

Father Albert Shamon

A Word for Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R3) Luke 14:1, 7-14; (R1) Sirach 3:17-18, 20, 28-29; (R2) Hebrews 12:18-19, 22-24.

Twice before, Jesus had dined at the home of a Pharisee, for He had come to save all (Luke 7:36-50; 11:37-44). Yet each visit developed into a confrontation.

On his third visit (R3), Jesus cured a guest suffering from dropsy (verses 2-6). Twice in this incident, the Pharisees answered Jesus' question with silence. Thus when we read, "they observed him closely," this strikes an ominous note.

After curing the man, Jesus told the two parables in Sunday's reading. The first referred to the guests and the second to the host.

Seeing the way everyone was scrambling for first places at table, Jesus spoke of humility. Then, noticing the guests who had been invited, He spoke of the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind. Luke closes this section with another banquet — Jesus' own in the kingdom of heaven (verses 15-24).

Last Sunday's gospel raised the question, "Lord, are they few in number who are to be saved?" (Luke 13/23). Our Lord redirected the question from "how many" to "who." In today's readings, He tells who will be at the banquet of heaven: the humble and the single-minded.

Jesus was echoing His mother, when He taught that the proud would be put down and the humble exalted. Just as we don't like liars and braggarts, so God resists the proud.

Humility is not servility or timidity. The word "humility" comes from the Latin word *humus*, meaning ground. A humble person is one who has his feet on the ground, who is a realist, not a dreamer or megalomaniac.

A mistake we often make with humility is to reduce it to a horizontal virtue — to see ourselves in relation to our neighbors — and to think we are humble if we put ourselves below others. That

may not be true. We may be superior to others in talent and ability. Our Lady was humble, yet she admitted God had done great things for her. Humility is truth.

Yet humility is a vertical virtue, as well. It compares self to God, not to neighbor. The humble person realizes God is all that is and we are all that is not. That's the truth!

But truth is only half the story of humility; the other half is to admit the truth about ourselves in relation to God. If all that we have and are comes from God, then the truly humble person is religious, a church-goer. Every Sunday at Mass, he says, in effect, "Thank you, Lord, all that I am and have I owe to you." That's the truth; and the humble person admits it.

The second attitude needed to enter the banquet of heaven is single-mindedness: to do good without seeking credit here and now. ("You will be repaid in the resurrection of the just.")

Life is full of mistaken identities, as Tolstoy depicted in his lovely short story, "He Who Sees His Neighbor Has Seen God."

In the story, a cobbler dreamed Jesus would visit his shop the next day. That day he saw a woman, desperate enough to commit suicide. He dissuaded her, comforted her and helped her. Later he saw a man shivering with cold. The cobbler invited him into his shop, warmed him and fed him.

Near evening, a little lad came crying to the shop — lost. The cobbler, even though he feared he might miss Jesus, closed his shop to take the lad home. When he returned, still no Jesus.

At midnight, disappointed, the cobbler prepared for bed. As was his custom, he opened his Bible to read a passage, and his eyes fell on the following words: "Who receives one for my sake receives me."

Joy filled the cobbler's heart, as he realized that Christ did visit him that day in the person of His needy brothers.

Father Paul J. Cuddy

On the Right Side



Should Catholic schools be closed?

In June, 1944, I was stationed with the 9th Air Force at Saffron Waldron, England, before being sent to France. Our base was near Cambridge, so I decided to visit Cambridge University and the city. I stayed overnight at the rectory, where the rector, a convert from Anglicanism and vicar general of the diocese, was a cordial host.

During my stay there, I visited the Catholic school. There were no nuns or brothers teaching (still an American novelty in 1944). Laymen and laywomen staffed the elementary school. A brusque headmaster showed me around.

"How do you finance the school?" I asked.

"The parish was responsible for building the school," he explained. "Then the government pays for the salaries, maintenance of buildings, utilities. This comes from our public taxes."

With stupid superciliousness I responded, "Oh, in the States we don't bother with that. Our people pay for everything."

He shot back heatedly, "First of all, we couldn't afford it. Furthermore, don't you believe in fighting for your rights?"

I was quite chastened, and have often thought what fall guys we are to have to pay double taxes for our children to learn reading, mathematics, science and all the secular subjects because we also teach religion.

A relevant letter came recently from Roy Bush, an Air Force friend of 35 years ago. He became a Catholic in 1953, when we were together at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, and I put him to work teaching religion to the children of our military personnel.

After military service, Roy finished college, taught school and became the principal of an elementary public school in Washington. Although he was a public school principal for years, he had great regard for Catholic school.

