

Father Albert Shamon

A Word for Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R3) Matthew 4:1-11; (R1) Genesis 2:7-9, 3:1-7; (R2) Romans 5:12-19.

Lent is so important that the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy devoted two paragraphs to it (#109-110).

"The Lenten season," it said, has a twofold character: 1) it recalls baptism or prepares for it; and 2) it stresses a penitential spirit."

In the revised liturgy, therefore, the baptismal features were made more visible, and the virtue of penance was better highlighted.

In early times, the history of salvation played an important part in the preparation for baptism, for it is through the baptismal vows that one embraces the new covenant. Yet ours is not the only covenant God made with men. The covenants of the Old Testament help us understand ours.

The first reading for the first Sunday of Lent deals with the Edenic Covenant. The first readings for the second, third and fourth Sundays tell of the vocations of Abraham, Moses and David, with whom God made covenants — the Patriarchal, the Sinaitic and the Messianic Covenants, respectively. And the fifth Sunday relates the covenantal promise: life out of death.

The second readings for the same weeks harmonize with the Old Testament and gospel passages.

The gospel for the first Sunday relates the temptations of Jesus. At baptism, we renounce Satan and his works. Prayer and fasting will help here.

The second Sunday's gospel reading presents Jesus' transfiguration, the symbol of our own transfiguration at baptism through sanctifying grace.

The gospel for the third Sunday recounts the story of the Samaritan woman. Baptism gives the living water of the Holy Spirit to those who have faith.

The fourth Sunday's gospel tells of the cure of the blind man. At baptism, ears and mouth are blessed so that one might be able to hear the message of faith and to pray. Such endeavors enable us to live the new life of faith.

The fifth Sunday's gospel describes the raising of Lazarus from the dead. Baptism resurrects one to new life: the life of the Spirit.

One of the hilarious comic-relief scenes in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* is the soliloquy of the impudent Launcelot Gobbo, Shylock's houseboy. He is a youth given to breaking dishes, wearing out clothes and adding to household expenses. Shylock, of course, is very displeased with him. So Launcelot ponder a serious question: should he desert his employer and go to work for one more generous?

In the soliloquy, Launcelot describes himself as being between the devil and God. "The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me ... to flee," he says. "My conscience says, 'No ... do not run.'"

"Budge," says the fiend.

"Budge not," says Launcelot's conscience.

And so it goes, each offering arguments for his case. Gobbo ends up following the fiend's advice.

So are we all tempted: the voice of God on one side, the devil on the other. The fiend says, "Lent is no different from any other time. Stay as you are."

Conscience says, "Lent is a time of grace; a time to fast, to pray and to give alms."

"Change not," says the fiend.

"Indeed, do change," says your conscience.

The best way to handle temptation is through prayer. Eve did not pray, and man fell. Jesus prayed, and Satan fell. And so we pray, "Lead us not into temptation ... but deliver us from evil."

Obituary

John Riesenberger, 87, active in Church affairs

John C. Riesenberger, an usher at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Rochester for 40 years and a lifetime member of the Knights of Columbus, died on Thursday, February 19, 1987, at Strong Memorial Hospital, after a short illness. He was 87.

Mr. Riesenberger was very active in Church affairs and was regarded by many as an outstanding Catholic layman. He was president of Blessed Sacrament's Nocturnal Adoration Society since 1952, and was a trustee of the Daily Mass League for more than 20 years.

Mr. Riesenberger represented the Rochester area at the International Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia as a member of the Nocturnal Adoration Society several years ago. At the age of 70, he retired from the Regional Transit Authority after 37 years as claim manager, but stayed on as an employee-assistance coordinator for another 12 years. Mr. Riesenberger coordinated counseling and retirement-planning services for retirees and those still working for the transit

service.

He was also actively involved in committee work for the Retirement Planners Association of Western New York, which he served as president. Busy in senior-citizen affairs, Mr. Riesenberger belonged to the National Council on Aging and the American Association of Retired Persons. The Greater Rochester Commerce Magazine also featured an article on Mr. Riesenberger's work with retirees and the national recognition his program had earned. Mr. Riesenberger was active in Brighton Republican politics for many years.

The Church's office for the dead was recited by the Nocturnal Adoration Society on Sunday, February 22. Society members served as pallbearers for the funeral service at Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Monday, February 23.

He is survived by his wife of 65 years, Madeline, a sister, Julia Aman of Fairport; and many nieces and nephews.

Coalition to sponsor seminar on constructive investments

The Genesee Valley Office of Social Ministry and a coalition of religious and labor organizations will sponsor a seminar on socially responsible spending, saving and investing.

"Using Your Money for Constructive Investment: Options for Institutions and Individuals" is scheduled from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday, March 12, at the Rochester Hilton Hotel, 175 Jefferson Road, Henrietta.

The cost is \$15 per person. For reservations, send a check payable to "Constructive Investment" to 935 East Avenue, Rochester, N.Y., 14607. For more information, call (716)546-4894.

Teacher workshop scheduled

Camp Stella Maris will host a workshop to introduce teachers to Project Wild, an environmental education program, sponsored nationally by such organizations as the Wildlife Society, the National Wildlife Federation, Defenders of Wildlife and the American Humanity Association.

The workshop is set for Friday, March 13, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Camp Stella Maris.

The cost of the workshop is \$5 and includes various teaching materials and lunch.

Contact Florence Mauro at (315)346-2243 for information.

Women's club sets party

The Catholic Women's Club is planning a card party for Wednesday, March 18, at the American Association of University Women clubhouse, 492 East Ave. Proceeds from the sale of tickets, priced at \$7 each, will go to the organization's general treasury.

For information on the card party or membership in the club, contact Mary Weidenborner, president, at (716)461-9173

YWCA marks women's day with workshops, performers

The Rochester YWCA will host a day of workshops for and about women on International Women's Day, Saturday, March 7, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Workshop topics will range from "The Rambo Syndrome" to "Women and Their Rights under the Law."

At 8 p.m., the Crowsfeet Dance Collective will present "Barbie's Revenge" at the Rochester Museum and Science Center's Eisenhart Auditorium, 657 East Avenue. Admission will be charged on a sliding scale from \$4-\$9.

The YWCA, located at 175 N. Clinton Avenue, is accessible to wheelchairs and will

provide childcare as well as interpreters for the hearing impaired. Lunch will be available.

Society sponsors mini-retreat

The Altar Rosary Society of St. Mary Our Mother Church in Horseheads will sponsor a mini-retreat on Friday, March 6, from 8:45 a.m. until 3 p.m. at the Dominican Monastery in Elmira.

Father Bartholomew J. O'Brien will be the retreat master.

Please bring your own lunch. All are welcome.

"When you wonder about the mystery of yourself ... look to Christ who gives you the meaning of life ...

When you wonder about your role in the future ... look to Christ." *John Paul II*



VOCATION WEEKEND RETREAT

MEN — High School Juniors and Older

WHEN — Fri. March 27th at 7 P.M. to Sun. March 29th. 3 P.M.

WHERE — Saint Raymond's Novitiate Order of Our Lady of Mercy 8692 Lake Street Road LeRoy, N.Y. 14482

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