

Father Albert Shamon

A Word for Sunday



On the road

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Luke 24:13-35; (R1) Acts 2:14, 22-28; (R2) 1 Peter 1:17-21.

In the Emmaus story, we see something very characteristic of Jesus during His lifetime. Often His disciples craved publicity and display, whereas He seemed to retreat from too much attention, striving instead to carry on His work as quietly and unobtrusively as possible.

So it was on Easter Sunday. He rose alone. No mortal man saw Him put on immortality. His disciples saw only an empty tomb and burial cloths.

With the same ease and quietness, He joined the two disciples on the Emmaus road. About these two, we know hardly anything. They were plain, ordinary, common men. On this particular day, they were sad, dejected and disappointed men.

Yet they had this in their favor: their sadness sprang from their love of and hope for Jesus. As they traveled, they were discussing all that had happened to Him. Like Francis Thompson in his *Hound of Heaven*, they did not yet realize, until the sorrow had sanctified them, that everything He took from them was taken so that He might return it to them. Their gloom, they discovered, was "after all, the shade of His hand, outstretched caressingly."

Like the liturgy itself, the Emmaus event is divided into a "Liturgy of the Word," in which "He interpreted for them every passage of Scripture which referred to Him," and a "Liturgy of the Eucharist," in which "He took bread, pronounced the blessing, then broke the bread and began to distribute it to them."

The purpose of the word is to enkindle faith. The purpose of faith is to enable one to "see" Jesus in the mystery of faith. In both the breaking of the word and of the bread, the Holy Spirit was fervently at work. It was the Holy Spirit that set their hearts on fire as Jesus explained the Scripture to the two dis-

ciples on the road to Emmaus. It was the Holy Spirit that opened their eyes at the breaking of the bread.

So inspired, they came back to the Church — to the Eleven and the rest of the company. And the Church confirmed their own faith experience. "The Lord has been raised!" they cried. "It is true! He has appeared to Simon."

How busy Jesus was Easter day! And what was His business? To heal the broken hearts of His friends.

He appeared first to Mary, His mother. Great as the sea had been her sorrow; now greater than ecstasy was her joy!

He appeared next to the weeping Magdalene, who cried in love, "Rabboni!" Then the holy women, so loyal in the dark hours of the Passion, saw Him.

Next He appeared to Simon, who confirmed his brethren, and then to the two on the Emmaus road, and finally to the Eleven.

And how did He leave them all? Filled with joy and love and hope.

The U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on economic justice said that the care and love that Jesus showed toward everyone, we must show to all (#330). Thus we must make Him present in the world.

Surgeons at the University of Minnesota have performed an operation during which a healthy person "loans" his heart to a patient on the operating table. The surgeons operate on the "idle" heart in the patient, while the life processes flow into the patient's body through plastic tubes joined to the donor.

We meet people every day who have been overwhelmed by life. Their hearts have become heavy and broken, like the friends of Jesus on Easter day. As the risen Jesus loaned His heart by His love and understanding and forgiveness to the least of His children, so we ought to loan our hearts through our love, understanding and sympathy to the broken-hearted and sad, and so sustain them that they too might cry, "Alleluia! Praise the Lord!"

Cindy Bassett

The Bible Corner



The anointing

Mary Magdalene took the alabaster perfume flask and slowly opened it, releasing the delicious aroma of myrrh. Peering in at Simon's doorway, she saw Jesus eating with a few of his followers. Mary had come here unannounced, but her great love for Jesus gave her the courage to enter.

Walking directly over to Jesus, Mary poured out the entire contents of the alabaster flask and tenderly anointed His head. Some of those present were sharp in their disapproval, saying, "This perfume could have been sold and the money given to the poor."

Jesus knew the extent of Mary's unselfish gift. "Mary has chosen well," He told them. "She has anointed my body and prepared it for burial."

Mary had not been thinking of Jesus' death when she went to Simon's house. She had come to anoint Jesus with all of the reverence befitting a king. The prophet, Samuel, had anointed both Saul and David with holy oil to consecrate them for their duties as the kings of Israel, and Jesus was the Lord of Mary's life.

"Others had also seen Jesus as a king," Mary thought later, after Jesus' crucifixion. Someone had placed a sign on His cross, branding Him 'King of the Jews.' "And now," she mused, "I go to anoint the body of Jesus in death."

None of the women spoke on the way to Jesus' tomb. Not until they neared the tomb did one of them say, "How shall we move the boulder to enter?"

Suddenly, the entire landscape was brilliant with light. The stone had been rolled aside and the body of Jesus was gone!

In their fear and confusion, the other women had fled immediately. But, Mary, still reeling from the discovery, sat down for a moment, weeping. Beside her, someone looked on in silence. Then He came closer and asked, "Why do you cry?"

"Because they have taken away my Lord," she answered through her tears,

still not looking up.

"Mary!" Jesus said. This time He changed her life more radically than when He had cast out the seven demons that had tried to take her life away.

"Master!" Mary exclaimed.

"Go and tell the others."