"It has happened," he wrote. "Carroll High School closed. Not a large school, its top enrollment never exceeded 450. Nevertheless, it had an excellent reputation right up to its last days. Financial problems finally caught up with it. But to say that is an

over-simplification. The most important institution for training Catholic youth in the entire Washington area closed because it did not have the support of Catholics. Increasing number of parents began to send children to the public schools. With a decrease in religious vocations, specifically for the ministry of youth, fewer priests and sisters and brothers were teaching. Those who steadfastly remained were ridiculed as 'slave labor' by some priests and religious for continuing to support the Catholic school.

"I do not advocate the neglect of the Church's ministry to the poor. But neither do I feel the neglect of our leadership is the right way to go! I taught high school seniors: 'Matrimony is a sacrament of love. It is the love between husband and wife, radiating out to children, other members of the family, and out to the community. It is much like Holy Orders. Both foster a surplus of love which overflows and is spread to others. Such is the ideal we are called to teach.' It is safe to say that such truths will not be taught in this area now.

"The parish programs for high school youth are few, and those that do exist draw only a few who are encouraged to attend for social events. This is a sober reality at a time when our public schools are given over to secular humanism and our country has become basically pagan and materialistic.

"Last week I was contacted by the principal of one of the two Catholic elementary schools here. He is a man of about 40, with a deep faith and dedication. He offered me a job half-days teaching math, reading and English. Since I am retired, I took it. 'My afternoons will be free to write, and write I will. (I still remember the first book you lent me when we were at Lackland: Arnold Lunn's *Now I See*.)

"This should be an interesting year. The two elementary schools are being pressured to consolidate because it would save money. Personally, I think it would spell the end for both of them. In any event, I'm going to keep my spirits up and do my best. As Archbishop Sheen used to say: 'God love you!'"

Obituary

Former Fairport mission helper dies in Maryland

Sister M. Justina (Catherine E.) Morris, a Mission Helper of the Sacred Heart who worked in Fairport from 1972-1974, died Sunday, August 17, 1986, at Stella Maris Hospice in Towson, Md., after a long illness.

A native of Baltimore, Sister Justina was a member of St. Paul's parish on Caroline and Oliver Streets in the city. She was born in 1913, and entered religious life in 1935. Following her profession of vows in 1937, Sister Justina was assigned to catechetical work and care of children in a day nursery operated by her community in Baltimore. She continued the nursery work when assigned to New York City in 1938.

Returning to the motherhouse in Baltimore in 1940, Sister Justina became assistant to Sister Rosalia Walsh, conducting courses for adults in catechetical methods and religious doctrine. At this time, she also did a great deal of vocation work, traveling to many cities to speak to young women about religious life, and in addition, she wrote a number of religious workbooks for

children.

In 1963, Sister Justina again returned to Baltimore to continue her own study, and after two years was awarded a bachelor of science degree from Loyola College. She then moved to New York City, and earned a master's degree in religious education from Fordham University.

From 1966-72, Sister Justina served as secretary to the mother general of her community, and as editor of the community's magazine. During this time, her health began to deteriorate, but in 1972, at the end of her term of office, she was assigned to catechetical formation work in Fairport, N.Y.

In recent years, frequent hospitalizations and weakness prevented Sister Justina from being actively involved in ministry or service within the community.

Sister Justina is survived by several sisters: Elizabeth Davis, of Wichita, Kan.; Judy Fitzgerald, of South Boston, Mass.; and Gertrude Greifzu, of Baltimore, as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.

Overeaters invited to retreat scheduled by Cenacle sister

"Compulsion Controls: Communication Changes" is the topic of a retreat for compulsive overeaters set for Sept. 12-14 at the Cenacle Center for Spiritual Renewal.

Sister Mary Sullivan, a Sister of the Cenacle for more than 25 years, will direct the retreat. Participants will reflect on the spiritual, emotional and physical aspects of overeating discussions, time for private prayer and personal consultation with the sisters are also provided.

For information or reservations, contact

the Cenacle Ministry Office, 693 East Ave., Rochester, or call (716) 271-8755.

Pastoral ministry orientation

The Department of Chaplaincy Service at Strong Memorial Hospital will be conducting orientation sessions for clergy and parish staff members who are new to the area or who wish to become more familiar with the hospital.

Those who would like to register or have any questions regarding the sessions should call the chaplains' office at (716) 275-2187 any weekday from 9 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.

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<p style="text-align: center;">Williamsburg, VA. Sept. 30-Oct. 5 \$375.00</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">6 Days visiting New Hope, PA. Longwood Gardens; Williamsburg, VA.; Jamestown, VA.; Monticello VA.; Luray Caverns.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Reading, PA. Oct. 11-13 \$152.00</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">3 Days Shopping Spree in Reading Tour of Pennsylvania Dutch Country with Amish Feast, Poconos</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Toronto Dec. 6-7 \$127.00</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">2 Days Christmas Lights and Decorations at Cullen Gardens, Cullen Farms, Niagara Falls, and downtown Toronto. Two Dinners.</p>

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