, once again, "woman" — "Woman, behold your son." The woman of the first creation was called Eve or Life (Zoe in the Septuagint), for she was the mother of all the living. Jesus now called Mary "woman" — clarifying her new role as mother not only of the Word made flesh, but of all flesh made alive by the Word: the new Eve, the new mother of all the living, of those who live by Christ.

Thus Jesus said from the cross, indicating John, "Woman, behold your son." Note that He said "son," not John — for John is the name of one person only, but "son" includes all, for she was then made mother of all persons.

Mary understood. She realized there at Cana that the bonds of blood, however dear, had to be suspended now. Never again did she intervene in her Son's public ministry. Right there at Cana, she relinquished her role as His mother and began her new role of bringing others to her Son when she told the waiters in her last recorded words, "Do whatever He tells you." And so later, when a woman called out, "Blest is the womb that bore you," Jesus answered, "Rather blest are they who hear the word of God and keep it" (Luke 11:28). Mary was more blessed for keeping God's word than for being His mother.

So the relationship between Mary and her Son looked ahead to the "hour" when she would become "woman" and receive the new wine of the Holy Spirit, enabling her to become "mother of all the living."

Of course, the new wine is better than the old. The old wine symbolizes the Law and the prophets, while the new wine signifies Mary and the Holy Spirit. The Word was made flesh through the Holy Spirit with Mary's cooperation. Likewise the Word can become flesh again in each one of us through Mary and the Holy Spirit.

Like wine, such a wedding will bring joy to all.

Parishes Send Buses to March for Life

The Rochester March for Life Committee will again send people to Washington, D.C. on January 22 to protest the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion.

The Rochester group will meet for a prayer vigil from 8-9 p.m. followed by the showing of a new video Tuesday, Jan. 21, at Guardian Angels Church in Henrietta. Buses will leave for Washington promptly at 10 p.m. Earlier, at 7:30 p.m., the film "A Matter of Choice" will be shown. For reservations, call Dee Dries, (716)334-7562.

A bus will also pick up marchers at DeSales High School in Geneva at 10:30 p.m., then will stop at St. Mary's in Waterloo. The bus will leave for Washington at 11 p.m. For reservations, call Kathi Peters, (315)539-8006, after 4 p.m.

The bus for Apalachin-area residents will leave from St. Margaret Mary Church at 11:45 p.m. Call (607)625-3191 between 9

a.m. and 4 p.m. or (607)625-3546 after 4 p.m. for reservations.

This year, 100 participants can have breakfast with their congressmen. Reservations are available on a first-come-first-served basis. The cost is \$5.50. Contact Dee Dries, (716)334-7562.

Buses are scheduled to return at midnight, Wednesday, January 22. The charge for the trip is \$25 per person and sponsors are needed.

Young Adult Winter Picnic

Young adults aged 18 to 35-plus, single or married, are invited to enjoy cross country skiing and brunch Saturday, Jan. 18, at Lake Shore Golf Center. Skiing is planned from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. with brunch immediately afterward. Call (716)586-1919 for more information.

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