

Columnists

## Ongoing interest in Sheen tapes

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

Q: You haven't mentioned Sheen tapes in some time. Do you still carry them?

A: It's not that I think them less valuable, but I suppose because for many years people have gotten so many, that I thought interest had died out. I have sold or donated over 46,000 Sheen cassette talks in a dozen years. Every once in a while I get a jolt that informs me there still is a good interest. On April 15, this beautiful letter came from Elmira.

Dear Father,

"I love your column in the *Courier-Journal*. During Holy Week, I played Archbishop Sheen's tapes. They are great.

"I am sending this check for you either to send to those priests you often mention (these would be Bishop Raphael Ndingi; Father Kraft, SVD; Father Welch, S.J.; and Brother Ignatius DiSanto) or for tapes, or for whatever you think will do the most good. I hope you are well and that you will continue to write for our edification for a long time to come."

Q: What tapes are especially popular?

A: People used to phone and say: "Do you still carry the Sheen tapes?" The problem is: which Sheen tapes? Archbishop Sheen began his cassette apostolate thus: He was given a retreat in Gary, Indiana. Instead of giving the talks in one church, he gave eight talks in four different churches in Gary. A young Slovak priest who was interested in electronics asked Archbishop Sheen if he might tape the talks, and sell them to the people in the Gary diocese. They turned out to be so successful that the retreat talks were sought after by thousands outside the diocese. In many ways I think they are the best. But there is a problem.

Q: Why both the best and also the problem?

A: I think they were the best because the talks came through with a force and unction that surpassed most of the others. His presentation was so moving that many priests and sisters and lay people had a genuine renewal, a kind of "born again" experience. Many started to make a daily Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament, and many have continued to this day.

## On the Right Side

Q: And the problem?

A: Archbishop Sheen felt strongly that religious sisters should be identifiable and should wear the holy habit. He was almost violent in his denunciation of ditching the habit. He seemed to be convinced that this was a beginning of a secular spirit among the religious wearing secular clothes and earrings. Many sisters were so resentful that they not only would not listen to the Sheen message, but discouraged others. The depth of reaction reminded me of Congreve's oft quoted: "Heaven has no rage like love to hatred turned; nor hell a fury like a woman scorned." I'm afraid Archbishop Sheen did scorn the secularizing sisters, who according to his lights were doing a damaging thing to religion. If the archbishop had kept his anguish to himself, I think many good sisters could have been edified by his conferences. It seems to me that God, the Church, Archbishop Sheen and the sisters all lost out on that issue.

Q: What cassettes do you recommend?

A: There are several albums of tapes; and there is a set of 21 conferences he gave toward the end of his life, which are sold individually instead of in albums. I suggest people start their collection with: 1) Foundation of Sanctity; 2) Meaning of Suffering; 3) Christ, the Center of the World; 4) The Devil; 5) The Woman I Love (Our Lady); 6) The Young and Sex; and 7) Simon Peter, which is a favorite among the Kenyan native clergy. Stores must sell them for \$5. I charge \$3, plus \$1 for packaging and mail.

Sheen tapes can be obtained by writing to Father Cuddy at: Holy Trinity Church, 1460 Ridge Road East, Webster, N.Y. 14580, or by calling (716) 265-1616.

## Interdependence and solidarity

By Father Albert Shamon

Sunday's readings: (R3) John 15:1-8; (R1) Acts 9:26-31; (R2) 1 John 3:18-24.

Jesus, who had said He was the good shepherd, now says, "I am the true vine; you are the branches."

We might say that the visible vine today is the papacy, and we are the branches. The branches cling to the vine when we think with the papacy. That is why it behooves us to read the documents emanating from the pope.

To commemorate the 20th anniversary of Pope Paul VI's landmark social encyclical on the development of peoples (*Progressio Populorum*, 3/26/67), Pope John Paul issued his seventh encyclical entitled *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, "On Social Matters." The pope presented the encyclical (dated December 30, 1987) at a Vatican press conference February 19, 1988.

The London *Times* wrote that the encyclical offers clear spiritual leadership and may prove more influential than any of the present pope's previous encyclicals.

The new encyclical updates the social teaching of Paul VI's encyclical and expands its themes. Pope John Paul outlines the dramatic situation of the modern world, blaming in particular the rivalry of the superpowers for what he terms "unacceptably exaggerated concern for security" (#22) as the main reason for the widening gap between rich and poor countries.

The pope points out the responsibility of industrialized nations to take into account the consequences of their decisions in poorer, developing nations. Here, he enunciates one of the pillars of the encyclical: namely, the notion of *interdependence among nations and peoples*.

John Paul says that the achievement of peace is impossible unless world leaders recognize that the interdependence of nations demands the abandonment of bloc politics and all forms of imperialism.

The interdependence of nations is a theme John Paul has reiterated on numerous occasions. In his visit to the United States, the pope spoke to the people of Detroit:

"God himself has created our basic interdependence and called us to solidarity with all.