She found the others in the upper room of a friend's house in Jerusalem, where only a few days before, the apostles had shared the Passover meal with Jesus.

"I have seen Him!" Mary cried, bursting through the door. "Jesus is alive!"

"Maybe you just thought you saw Him, Mary," Matthew said, as Peter and John raced toward the tomb. "A heart overcome with grief can do strange things to the mind."

"Why did I expect you to believe me?" Mary cried angrily. "You only pretended to be His friends. When He needed you most, you all ran away! And now, you hide in this room in fear for your own lives. I know what I saw, and Jesus called me by name!"

Mary's words hung in the air like a banner of dishonor, and no one said anything more until Peter and John returned.

"Mary was right!" John cried as he entered. "There is no body."

"We went into the tomb," Peter said, still breathless. "All that remains are the linen wrappings." While everyone still contemplated these strange circumstances, Jesus suddenly appeared in their midst, holding out His hands for all to see the marks of the nails. "Why do you find it so difficult to believe? It was written so long ago in Scripture that the Messiah must suffer and die and rise on the third day."

Mary Magdalene spoke first. "My God and my King!" Then she took the alabaster flask and poured the oil into the wounds on His feet and hands. Mary's face was radiant as she looked upon Jesus and said, "This time, Lord, I anoint you as a King for all people, with a reign that will never end!"

Scripture references: Matthew 26:6-13; John 20:1-20.

Evening for women planned

The Sisters of Mercy are inviting women interested in deepening their knowledge of the call to religious life to a Eucharistic liturgy and supper. The event will take place Wednesday, May 6, at 5:30 p.m. at St. Rita's Convent, 1008

Maple Dr., West Webster.

For information or to register, women in the Rochester area may call Sister Sheila Stevenson, (716) 244-2175; in the Corning, Elmira and Ithaca area, Sister Marie Catherine Cain, (607) 732-6295; and in the Hornell and Bath area, Sister Patricia Prinzing, (607) 324-0833.

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Obituaries

John G. Ermatinger, 73, banking executive

John G. Ermatinger of 224 Shorewood Drive, Webster, died of cardiac arrest on Saturday, April 11. He was 73.

Under the leadership of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, Mr. Ermatinger served as a member of the Financial Advisory Committee of the Diocese of Rochester. He also served on the boards of the Catholic Family Center, Friendship Nursery, United Cerebral Palsy and the Wegman Foundation.

Mr. Ermatinger was a graduate of West High School and the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania.

During World War II, he served as a lieutenant in the U.S. Naval Reserve, in the Bureau of Supplies and Accounts in Washington, D.C.

Before his retirement in 1978, Mr. Ermatinger had been employed by Security Trust Company (now Norstar) for 36 years. As executive vice president, he was in charge of the bank's Investment Department and bank portfolio.

For 10 years, he was chairman of the budget committee of the Rochester Community Chest. He also served as chairman of the Capital Fund Committee of the Rochester Chamber of Commerce for 24 years.

At the time of his death, he was a member of the financial committee of St. Paul's Church in Webster. He was also a well-regarded trustee of Rochester Funds, Inc., for which he had been slated to become chairman of the financial committee this May.

Mr. Ermatinger's main hobby was travel. He recently returned from the Galapagos Islands off the west coast of South America. In his lifetime, he visited 70 countries and 49 states.

He is survived by his wife, Georgette, and three daughters: Renee Des Rosiers of Grafton, Mass; Jean Laurelle Ermatinger of Perinton; and Cheri A. Cope of Webster; six grandchildren; and one sister, Mary Louise Pfleging of Rochester.

Sister Anselmo Sewilo, 90, longtime teacher

A Mass of Christian Burial for Sister Anselmo Sewilo, SSJ, was celebrated in the Motherhouse Chapel on Monday, April 13, by Father Joseph Jankowiak. Concelebrants were Monsignor William Shannon and Father Peter Bayer.

Sister Anselmo died in St. Joseph Convent Infirmary on April 10. She was 90 years old.

Born in Syracuse, Sister Anselmo moved to Rochester with her family while she was still a child. She entered the Sisters of St. Joseph from St. Stanislaus Parish in 1922, and later received her teaching degree from Nazareth College.

Sister Anselmo taught in the elementary schools of the Rochester diocese for 45 years. She spent the longest period of time at St. Mary's School in Waterloo, where her 19 years

spanned the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. Other schools in which she taught were: St. Hyacinth, Auburn; St. Casimir, Elmira; St. Patrick, Dansville; and St. Anthony of Padua, St. Stanislaus, St. Augustine and St. Monica, all in Rochester.

After retiring from teaching in 1968, Sister Anselmo lived in the St. Joseph Convent Infirmary.

Sister Anselmo's parents came from Poland in 1892, where they had lived in the same village as the grandparents of Pope John Paul II. Her twin sister, Sister Stanislaus Sewilo, also a sister of St. Joseph, died in 1977.

Sister Anselmo's friends described her as an excellent elementary school teacher who was well-loved by her students. She is survived by many nieces, nephews and cousins.



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