

Rosary congress: a spiritual war effort

Sunday's readings: (R3) John 17:20-26; (R1) Acts 7:55-60; (R2) Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20.

This Sunday before Pentecost highlights the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who empowers Stephen to give witness to his faith and die for it (R1). It is the Holy Spirit who gives His bride, the church, her life (R2). It is the same Spirit who effects unity among the faithful, like that between the Father and the Son (R3).

Perhaps there is no one who has not heard of Mickey Mouse and Disneyland. Walt Disney is equally well known; but not his brother Roy. Yet the two worked closely together. Walt was an artist; Roy was a businessman. They made an agreement. Roy worked behind the scenes taking care of all the business details, so that his brother Walt would be free to create and produce. "My job," Roy admitted, "is to help Walt do the things he wants to do. I deal with the banks and give Walt a free hand."

The Holy Spirit, like Roy, is the hidden partner of the church, working for unity —

to make all things work together for the good of the whole enterprise.

How much the Holy Spirit is needed today! So much dissension seems to prevail in the church. Liberals want to change everything; conservatives want nothing to change. Some would phase out Catholic schools; others want them at any cost. Stick to the spiritual; focus on social problems. Relax church laws; make them more strict. And so the conflicts go and grow.

What can we do about them? We can pray, as Jesus did, for unity. Meditate on the words of Eucharistic Prayer No. 2: "May all of us who share in the body and blood of Christ be brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit." The bond of unity is love; and the source of love is the sacrament of love, the body and blood of Christ, and the God of love, the Holy Spirit. The greatest prayer is the Mass! Properly prayed, the Mass can bring unity to the church.

Permit me now to stop here on the Word for Sunday and put in a word for something I feel is vital to the church in the United States.

Our Lady said to Anatol Kaszozuk, the

apostle of the Rosary Congress in Poland, "Do you want to help save America?" To his "Yes," Our Lady said, "Establish the Rosary Congress in America too." Anatol did last year.

The Second Rosary Congress at Immaculate Conception Shrine in Washington, D.C., is June 11-17. Too many people look upon this Congress as nonessential. Actually, it is a spiritual war effort to save our nation, our church, our homes, and our families here in America. The Congress is a gift of Our Lady to draw down God's mercy upon our land.

An incredible number of people attended the much publicized "pro-death" march in Washington, Sunday, April 9 — over 100,000 people. Unknowingly, these people are destroying our country, our families and Christianity in the USA. Our Lady is looking to us to respond.

This is what you can do:
1) Come to the National Shrine of Our Lady in Washington for the Congress June 11-17.

2) Get others to join you.
3) Contact Mrs. Barbara Di Vincenzo, 17 Meadow Dr., Spencerport, NY, 14559,



A WORD FOR SUNDAY

716/352-6973. A bus will leave Rochester June 11 and return June 17. Round trip fare is \$55. Barbara will give details about bus and lodging.

4) Organize prayer and fasting the week of June 11 in your area.

5) Make a "love offering" for Our Lady's work. The Congress needs funds. Send your checks to Apostolatus Uniti, 2200 Pleasant Villa Ave., Catonsville, Md., 21228. Because of its remarkable history and miraculous results in Poland, the Rosary Congress there is known as the "Siege of Jericho."

I have a poster of three raccoons. Under the picture are three lines:

There are those who make things happen, and those who watch things happen, and those who wonder, what happened.

Let us be doers; let us make things happen in this country for God; let us do it as Our Lady has shown us — through going to the Rosary Congress.



THE BIBLE CORNER

By Cindy Bassett
Catholic Courier columnist

Ananias watched as Samuel came forward. He was not a person who hid his feelings well. His expression was filled with worry.

"Our prayer meeting tonight has not helped whatever is troubling you," Ananias said to his friend. "What is it?"

"I have received very distressing news from our fellow believers in Jerusalem,"

God's surprising choice to speak to the gentiles

Samuel replied. "A great persecution of the followers of Jesus has begun there."

"I am sorry to hear that," Ananias said. "We are fortunate that no one in Damascus has done anything to stop our preaching. The number of followers grows everyday."

"That is what I am so worried about," Samuel replied. "The lives of all who believe in Jesus are in danger."

"In what way?" Ananias questioned. "Saul, a leading Pharisee in Jerusalem, has become the leader of those who seek to destroy our new church." Samuel replied, "He will stop at nothing in his search for followers of Jesus, even going house-to-house to arrest people. I have heard that Saul is on the way to Damascus to arrest the followers of Jesus and bring them back to Jerusalem to stand trial."

"There is nothing we can do but give the problem to God and pray about it," Ananias replied. "God has a solution to every problem even if it seems beyond us."

Ananias was awake most of that night, praying about Saul. Suddenly, he heard God calling his name. "Yes, Lord," he said.

"Ananias, go at once to a house on Straight Street. There you will find a blind man named Saul who has come from Jerusalem. He has been praying to me for three days, and he knows that you are coming to restore his sight."

"But, Lord, I don't understand! This Saul is a terrible man. He is a known enemy of all who follow you. And his reason for coming to Damascus is to arrest us!" Samuel protested.

"You will find a changed man," God replied. "For I have chosen Saul to tell the gentiles about me. And he is going to suffer much in this work I have given him to do."

Ananias left his house immediately. He found Saul just as the Lord had told him. So he placed his hands over Saul's eyes, saying, "God has sent me to heal you. It is the same God who appeared to you as you traveled on the road here."

"I would like to be baptized as a follower of Jesus," Saul said as he stood up and looked at Ananias. "And I shall be known as Paul now."

If Ananias had trouble understanding the drastic change in the former persecutor of the believers, this fact totally baffled the

Jewish leaders in Damascus. For that same day, Paul was seen preaching about Jesus in the synagogues there.

"He must be insane," they said. Although many of the elders tried to debate with him, not one of them could refute Paul's claims that Jesus is the Son of God.

After a few days, a warrant was issued for Paul's arrest. Guards were posted at the city gates to apprehend him if he tried to leave Damascus.

Some of Jesus' followers heard of the plot against Paul, and they smuggled him out of Damascus by lowering him in a basket over the city wall. Ananias and Samuel were among those who helped him escape.

"We have much work to do and there will be trouble for us ahead," Ananias commented to his companion as they watched Paul leave.

"Yes, and many of these problems will be beyond my understanding," Samuel replied. "But as you said, the important thing is to bring these problems before God in prayer. Sometimes the solution is found within the problem."

Scripture reference: Acts, Chapter 9:1-25.

Meditation: "But now I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." (Matthew 5:44).

Poverty meeting planned

The Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry is planning a working conference on poverty in the Yates County on Saturday, May 6, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. in the First Presbyterian Church, 211 North Main St., Penn Yan.

THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER



EDWIN SULEWSKI
FUNERAL DIRECTOR

How can I prevent difficulties from grief?

Many who confront grief for the first time are surprised at the intensity of their feelings. Grief is most often associated with the death of a loved one but it can also result from divorce, loss of bodily function, moving or from a child growing up and leaving home. Because grief is poorly understood, those who have not experienced it personally can be poor helpers. By learning about grief ahead of time we can more capably assist friends in their time of need and can more readily understand the intensity of feelings when death affects our families. Take time to read and inquire about grief and learn ways to assist those in need of support.

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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