



A Word for Sunday

Father Albert Shamon

Sundays' Readings: (R3) January 14:23-29; (R1) Acts 15:1-2:22-29; (R2) Revelations 21:10-14, 22-23.

Next Sunday's liturgy attacks formalism — that is, form for the sake of form, performing rites that have lost their meaning. Thus the First Council of Jerusalem abrogated circumcision (R1). St. John questioned the permanency of the temple — "in God's city there is no temple" (R2). Christ declared the hearts of men are temples. A temple is a place where God dwells. "If anyone loves me, we will come to him and make our dwelling place with him" (R3).

Such emphases have led to extremes. There are some who feel the church building is no longer necessary. "Mass can be celebrated anywhere," they say. In fact not infrequently they judge those who go to Mass weekly hypocrites. The important thing, they aver, is to bear witness in daily living.

At the other extreme are those who reduce Church to church building. They stoutly resist all alterations to structures. The mere hint of closing a church building might unleash a veritable Donnybrook.

So, what about the Church, as church building, a proper place for worship? Is it or isn't it necessary?

Suppose a man loves a woman, and the woman loves the man. Unless such love is first externalized, it will never materialize into marriage. Remember Edmund Rostrand's play *Cyrano de Bergerac*. Cyrano loved the lovely Roxanne. But Cyrano's enormous, steplelike nose caused him to despair of ever winning the hand of the lovely Roxanne. So he never showed his love and lost the fair Roxanne.

Similarly religion is fundamentally a matter of the heart. "Thou shalt love both God and neighbor." But because man is an animated body, his inner thoughts and desires need outward projection, else there can never be the communication so necessary for communion between persons. Thus liturgy, rite and ritual, are essential to religion.

And just as the expression of love ought to have its proper time and place, so liturgy normally ought not to be performed everywhere and anywhere.

Even pagans chose hilly places, high above the din of the business world, or sequestered vales, where springs bubbled up living water, for their religious celebrations. They felt proper worship could be offered the gods only apart from the humdrum world.

The Chosen People had to wait till Solomon for a temple. Yet even Solomon ran into opposition. Some felt a temple localized God or made the religion of the Covenant too much like pagan religions with their temples and lip-service. Yet when Solomon's temple was destroyed. Through the prophet Haggai, God ordered it rebuilt.

It was the prophets who constantly sought to keep clear God's link with the temple. He would be with His people if their worship was truly an expression of their hearts.

When Christ came, the temple played an important part in His life. He was presented there by Mary and Joseph. He was found there at the age of twelve. Yet His first public act was to drive out money changers from the temple. "My house is a house of prayer," He complained. At the same time, He put things in their proper perspective by pointing to His own body as the temple of God. In His passion, He offered in His body the only true sacrifice worthy of the Father — an obedience to death.

Here below, the Body of Christ is now the Church. The Church is the people of God. Real worship still begins in the heart — obedience to the Father's will. "Still stands Thine ancient sacrifice — an humble and contrite heart."

To nourish and sustain this inner sacrifice, each need the support of the Christian community and the sustenance that comes from the Bread that makes men strong, Liturgy is needed, and liturgy needs a place — a church building; but first of all liturgy needs to be born in the human heart.

Special Feast Day at Cenacle

The Cenacle Center for Spiritual Renewal, 693 East Ave., Rochester will conclude a year-long Centenary celebration with a special feast on Saturday, May 10, beginning at 10 a.m.

The celebration commemorates the closing of the 100th anniversary of the death of the order's foundress, Mother Therese Couderc, and the 150th of the death of Father Stephen Terme, co-founder.

Open to the whole family, the celebration will feature something for all ages. The celebration will begin at 10 a.m. at the Cenacle with a special Mass celebrated by Bishop Matthew H. Clark. A buffet will follow at 11:30 a.m. For the young and the young at heart, clowns will be on hand to provide the entertainment. Tickets are \$6.50 for adults and \$3.50 for children. For more information, call (716)271-8755.

The New Code of Canon Law

The Revised Church Code

On February 3, 1983, in a ceremony conducted in the Hall of Benedictions over the Portico of the Vatican Basilica, Pope John Paul II officially "presented" the new Code of Canon Law to the entire Church.

In his address, Archbishop (now Cardinal) Castillo Lara, president of the Commission for the Revision of the Code, explained the hopes and expectations of the new legislative document for the life of the post-Vatican II Church: that this new canonical legislative activity "would guarantee the correct and effective application of those reforms (Vat. II) to the life of the whole Church with a view to an even more lively and well defined presence in the reality of today's humanity."

With these sentiments, Cardinal Lara was attempting to reiterate the thoughts of many contemporary and ancient canonists: that "law follows life" — the newly revised code would be extremely ineffective if it did not incorporate the theology and pastoral insights of the monumental Second Vatican Council into its juridical structure.

Pope Paul VI continually prodded those charged with revising the Code to have a "new way of thinking." The Church has always had law, but the history of Canon Law reveals that the needs and times in which it ministers have influenced its change and adaptation. As one canonist has summarized: "It is not a staid and unchangeable record, but one geared to the ever unfolding understanding of the needs of a people."

The most basic shift in the revised Code that can be observed is most likely the Vatican II vision of the Church as the people of God. Needing at times in its history a protection against encroachment by the state, the Church has used the image of the "Perfect Society" with its very clearly defined monarchical structure.

While recognizing and affirming the hierarchical nature of the Church, the Council Fathers preferred the image of the Church as mystery: "The Church — that is, the kingdom of Christ — already present in mystery, grows visibly through the power of God in the world" (Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, #3).

The Church, too, was now seen as people — a People of God, a community in which all members share in a mission to live and proclaim the gospel and each has the responsibility of service to others. These insights would have enormous ramifications for a Church seeking to update its juridic norms: For the first time it would be necessary to enmesh the newly developed and realized rights and obligations of the entire People of God into its legislation.

Parent group needs help

Parents Anonymous, a non-profit, self-help organization, primarily staffed by volunteers, is conducting volunteer training in April and May. For more information, call the Parents Anonymous State Office, (716)454-5066.

Introducing . . . The "New" Courier-Crossword . . .

Our new, monthly crossword puzzle! Give it a try and see how well you do. Answers will be printed in next week's issue. Good Luck!

1	2	3		4		5	6
7				8			
	9					10	
11				12	13	14	
15		16	17				
		18					
19	20			21		22	23
24						25	26
27				28			

ACROSS

- 1. "Ave"
- 5. St. Thomas was called the Dumb . .
- 7. Genetic building block
- 8. Italian patroness of those with eye trouble
- 9. Negative Response in Russian
- 10. 55 to Pilate
- 11. Roman Numeral Five
- 12. "Sober . . . judge"
- 15. Lack of Knowledge
- 18. Spherical Object
- 19. Monopoly property worth \$200
- 21. Buckeye State
- 24. Light sarcasm
- 25. Topsy citation
- 27. RI, MA, CT, NH, ME AND VT. make up . . .
- 28. What Peter means

DOWN

- 1. State founded by Calvert
- 2. Mother of Mary
- 3. Charles or Bradbury
- 4. Mass servers
- 5. Chrism
- 6. Apostle of the Indies
- 11. Bl. Mary
- 13. Home land of Bishop Desmond Tutu
- 14. Common article
- 16. Parents' frequent answer
- 17. Either's partner
- 20. Crude metal
- 22. Important words at a wedding
- 23. Possess
- 26. That is (Latin abbrev)

FOR MOM

with love . . .

Waterford

Belleek

Pewter

Irish Linens

20% OFF SALE



Hours: Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

21B. So. Main St. Pittsford Call 248-8346