

TV untapped as evangelization resource

By Father Paul J. Cuddy
Catholic Courier columnist

Question: How do you think our diocese is doing with evangelization?

Answer: Last January, I was at the post office in Lyons for stamps. A nice young postal clerk named Castellano, who is a lector at St. Patrick's Church, Savannah, gave me a set of stamps with LOVE emblazoned on them. He smiled and recalled: "I remember when you got some last year you said: 'I wish people would DO it instead of TALK about it.'" These same sentiments apply to much of the talk about evangelization.

The most effective instrument for Catholic evangelization is almost completely unused in our diocese, namely television.

Father Albert Shamon of Auburn has a radio program, which is on several stations each Sunday. Kevin Doran of Hornell has the weekly "Magnify the Lord" shared by eight other stations. Father Andy Kalafsky broadcasts the Sunday Mass at Watkins Glen. Owego has done the same for 20 years through the zeal of parishioner Jim Raftis. These are important, but consider-

ing the whole diocese, only a dribble.

Our Catholic population is 377,000. We have 263 active priests, including the recently ordained Fathers Brown and McHale. We have 80 retired priests, denominated by some quirky minds as "inactive priests." There are 65 religious priests: Franciscans, Basilians, Capuchins, Benedictines, Redemptorists, Jesuits, Carmelites, Trappists. What is the balance of evangelical effectiveness between these dedicated men and Mother Angelica's EWTN, which broadcasts 24 hours every day, proclaiming Christ and His Church?

Q.: What is this EWTN?

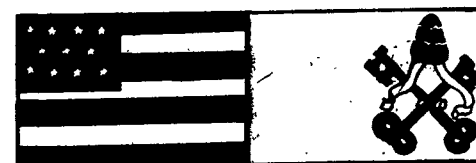
A.: After the departure of Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen, the whole Catholic Church in the States lapsed into TV silence, and evangelization was taken up by Tammy and Jim Bakker, Jimmy Swagart and other such. Finally a woman, Mother Angelica, impelled herself and her community into the Catholic TV apostolate, through the Eternal Word Television Network.

Mother Angelica is a cloistered nun in Birmingham, Ala. She founded Our Lady

of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham in 1962. The sisters published millions of devotional mini-booklets. Then came a providential breakthrough. She had gone to a TV station to do some taping, and learned that the station would be showing a blasphemous movie. She told the manager to either drop the movie or she would stop using the station. He refused. She resolved to build her own station and buy her own equipment. With faith and prayer, but without cash or securities, she set out to start her station on August 15, 1982. EWTN was born in Birmingham, and has miraculously flourished ever since.

Q.: Is there some movement to bring EWTN into the Diocese of Rochester?

A.: It is already in the Geneva area through the Finger Lakes Cablevision Network, reaching into four counties. Now, under the direction of the indefatigable Father Shamon, with the support of all the local pastors, a committee is working with representatives of seven parishes, plus Skaneateles, to enlist the people to petition the Auburn Cablevision Company, Inc., to



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

carry EWTN. This would bring the program to Auburn, Fleming, Skaneateles, Marcellus, Owasco, Sennett, Throup, Spafford and Bordino.

Q.: What kind of programs does EWTN carry?

A.: I studied them for many hours last January and February while caring for St. Michael's Parish in Lyons, which gets the Geneva Cablevision. The variety is wonderful. Bible studies, talk shows, family programs, devotional things like Mass, rosary, Benediction; children's programs, music. I found several people who watched the EWTN station exclusively. Its coming to the Auburn area would reach out to those who go to Mass and those who don't; and to many non-Catholics who are greatly attracted by its devotional, scriptural and even entertainment orientation.



A WORD FOR SUNDAY

world I love. It's people I can't stand."

So often we love the world — but people? We can't stand them. Jesus said, "Love one another." Not "like one another." Like is a feeling. We cannot control our feelings. Love is a will act; it doesn't let our feelings control us. We might feel like killing someone, but love prevents us from doing this and moves us to pray instead for that somebody.

