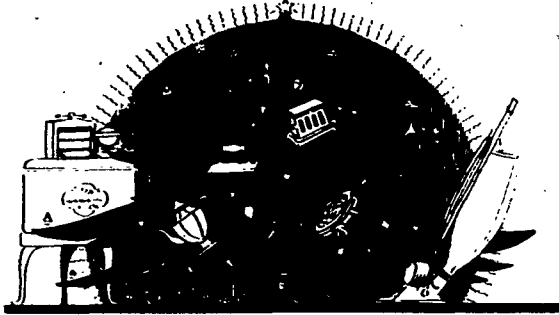


Columnists

CELEBRATE



A 1920s Christmas at the THE STRONG MUSEUM

One Manhattan Square Rochester, New York

The holidays at the Strong Museum begin with the magnificently decorated Christmas tree—ready for visitors on Tuesday, November 24, 1987.

Sunday, November 29 2:00-4:00 p.m.	Hochstein Chamber Ensemble and The Hochstein Children's Choir perform holiday music.
Sunday, December 6 2:00-4:00 p.m.	The City Spirit Chorus presents a holiday musicale.
Wednesday, December 9 10:30 a.m.	Holiday lecture: "Celebrating Christmas during the 1920s: The Maturation of the Festival of Abundance"
Sunday, December 13 1:00-5:00 p.m.	A Holiday Family Sunday Activities for the entire family.

All events are free with regular Museum admission.

Ask about the Strong Museum Associates special holiday and year-round activities, and become a member today!

For more information about the Strong Museum or holiday activities, call 263-2700, extension 255.

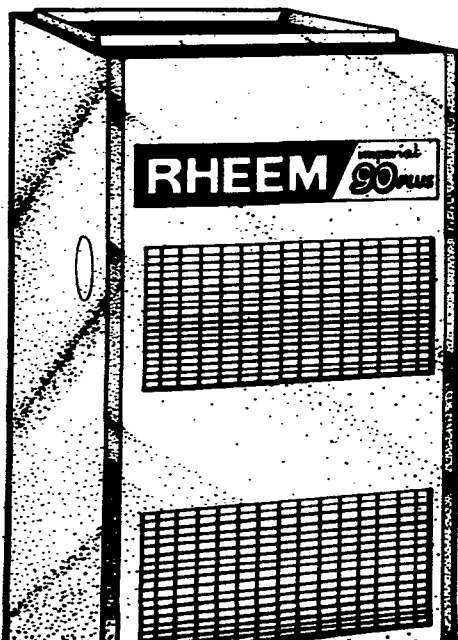
THE STRONG MUSEUM

Rheem® 90 PLUS™ Gas Furnace.

Our new 90 PLUS gas furnace squeezes out more than 90% of the heat available in natural gas, to give you more for your energy dollar. With the kind of winters we have around here, the efficient choice is the right choice: Rheem. Call us today.



Drive Your Energy Bills Down All Winter Long.



BRANDT

HEATING &
AIR CONDITIONING

237 Winton Rd. N.

(716) 288-4270

A Trusted Friend For
Over 54 Years In Heating

24 HOUR
EMERGENCY
SERVICE

SENIOR
CITIZEN
DISCOUNT

A heart for the miseries of others

By Father Albert Shamon

Sunday's readings: (R3) Matthew 25:31-46; (R2) Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17; (R2) Corinthians 15:20-26, 28.

As we walk through Matthew's Gospel, scenes of salvation history are presented as fulfilling the words of the prophets. As his Gospel draws to a close, Matthew foreshadows the end in three parables (chapters 24-25). Then, with a mighty crescendo, he climaxes all with the Last Judgment.

For Matthew, judgment is separation. Sheep and goats pasture together. At the end of the day, they are separated. Sheep with their woolly coats prefer open air, whereas the thinly clad goats seek warmth by huddling together in pens. So, at the end of the world, the good and the bad shall be separated — eternally.

At Medjugorje, Vicka described Hell much as the children of Fatima did in July, 1917. The souls were like hideous animals, darting in and out of the flames, damning God. Purgatory was like ashes — dull, gray, filled with wandering souls asking for prayers. Heaven was a valley, too beautiful for words to describe. "Everybody is so happy there," Vicka said.

The sentence Christ the King pronounces is very interesting. To those on His right, He says, "Come, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world." Note that heaven was prepared from the beginning, but hell was not in God's original plan. He made us for eternal happiness; this is our destiny.

To those on His left, Christ says, "Out of my sight, you condemned, into that everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels." Note here that hell came into existence only after the rebellion of the angels: it was meant only for them, not for us. Fearful to ponder, man can rebel like Lucifer and his angels did.

