

Father Albert Shamon

A Word for Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R3) Luke 12:13-21; (R1) Ecclesiastes 1:2, 2:21-23; (R2) Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11.

A good homily generally begins with an attention getter. So one day a priest began his homily with a sentence he hoped would arrest everyone's attention. He began thus: "Someday, everyone in this parish will die." A man in the front pew simply smiled. The priest, perplexed, thought he had not been heard. So again, in a louder voice, he repeated: "Someday, everyone in this parish will die." Still there was no reaction from the man in the front pew. A third time the priest boomed: "Someday, everyone in this parish will die." It elicited only a broader smile. Afterward, the frustrated priest asked the man what he was smiling about. "Father," the man answered, "I don't belong to your parish."

Some people live in a fool's paradise, as though death were not for them.

The first and third readings for Sunday speak of the inevitability of death. This discussion is designed to help us live in the now. Qoheleth, the teacher of wisdom, says that no matter what we may have amassed in wealth, one day we shall leave it all to another who did not even labor for it. Jesus, a still-greater wisdom teacher, counsels us not to work for riches that we must leave to others, but for spiritual riches.

In 1923 a big business meeting was held in the Edgewater Beach Hotel in Chicago. Among those attending were nine of the world's most successful money makers: the president of the largest independent steel company; the president of the largest utility; the president of the New York Stock Exchange; a member of the president's cabinet; the greatest investor on Wall Street; the head of the world's greatest monopoly; the president of the Bank of International Settlements.

Here is what happened to these wealthy men. The first, Charles Schwab, died bankrupt; the second, Samuel Insull, left the country and died

penniless; the third, Howard Hopson, went insane; the fourth, Arthur Cotton, died abroad, loaded with debts; the fifth, Richard Whitney, served a long sentence in Sing Sing prison; the sixth, Albert Fall, was released from prison so that he could die at home; the seventh, Jesse Livermore, the eighth, Ivor Krueger, and the ninth, Leon Fraser, all committed suicide.

Here is striking proof of what Jesus tells us in Sunday's gospel: a man who was rich wanted to be richer, but the Lord called him before he could enjoy his riches.

Our Lord does not say that money in itself is evil, but He does tell us, with St. Paul, that the "love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Timothy 6:10).

Money is important, but only to buy and do what is more precious than money. It provides food, clothing, education, shelter for our families. It helps spread the gospel. It helps us help our fellow man. It helps us to "grow rich in the sight of God."

When we seek money only for power and pleasure so that we can say, "Relax! Eat heartily, drink well. Enjoy yourself," then it becomes evil.

That is why St. Paul says, "Be intent on things above rather than on things of earth" (R2).

We are not saying, "Woe to the rich and blessed are the poor." Oh no, some poor people can be avaricious as Judas; some rich people as generous as Johnny Appleseed. Usually it is the other way around.

However, look at your own situation. What is your attitude toward money? Here are two concrete tests: What do you give to the Sunday collection? What will you give to the annual Thanks Giving Appeal?

At Mass, Christ gives Himself completely to His Father for all of us. At Holy Communion, He gives Himself completely to each of us. At Sunday Mass, ask Him for a like spirit of generosity regarding money. "Happy are the poor in spirit," not the poor.

Father Paul J. Cuddy

On the Right Side



Autobiography: Lee Iacocca

On leaving Trumansburg, after six days caring for St. James Parish, I left a note with the pastor, Father Kanka. "I lifted your *Autobiography: Lee Iacocca*, which I found in your living room, and will return it promptly."

Now, a week later, I am finished and am greatly impressed. Iacocca's parents were immigrants from San Marco, near Naples, Italy. Their assets were a limited formal education but a lively intelligence, little money but abounding ambition, a traditional Catholic faith which they practiced, and that exuberant family love and unity with which many people have become familiar from the TV talks and books of the "love professor," Dr. Leo Buscaglia.

The autobiography is very readable. The style is that of a man who has accomplished great things, yet the story does not come through as that of an egotist. Iacocca narrates as a man unfolds a story that interests him and will interest others. His informal style includes earthy expressions that give the flavor of genuine authenticity. Here are a few excerpts.

On the land of opportunity (p.3): "Nicola Iacocca, my father, arrived in this country in 1902 at the age of 12 — poor, alone, and scared ... As the boat sailed into New York Harbor my father looked out and saw the Statue of Liberty, that great symbol of hope for millions of immigrants. On his second crossing, when he saw the statue again, he was an American citizen — with only his mother, his young wife, and hope by his side. For Nicola and Antoinette, America was the land of freedom — the freedom to become anything you wanted to be, if you wanted it bad enough and were willing to work for it."

