

Columnists

Travels with an American "uncle"

By Father Paul J. Cuddy

On Thursday, June 8, Father Stephen Mbugua, the soft-spoken Kenyan who came for studies at St. John Fisher College last February, phoned me. I have become a kind of adopted uncle to him. He said: "There is no school today. Father Bethuel Mwarura came from Kenya. Could you show us some of Rochester? There are four sisters who have just come from Tanzania. We would like to see Nazareth College where they will study?"

So I phoned a good friend, Sister Rosemary St. Peter, who is a wheel in the congregation of St. Joseph. "Sister, would it be possible for our Kenyans to meet your Tanzanian sisters?" I asked. "No problem, Father," she replied. "Just come and I will have them at the motherhouse."

How did these sisters land at Nazareth College? Father Damian Milliken of the Elmira Millikens has been a Benedictine missionary in Tanzania for 28 years. His sister, Kathleen Milliken, RSM, is a member of the Mercy Council. She and Sister Maura Wilson, SSJ, a member of the St. Joseph's council, coordinated through Father Damian to have Sisters Alifa, Leonia, Silvestra and Domitila come to study at Nazareth for three years. The future of the Church and of African nations will be shaped by the quality of education given the citizens of their countries. Nazareth is furnishing the tuition. The Mercy and St. Joseph congregations have assumed the costs for room, board and other expenses.

At 2 p.m., I rolled up to the Basilian faculty house, directly across East Avenue from Maplewood Party House; loaded Brother Martin and Fathers Steve and Bethuel into the car; and drove to the SSJ motherhouse a couple miles away. The college and infirmary both adjoin the motherhouse property. Sister Concetta Mitrano, once principal of Wayland's parish school, escorted three of the Tanzanian sisters to the parlor. The fourth was sick with malaria. Introductions were made. I cleared out while the Africans talked up a storm in Swahili. At the end of the hour's visit, the African sisters were beaming. I thought: "How happy I would be to meet with some Americans if I were abruptly dropped into a foreign country." So with the sisters.

On the Right Side

East Avenue and Brighton where Nazareth and St. John Fisher are, is the land of the wealthy. I certainly did not want my African "nephews" to have the impression all Americans are rich. So I phoned Mercy Sister Pat Flynn, who runs St. Michael's Wood Shop in Rochester's inner city, and trains black high schoolers in carpentry and responsibility. She is a strict disciplinarian, and should be awarded a medal — though a nice check would be better for developing underprivileged youngsters into self-reliant citizens.

A jewel of our diocese is St. Ann's Home; and adjoining it, the Heritage, a marvelous home for the elderly. The Sisters of St. Joseph are in charge. The administrator, Sister Marie Michelle Peartree, runs a mighty tight ship. I am so proud of St. Ann's and the Heritage I frequently bring people there to admire it. Our Kenyans did.

Because they are living only with academic priests of Fisher, I wanted my nephews to meet some fine parish priests. St. Cecilia's is only a couple miles away from St. Ann's, so we popped in there before 7 p.m. Concluding dinner were Father Bing Cushing, the pastor, Father Bernard Newcomb, the pastor emeritus, visiting retired Fathers Elmer McNamara and Gerald Kelly, and a parish pillar, Ed Bretz. So there followed a great confabulation between the American and Kenyan clergy, to their mutual interest.

Lake Ontario is three miles from our Webster rectory. Foreigners are intrigued by the great lake. We concluded our tour with a drive to the lakeshore, near Hedges' restaurant. A blood-red sun was dropping rapidly across the lake. With awe, we watched it disappear and speculated on the fact that Canada is only 48 miles away. My "nephews" had many images to dream about that night.

Praying the perpetual rosary

By Father Albert Shamon

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mark 6:1-6; (R1) Ezekiel 2:2-5; (R2) 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

In Homer's *Iliad*, Cassandra, daughter of Priam, King of Troy, was loved by the god Apollo. He gave her the gift of prophecy. Later, offended by her, Apollo rendered his gift useless by ordaining that no one would believe Cassandra's predictions, although they were true.

God repeatedly sent prophets like Ezekiel to Israel. They spoke the truth, yet hardly anyone believed them. Finally, God sent the greatest of the prophets, Jesus, and even then His own "found him too much for them."

In past centuries, God has sent us the Queen of Prophets. At Fatima, she gave us a plan to avoid World War II. She spoke the truth; but no one believed her.

Today, family, children and orthodoxy are under fire. The magnitude of the onslaught is overwhelming.

On October 7, 1986, Father Stefano Gobbi reports, Our Lady told him that the devil's tactic was precisely this: to convince good people that no effort of theirs can halt the march of evil.

Our Lady branded such an assumption as a base lie. She promised, "The Red Dragon will find himself decisively defeated, not by a great chain, but by a very frail cord — the holy rosary" (October 7, 1983).

In 1978, the Holy Father sought permission to visit Poland to mark the 1,000th anniversary of Christianity in Poland. The communist government imposed so many humiliating restrictions that Bishop Krazewski said the nation was shamed and the pope would not come under such conditions.

On December 8, 1978, in a private revelation, Our Lady asked that seven days and nights of continuous rosaries be prayed at her shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Jasna Gora from May 1-7, 1979. This "perpetual rosary" was soon popularly referred to as the "siege of Jericho" for all the restricting walls came tumbling down, clearing the path for the pope's visit.

A Word for Sunday

Since then, whenever the pope makes a visit to another nation, somewhere in Poland a perpetual rosary is prayed for his intentions and protection. The Holy Father responded: "I know about this. I bless it. I rely upon it. Do it on a grand scale!"

At the first National Rosary Congress in Washington, D.C., June 6-11, 1988, I was urged to start the perpetual rosary in our diocese. At the Marian celebration in Canandaigua, I launched the perpetual rosary to crush the empire of Satan in our nation and to help Christ's kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven.

The perpetual rosary is simple. Just pick out one day of the week, any day, and pick out one hour from that day on which you pledge to say the 15-decade rosary. I pledge every Thursday from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. What could be simpler, yet more powerful?

One blow of the axe against the mighty oak may not even cause a tremor in the wood. Nor may the second, or the third. Each blow of itself may seem of no consequence, yet from childish swipes, the oak will eventually tumble.

If you are willing to make this little sacrifice, will you write to me? Give your name and address, and the day and the hour you have chosen. Send this information to: Father Albert Shamon, 5 S. Marvine Ave., Auburn, N.Y., 13021. I shall enter it on our master chart.

This is a very achievable goal. I hope every parish and organization will promote this. It is time we do something positive about evil in the world. It is time to turn the tide, to win the world for Christ. Our Lady has shown us the weaponry we must use. Let us use it. Pray the rosary around the clock, week in and week out. Then watch the incredible results.



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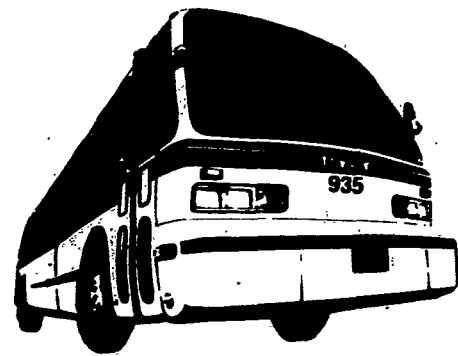


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