What does God ask of us in order to win heaven? Simply that we love one another. The proof of that love is our works of mercy. The Latin word for mercy is *misericordia*. It is a word compounded from *miseri*, meaning misery, and *cordia*, meaning heartfelt.

Mercy, therefore, means having a heart for the miseries of others. But it cannot stop there; just to feel sorrow for another's miseries and do nothing about them is mere sentimentality — crocodile tears. Mercy demands another ingredient, namely doing something to alleviate misery through such actions as feeding the

A Word for Sunday

hungry.

God, being pure Spirit, cannot feel emotion. Yet His mercies are above all His works, because God always does something about man's miseries. Man's greatest misery is sin, and God does something about this by forgiving sin and sending His Son to take it away.

So it goes with our works of mercy. We must do more than feel sorry for others. We must positively help them, not only in their bodily needs — although some would reduce the Church to a welfare organization — but especially in their spiritual needs.

One of the most striking passages in the address John Paul II made to the bishops of the United States gathered in Los Angeles (Sept. 16, 1987) was on the laity's role in bringing the Gospel to the world. It seems we are busy straightening the pictures on the wall while the house is burning down.

"How is the American culture evolving today?" the Holy Father asked. "Is this evolution being influenced by the Gospel? Does it clearly reflect Christian inspiration? Your music, your poetry and art, your drama, your painting and sculpture, the literature that you are producing — are all those things which reflect the soul of a nation being influenced by the spirit of Christ for the perfection of humanity?"

The Holy Father went on: "It is above all the laity . . . who bring the Gospel's uplifting and purifying influence to the world of culture, to the whole realm of thought and artistic creativity, to the various professions and places of work, to family life and to society in general . . ."

The mission of bishops and priests is to sanctify the laity by word and sacrament and to encourage them in their ecclesial mission.

All this is to be done that His Kingdom might come to all at the Last Judgment.

A prophet prepares Jesus' path

By Cindy Bassett

In the 15th year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius Caesar, a young man who lived alone in the stark wilderness of the desert heard a profound message from God. The message was this: "My Light has come into the world and a new kingdom, open to all, has begun. Go and tell everyone about it. I am appointing you to be my witness to the Light. Those who receive My Son, will become children of the Light. All they must do is trust Him and He will save them."

"How will I know Your Son?" the young man asked. "When you see the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove resting on Him, you will know that He is the Messiah," the Lord answered.

The young man, whose name was John, left the desert immediately to preach this good news. Everywhere he went, he urged the people: "Get ready for the coming of the Lord! The time is at hand!"

Many who heard John's message believed. And as a sign of their changed lives, they were baptized by John in the Jordan River. Soon John's fame spread all over the region of Judea, and he became known as John the Baptist. Even the chief priests in the Temple in Jerusalem learned of John's preaching, and they called a meeting to discuss this phenomenon.

"Just who is this man who goes around telling people of a new kingdom?" Caiaphas, the chief priest, asked the others who gathered.

"There are those who are certain that John the Baptist is the Prophet Elijah come back from the dead," one of the priests offered. "Before he started preaching, he lived alone in the desert eating locusts and honey, much the same as Elijah did."

The priests decided to send representatives to find out who John the Baptist really was.

The Pharisees and Sadducees found him near Bethany, preaching and baptizing. As soon as they made their way through the crowd, they confronted him.

"Are you Elijah?" they asked him.

"No, I am not," John replied.

So they asked him the question that had been in their minds from the very beginning:

The Bible Corner

"Are you the Christ?"

"No, but someone is coming who is far greater than I. I am not even fit to be his slave. For I baptize with water, but he will baptize with the Holy Spirit," John said.

The priests were stunned to silence for a few minutes. "Then you have never met the one you preach about, the one you claim is the Messiah?" one of them asked.

"I am only his witness, and my purpose is to prepare others to receive him and the new kingdom," John said. "But do you think that if you are just baptized, you will be worthy of him? Hypocrites! You must change your hearts first!"

Nothing remained to be said. The Pharisees and Sadducees returned to Caiaphas and said: "John the Baptist is a very dangerous man who will incite people to overthrow the government."

The next day, John the Baptist encountered Jesus in Bethany. But when Jesus asked to be baptized, John refused, saying: "It would not be right, for I am the one who needs to be baptized by you." "You do not understand," Jesus replied. "I must fulfill all that my Father has given me to do."

So John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River that day. As soon as he had done so, John saw the dove descending on him, and he remembered God's words to him while he was still in the desert.

Soon thereafter, Herod imprisoned John the Baptist. His ministry was finished, and Jesus began his Father's work. Today, we are all called to serve as witnesses to the Light. We must do no less than John the Baptist did.

Scripture References: Matthew 3; Mark 1: 1-11; Luke 3: 1-22; John 1: 1-35.