On confession (p.8): "Like most families in those days, our strong belief in God sustained us. We seemed to pray a lot. I had to go to Mass every Sunday and take Holy Communion every week or two. It took me a number of years to fully understand why I had to make a good confession to a priest, but in my teens I began to appreciate the importance of this most misunderstood rite

of the Catholic Church. I not only had to think out my transgressions against my friends. I had to speak them aloud. In later years I felt completely refreshed after confession. I even began to attend weekend retreats, where the Jesuits, in face-to-face examination on conscience, made me come to grips with how I was conducting my life."

On manifesting feelings (p.4): "My father and I were very close. Like many Italians, my parents were very open with their feelings and their love — not only at home, but also in public. Most of my friends would never hug their fathers. I guess they were afraid of not appearing strong and independent. But I hugged and kissed my dad at every opportunity. Nothing could have felt more natural."

On the need for a national industrial policy (p.332): "Now, if we've got an agricultural-industrial policy and a military-industrial policy, why the hell can't we have an industrial-industrial policy? I guess my attitude toward an industrial policy is the same as Abraham Lincoln's when somebody told him that Ulysses S. Grant got drunk a lot. Lincoln said: "Find out what kind of whiskey he drinks and send it to my other generals."

On family life (p.95): After he became president of Ford, he writes: "Instead of driving home a different car each night to become more familiar with our various products, I now had a driver. I used the commuting time to read and answer my mail. But I continued to follow my old weekly routine. Unless I was out of town, my weekends were devoted to my family. I wouldn't open my briefcase until Sunday night. At that point I would sit in my library at home, do the serious company reading, and plan the week ahead. By Monday morning I was ready to hit the ground running. I expected no less of the people who worked for me. I've always found that the speed of the boss is the speed of the team."

And in case any reader is wondering, I have since returned the book to Father Kanka.

Newsletter

Continued from Page 4

hit doubly hard this year with the loss of not only its newsletter, but also the part-time diocesan coordinator's position. "The way things are now, we don't consider ourselves diocesan any more," Rinefierd said. "We're really not able to do anything outside Monroe County."

Focus did build a substantial mailing list, but quite often issues were sent in response to specific inquiries about young adult ministry. "This is the prime time for people coming into Rochester," Rinefierd said. "We're going to miss a lot of them."

Although the moratorium has not been lifted, the committee has offered several divisions and departments "a breather" by allowing them to mail either an interim copy of their newsletter or a flyer with a calendar of events.

Because the newsletter is not intended to be a calendar, the committee is also considering whether to allow some divisions and departments to continue mailing calendars separately.

That's a direction that concerns Pat Fox, director of youth ministry. "I'm waiting to see the full description, but I have a concern that it (the newsletter) not become too lengthy or philosophical," he said. "They seem to be moving away from calendaring by saying that each department can mail out its own calendar. I

think that might defeat their purpose."

"Because the majority of youth ministry programs are parish-based, Fox believes his department could be well-served by the newsletter. "I think the idea of a unified diocesan newsletter is a great concept," he said. "I want to reach volunteers and professionals in the field of youth ministry and have them pass information on."

But Fox acknowledged that other groups, such as young adult ministry, have legitimate worries. "They (the committee) are going to

have to have some sensitivity to the fact that special constituencies' newsletters have to be seen differently," he said.

Father Norton agreed that because the diocesan newsletter will not serve all the purposes individual newsletters did, the transition "will be very painful for everyone."

"Each newsletter served a very specific purpose. But at the same time there was tremendous duplication and variation in quality," he said.

HOUSE OF GUITARS

We received 12 correct entries identifying **Hall & Oats** as the pop-rock duo whose hits include "Sara Smile."



The winner was **Steve Strzepak** of Bath, N.Y.

MUSIC TRIVIA

This week's question:

Kenny Loggins' 1980 hit "I'm Alright" was the theme song from what movie?

A:

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____
 Zip Code _____
 School _____

Rules:

Each week, the Courier-Journal, in conjunction with the House of Guitars will feature a Music Trivia contest. All you have to do to enter is answer the question, fill in your name and address and the school you attend (if applicable), cut out the coupon, and send it in to the Courier-Journal. If more than one correct entry is received, a drawing will be held and one winning entry will be drawn.

If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave. All entries must be received within seven days of this paper's issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.

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