

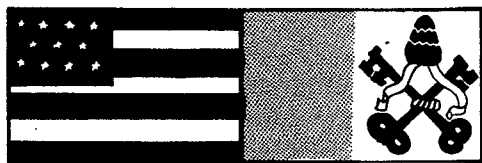
Texas parish bulletin offers range of fascinating facts

By Father Paul Cuddy
Courier columnist

The most ambitious Sunday bulletin I know is from Holy Trinity Church in El Paso, Texas. A Father Tom O'Mahoney is the pastor and editor of the bulletin. His assistant is Father Norman C. Bernstein, whose name must raise the eyebrows of visitors.

In the eight-page bulletin, half of which is given to an explanation of the Scripture of the Sunday, there was a recent section entitled: NEWS AND VIEWS. Among the tidbits that might be gleaned from this section were:

1. The United States has only 7 percent of the total Catholics in the world.
2. According to David Lehman, religion writer for the *Chicago Sun Times*, the archdiocese of Chicago has only 500 priests available for full-time parish work, though it has 2.3 million Catholics.
3. Ronald Reagan once said that a government agency, once approved, is "the nearest thing to eternal life on earth."



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

4. The diocese of Tucson, Arizona, is in grave financial difficulties due to an attempt to operate a commercial television station, which costs the diocese millions of dollars annually. (I note that Mother Angelica and her Catholic TV network, EWTN, costs dioceses nothing, yet is probably the greatest instrument of evangelization in the States. It does come into four counties in our diocese through the Geneva TV station; and into Waverly Village via Sayre, Pa. Work and pray that it will come into Rochester, Auburn, Elmira, Hornell and Corning. This is great evangelization).
5. Regarding the book, *Joshua*. This ridicules the Church as an institution and

incites contempt for hierarchical authority, as well as promotes the rejection of dogmas and canon law. The leading character, Joshua, is really Christ come on earth again as a carpenter. In this fictional story, Joshua takes issue with the pope and the bishops as He did with the Scribes and Pharisees of old. Joshua (Jesus) opposed Church doctrine on, for example, marriage and divorce, the necessity of sacramental confession for grave sin and ridicules the laws of the Church. In Joshua's view, these are man-made dogmas and laws, and are opposed to the true 'spirituality' Jesus preached. Each person, says Joshua, has freedom to serve God in his own way, and not be bound by the doctrines and laws imposed by a power hungry and dictatorial hierarchy. Incidentally, Joshua (Jesus) tells the pope that the bishops must be free of Vatican interference and permitted to deal in their own way with the flock. This book is but a re-hash of neo-modernism.

and the crisis of the West is that it isn't Christian anymore. Period." Cardinal Jean Marie Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris, France.

7. "The communist, said Churchill, sees capitalism as a predator to be shot. The socialist sees capitalism (read U.S.) as a cow to be milked. Few there are who see it for what it is, the sturdy horse that pulls the wagon," Pat Buchanan.

8. In London, England, an art gallery owner and a Canadian sculptor were convicted of outraging public decency by exhibiting ear rings made from the skulls of aborted fetuses. Could this happen here?

9. Cardinal James A. Hickey of Washington will close three of the four high schools operated by the diocese because of rising costs and falling enrollments. Two private Catholic schools will also close.

10. The city of Antioch was the place where St. Peter began his missionary labors, and it was here the disciples were first called "Christians" (Acts 11:26).

Paul responds to God's voice directing his life

By Father Albert Shamon
Courier columnist

Sunday's readings: (R3) Luke 7:36-8:3; (R1) 2 Samuel 12:7-10, 13; (R2) Galatians 2:16, 19-21.

In a parish near Auburn, the pastor was hospitalized. The priest sent to fill in was a teacher in a Catholic high school in Syracuse.

The very first Sunday, this teacher-priest began his homily this way: "Our youths have been robbed of heroes. All that is held up to them now are hunks of flesh: Rambo, wrestlers, hard rock 'stars,' and others of like ilk.

