

Cindy Bassett

# The Bible Corner



## The Lord's people

I never knew my brother Cain. By the time I was born, he had been gone from our house for years. I was never really certain where he had gone. My parents rarely spoke of Cain, and when they did, it was usually in disapproving tones.

My parents called me "Seth," which means "granted." My mother said God had blessed her with another son for the one that was taken away. I always thought she was referring to Cain. It wasn't until I was much older that I learned the whole story.

Just across from where we live is a large field. To me, the soil looked rich, and I thought it would have been a perfect place to plant a corn crop. My parents would never let me plant anything there. I was always pestering my mother about it and, one day, she finally told me the reason.

"Your brother, Abel, is buried there," she said, deliberately not meeting my eyes.

For a few minutes, I was too stunned to speak. It was as if a part of my life had been destroyed — something I could never know anything about. "How did Abel die?" I asked.

"Your brother Cain killed him," she replied almost in a whisper. "I lost both of my sons that day."

"Tell me about it, mother," I asked.

"God blessed us with two sons," she began. "Cain was the eldest. He was always so competitive with Abel. I was glad when Cain decided to farm and Abel became a shepherd. Both boys did well," she reflected.

"Adam decided that every year, we should make an offering of the fruits of our labor back to the Lord. All was due to God anyway. Abel chose his prize sheep. Your father and I watched proudly as he went up to the mountain to sacrifice it to God."

"Cain selected a portion of his best crops. But that day, something changed his mind. He brought the cast offs from his produce up the mountain for his offering.

"God knows everything that is in our hearts," mother explained. "And so, Abel's offering was pleasing to Him, but Cain's offering was not accepted."

"The Lord would have forgiven Cain if he had tried to make his mistake right. But instead of bringing another offering before God, he became bitter and jealous of Abel, and in his anger, he killed his own brother."

"Cain foolishly believed he could hide this terrible sin from God. He buried Abel in that field. God punished Cain by forcing him to leave here, never to return again. We haven't seen him since," she concluded.

"Well do you know where Cain is now?" I asked.

"We've heard many stories about him over the years. See that city that rises to the east?"

"Enoch," I replied.

"It's been said that Cain founded that city. He named it after his first son."

"But, mother," I protested, "if you knew this, why wouldn't you go to Enoch and seek Cain out?"

"With all of the news we've heard about Cain, I've never heard anyone say he was sorry," she replied sadly. "He goes on just as before. I guess I'll never understand."

I thought about both of my brothers for a long time after that, and I mourned their loss. It was terrible that I never knew either Cain or Abel. But the worst part about the whole thing was that it didn't have to happen.

I tried to forget his part of my history, but not before I had made a decision about my own life. I vowed that I would try very hard to listen to God and do the right thing.

**Scripture reference: Genesis, chapter 4.**  
During Seth's time, people began to call themselves "The Lord's people." Many years later, Noah, one of Seth's descendants, would serve God and His people in a very special way.

### Crisis service needs counselors

Life Line, Rochester's 24-hour crisis service, is in need of 20 counselors. Interviews for interested candidates will take place during August and September. Training for selected applicants will begin October 6, and will continue through November and December.

Life Line counselors receive a small hourly salary to cover such expenses as transportation and child care. Counselors may be of all ages, must be empathetic, remain calm under stress, and have the ability to be objective and non-judgmental.

Although candidates are not required to meet any particular academic requirements, they must promise to complete at least one year of active counseling for Life Line after their training period is finished. Each volunteer

### St. James registering preschoolers

A few openings still remain in preschool programs at St. James School, 119 Brockley Road, Rochester. Classes will begin in September for the two-day program for children age three and the three-day program for children age four.

For information, call the school office at (716)482-1523, between 9 a.m. and noon.

serves at least one five-and-a-half hour shift each week.

Life Line receives a wide range of calls concerning such crises as poisonings, mental health and medical emergencies as well as requests for information and service referrals.

Information about becoming a counselor can be obtained by calling (716)275-5151.

### Institute offers home-study course

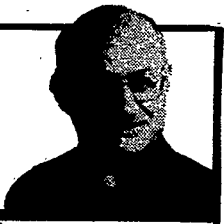
The Catholic Home Study Institute (CHSI) is now offering Vatican-approved, adult correspondence courses in various areas of theology such as basic doctrine, Sacraments, moral theology, spirituality and Church history. According to Executive Director Marianne Evans, enrollment in CHSI is growing, and has doubled since the institute was established in 1983.

CHSI is accredited by the National Home Study Council and its courses have been recommended for college credit by The American Council on Education. The institute is also pontifically approved by the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy and offers the Pontifical Diploma.

Write CHSI, 9 Loudoun St., Leesburg, Virginia, 22075 or call (703) 777-8388 for information.