## A Word for Sunday

This teaching is formulated in an incomparably effective manner in the parable of the good Samaritan who took care of the man who was left half dead along the road from Jerusalem to Jericho. We all travel that road and are tempted to pass by on the other side.

"Referring to the Samaritan, who was moved by compassion, Jesus told his listeners: 'Go, and do the same.' Today, Jesus repeats to all of us when we travel the road of our common humanity: 'Go, and do the same.'" (9/19/87)

In speaking about the social development of peoples, the pope felt compelled to stress the international dimension, because of the objective need to promote a new worldwide solidarity. "... To succeed... we must create a just balance between the constraints put by interdependence upon the nations and the call for effective solidarity addressed to all nations. ...

"In order to be capable of global solidarity nations must first of all respect the human rights of their citizens... and the full rights of their fellow nations..." (idem).

One of the most interesting facets of the document is that the pope attacks the superpowers for playing out their competition in the Third World, reducing developing nations to "cogs on a gigantic wheel!" Although he does not explicitly name the United States and the Soviet Union, his meaning will be unambiguous to Church and political leaders.

This is something new. Paul VI and John XXIII leveled their guns against the capitalistic world. Pius XII was so anti-Communist he was called "the captain of NATO." John Paul sets the record straight by calling both systems — liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism — imperfect and criticizing them both equally.

Development, not progress. Worldwide solidarity is the name of the game.

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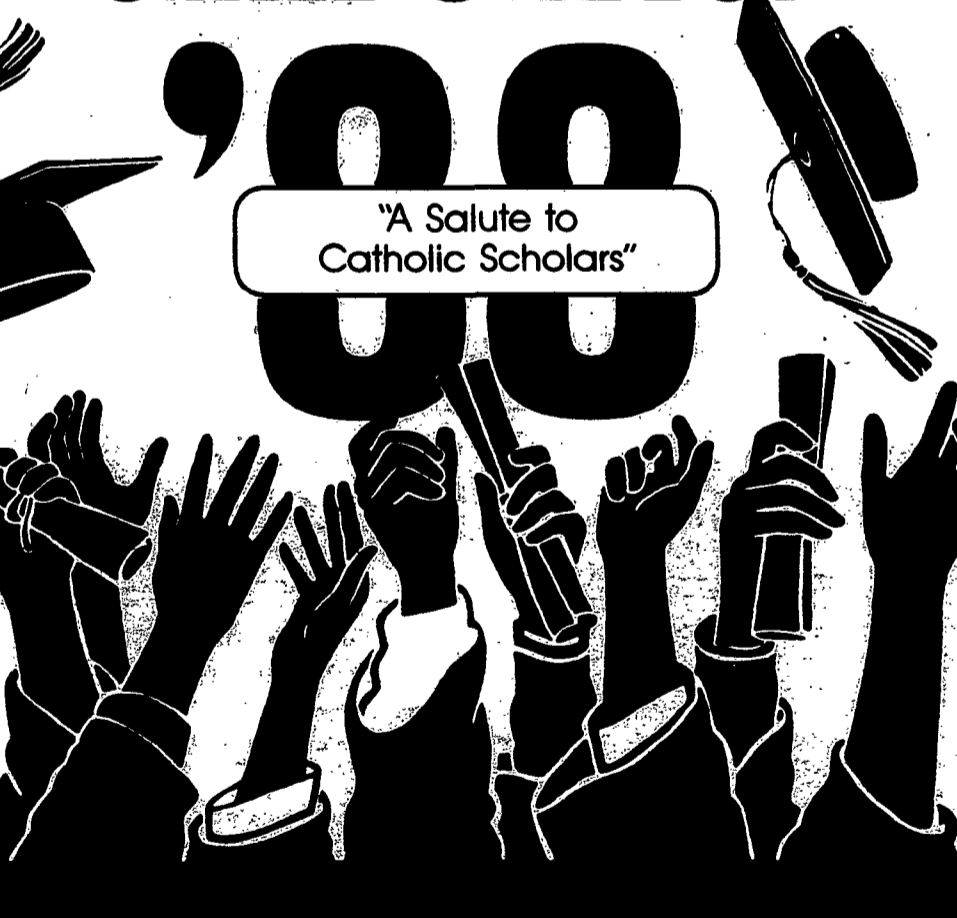
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## GRADUATION

"A Salute to Catholic Scholars"



In recognition of the Catholic high school seniors of the Rochester Diocese, the *Courier-Journal* will be featuring a special graduation supplement in the issue of June 2, 1988.

This keepsake section is among our best read... and best liked. Included will be a listing of graduates, photos of the valedictorian and salutatorian, and details of commencement ceremonies.

If your son or daughter does not attend a Catholic High School, but you wish to have them included in this issue, please mail their name and the school they attend to: *Courier-Journal*, Graduation Issue, 1450 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624. All names must be received by Friday, May 20, 1988. Names will not be taken over the telephone.

If you or your business would like to advertise in the *Courier-Journal* Graduation Supplement, special rates and sizes are as follows:

1/4 page	5 x 4 inches	\$ 400.00
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