"So, for the next five Sundays, I'm going to talk about the lives of the saints — real heroes!"

Well, the theme of Sunday's readings is forgiveness. God forgives David the sins of adultery and murder (R1); and Jesus forgives a sinful woman (R3). However, it might be well for a change to reflect on one of the greatest heroes of the Church, St. Paul (R2).

Paul was an educated man — a student of Gamaliel. He was a native of Tarsus — a city famous for its scholars and philosophers. He was a Pharisee, whose zeal had won him a role of leadership among his fellow Jews. He was a brilliant writer — although he could not know in his early life that one day he would be perhaps the most influential writer who ever lived. And he was a Roman citizen, a matter of no small import.

But one day Paul met Christ and joined a rag-tag group that claimed Jesus of Nazareth had risen from the dead. Because Paul had become an enthusiastic leader of that sect, he was imprisoned, beaten, stoned, shipwrecked and an outcast among his own people. "I have been crucified with Christ," he boasted, and he might have added, "for Christ."

Even among the Christians, he was suspect; before joining the Christians, he had persecuted them. When he brought the

Inpatient hospice service in need of volunteer help

Genesee Region Home Care Association, which has been providing hospice care in the Rochester community for a decade, is expanding its home-centered service this summer to include an inpatient service.

Hospice is a health plan that cares for terminally ill patients in their homes and supports the family throughout the illness and bereavement period.

GRHCA is looking for people interested in volunteering for this inpatient hospice.

Call Lindsay Beach, hospice volunteer coordinator, at 716/325-1880 for information.

Gospel to the Gentiles, some Jewish Christians felt he was wrong. False teachers challenged his credentials and fitness to speak of Christ.

To make matters worse he had a thorn in the flesh. Some scholars think it was malaria. Others suggest epilepsy. Still others an eye disease. Very likely it was a persistent and obnoxious opponent. No matter. The thorn was so intolerable that Paul "three times begged the Lord that it might leave him" (2 Corinthians 12/8).

What kept this little man going? Certainly not profit. He earned his living as a tentmaker. He preached without remuneration, and without pride. He had discarded that long ago. What kept him going? The answer is Christ — "the life I live now is not my own; Christ is living in me. I still live my human life, but it is a life of faith in the Son of God..." Paul was a man whose life was totally dedicated to the work to which Christ had called him.

Early Sunday morning Oct. 30, 1983, a Mercedes truck laden with 2,000 pounds of dynamite rolled past security barricades and crashed into the headquarters of the Eighth Marine Battalion in Beirut, Lebanon. Seconds later the terrorist driver ignited the explosives; 229 Marines died and 81 others were wounded. At a press conference following the tragedy, a general from the Pentagon was asked how one

man could get past such tight security and cause so much damage. The general replied: "In spite of our defensive weapons, it still is virtually impossible to stop those who are willing to die for what they believe."

Paul was such a man: he feared nothing, he was willing to pay the price for what he believed. He helped turn the world upside down because he was totally committed to Christ.

A rich man bought a team of faultless horses. His own coachman was inept, but the rich man hoped the quality of the horses would offset this. After a few months, the proud horses became dull and drowsy, their pace inconsistent, their stamina gone.

So the rich man called in a coachman who knew horses. After he drove the horses for a month and they had become famil-



A WORD FOR SUNDAY

iar with his voice, they held their heads high, their eyes were bright and their pace beautiful. The capacities were there all the time.

The horses' performance all depended on whose voice they heard directing their lives. It was the voice of God that directed the life of St. Paul. He heard it first on the road to Damascus, but its echoes lingered with him to the end, so that he could say, "The life I live now is not my own. Christ lives in me."

Has your life seemed somewhat ineffective of late? Are you listening to the voice of God? He speaks in the Scripture. Do you meditate on it daily?

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