Comedian Jerry Clower tells this story about Christian love in action. Two businessmen were lunching downtown. The waitress dumped a bowl of hot soup right over one of these businessmen. Everybody gasped and stared. They just couldn't wait for the manager to run out and fire the lady. They just couldn't wait for the man to rise up in indignation, with his suit ruined, and cuss the waitress. Instead, the man looked at the lady and gently said, "Young lady, I'm so sorry this happened to you. I know how it must embarrass you."

How would you have handled the situation?

Our Lord told the crowds to love their neighbors as themselves. But He told His followers to love one another as I have loved you. He died for His enemies. What love! Humanly, we cannot love like that. That is why He gave us the Eucharist. The sacramental grace of the Eucharist is love — divine love!

Love is a funny thing. If we love, we evoke love. We learn to love by being loved. An abused child becomes an abuser. A loved child becomes an affectionate person.

Our mission as followers of Christ is to create a new heaven and a new earth — to transform society, as Our Lady is doing to Medjugorje — into a family of loving persons. This will happen if, and when, we begin keeping the Eleventh Commandment: Love one another as I have loved you.

Followers of Christ transform heaven and earth

By Father Albert Shamon
Catholic Courier columnist

Sunday's readings: (R3) John 13:31-35; (R1) Acts 14:21-27; (R2) Revelation 21:1-5.

The first reading from the Acts is meant to encourage us in the faith no matter the cost. It narrates the conclusion of the first missionary journey of Paul and Barnabas. Back at their home base in Antioch of Syria, Paul and Barnabas told how God had opened the door of faith to the gentiles.

Their Gospel transformed the regions they had evangelized. It had created "a new heaven and a new earth."

Such a transformation was effected, because the Gospel message is one of love. "Love one another," Jesus said, "such as

my love has been for you." Without love, the world would be hell — an insane, biting, clawing, screaming world of madmen.

Alexander Dumas and a friend had a severe argument. It got so hot that they challenged each other to a duel. Dumas and his friend were both expert marksmen. Fearing that both would fall in such a duel, their friends persuaded them to draw straws. Whoever drew the shorter straw would pledge to shoot himself.

Dumas was the unlucky one. He drew the shorter straw. With a heavy sigh, he picked up his pistol, trudged to his library, closed the door. His friends stood outside. In a few moments one shot was fired. His friends rushed into the library to find Dumas standing with his pistol still smoking.

"An amazing thing happened," Dumas said. "I missed."

An amazing thing has happened among

Christians, too. Many of them have missed the Gospel message. They keep the Ten Commandments, but fail miserably in keeping the Eleventh Commandment, the most important of all.

Jesus said, "I give you a new commandment: love one another." You can go to Mass on Sunday; you can say your morning and night prayers, but if you do not love — you've missed the most important part of the Gospel message, the Eleventh Commandment.

In a Peanuts cartoon, Lucy stands with arms folded, a determined look on her face, while Charlie Brown pleads, "Lucy, you must be more loving. This world really needs love. You must let yourself love to make this world a better place in which to live!"

Lucy whirls around angrily, causing Charlie Brown to do a backward flip, and screams at him, "Look, blockhead — the

THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER



EDWIN SULEWSKI
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Why don't we forget funerals and get on with living?

When presidents and national heroes die the nation has elaborate ceremonies to mark their deaths. We mourn heroes because their lives mean something to us, they are important to the morale and life of our nation. When someone we love dies we mourn also. They are important to us and we need to mark their passing with appropriate ceremonies. The ceremonies we have for the deceased help us express our feelings about the person's life and our feelings of loss. Through ceremony we express tribute and say goodbye to those who have been close to us. If we did not take the time to express our feelings at a formal ceremony we would find it more difficult to let go of the past and get on with living.

We purchase all forms of insurance to protect our family & assets, not because we expect the worst to happen, but to be prepared. Doesn't it make sense then to prepare for what will happen. Let our trained counselors assist you with the many options available in planning for a worry-free future.

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