Father Albert Shamon

# A Word for Sunday



## Feast of the Assumption

**Sunday's Readings: (R3) Matthew 14:22-23; (R1) 1 Kings 19:9, 11:13; (R2) Romans 9:1-5**

One of the purposes of the Marian Year, according to *Redemptoris Mater* (3/25/87), is to commemorate the 1,200th anniversary of the Second Council of Nicea (787). That council condemned iconoclasm, or image smashing. But more significantly, it was the last council attended by both Eastern and Western hierarchies (#33).

In *Redemptoris Mater*, Pope John Paul II particularly mentions one icon that is still venerated in the Ukraine — the icon of Our Lady of Vladimir. The baptism of St. Vladimir (988), the grand prince of Kiev, marks the beginning of Christianity in the land then called Rus. And 1988 celebrates the first millennium of this epochal event.

In Auburn, we have a lovely Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church, Ss. Peter and Paul, which is filled with expressive icons. Its pastor is the Very Rev. Charles Mezzomo. As part of the millennium/Marian Year observance, Father Mezzomo has picked August 14 as the date of a special celebration. He has invited the priests and all the people of Auburn's Catholic parishes to join his parish in a public demonstration of faith in the dormition (death day) of the Mother of God.

The celebration will begin Friday, August 14, at 6 p.m., with vespers at Ss. Peter and Paul. At 7 p.m., the church bells of Auburn will ring, as people process to St. Hyacinth's Church, carrying the shroud of the Mother of God and singing Marian hymns.

After the first station of the funeral hymns to Mary at St. Hyacinth, the pilgrims will pray the rosary as they wend their way to St. Aloysius, where more funeral dirges will be chanted. From St. Aloysius, all will return to Ss. Peter and Paul for the final burial hymns, Festal Liturgy and blessing of flowers, anointing and distribution of blessed bread.

To prepare for the feast, two outdoor Moleben services — devotions in the Ukrainian tradition — have been scheduled for Wednesday and Thursday, August 12 and 13, at 7 p.m. at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, St. Francis Church, Clark Street. Several priests will be available there

for confessions.

In Jerusalem, there are two churches — the Basilica of the Dormition, standing on the traditional site of Mary's death, on Mount Zion; and the Church of the Assumption, marking the traditional spot of Mary's assumption, near the Garden of Gethsemane.

Where Mary died is not certain. Some say in Ephesus, but the weight of tradition, especially in the East, favors Jerusalem.

The liturgical cult to Our Lady started after the Council of Ephesus (431). Ephesus defined that Mary is truly the Mother of God (*Theotokos*, or "God bearer"). Naturally, the oldest Marian feast was her death day. The Church always honors the death days of martyrs and saints as the days of their birth into heavenly glory. In the East, Mary's death day was called her "dormition," or falling asleep. Later in the West, it was called her assumption.

The date August 15 can be traced to the year 529. St. Gregory of Tours (deceased 529) in the West and St. Modestus (deceased 634) in the East were among the first to speak of the final moments of the Mother of God. The most substantial testimony was given by St. John Damascene (749). Under the influence of the East, Pope Sergius (687-701) accepted the feast. From Rome, it spread to other countries of Europe.

On November 1, 1950, Pope Pius XII defined the Dogma of the Assumption: "We define as divinely revealed dogma that the Immaculate Mother of God, having completed her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory."

Such an "assumption" was most fitting. Christ died; it was fitting that Mary should die. How? We do not know. St. Alphonsus opines that she died from love. As harp strings burst asunder with the music they throb to express, so the heart of Mary burst from the intensity of her longing to be with her Son.

Christ's body did not see corruption; it was fitting that Mary's body not see corruption. For corruption is the wages of sin (Romans 5:12), and Mary was sinless.

Christ rose from the dead body and soul; it was fitting that she who was knit body and soul to her Son should also so rise — the first fruits of His redemption.

### Cenacle schedules retreat for Legion of Mary members

Members of the Legion of Mary are invited to "A Weekend with Mary," offered by Father John P. O'Malley and the Sisters of the Cenacle September 11-13 at the Cenacle Center for Spiritual Renewal, 693 East Avenue, Rochester.

The weekend will include times for personal prayer and reflection, sharing, and individual consultation with Father O'Malley and the sisters.

The offering for the weekend is \$60. For more information, contact Bernardine Begley at (716)663-8722.

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**HOUSE OF GUITARS**

We received 6 correct entries identifying the 1977 hit song, "The Year of the Cat."

The winner was Ed Rosenbauer of Webster

**MUSIC TRIVIA**

**This week's question:**  
Who had the most #1 records excluding Elvis Presley and the Beatles?

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.

**The Courier-Journal Music Trivia**  
1150 Buffalo Rd.  
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