

'Retired' columnist stays busy with correspondence

By Father Paul Cuddy
Courier columnist

Many ask: "Now that you are retired, what do you do with your time?" Probably a good deal of it is spent in correspondence: answering letters, prodding the recalcitrant, encouraging the discouraged. Also, it has proved fruitful to advertise books, pamphlets, magazines and tapes, especially the Sheen tapes which seem to have taken on a new interest recently. Letter writing is said to be the most intimate form of communication because people often will write what they might not think to say.

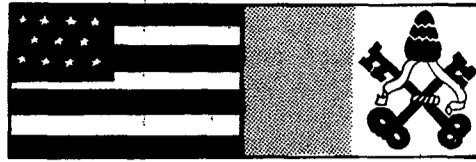
Anyway, letter writing is an important apostolate. Here are some samples.

From a regular reader: ...Over the last 12 years since my wife and I converted to Catholicism, I feel I've come to know you through your columns. While I haven't always agreed with you, I have found them to be provocative, filled with life and love for God and His people. While you may be 80 and have your funeral planned, I hope to be able to enjoy your columns for many years to come.

Comment: When I was a seminarian at St. Bernard's in the 1930s, a retreat master, Augustinian Father Walker said to us: "Don't wait until a person dies before you praise him. We all need to be given encouragement." Isn't that a good letter? Why not write to a friend or relative or former teacher or priest or sister or anyone who has touched your life happily, and express appreciation of their good influence before they leave this vale?

To Father Joseph Fessio, SJ, Ignatius Press, San Francisco. For Heaven's sake, will you do something about your subscription department? Recently I had dinner with five priests and mentioned with enthusiasm your monthly *30 Days*. One priest exploded: "I am dropping my subscription! Terrible!"

I was surprised since he is very intelligent and was once in the diocesan curia. So I asked "Why? I think it's the best Catholic monthly put out. It's international in scope. It covers a multitude of subjects. It is written by world famous analysts and reporters. It is written for an elite who use their brains. Why are you dropping your



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

subscription?"

"Oh, the magazine is all right. But I've had all kinds of trouble. I subscribed and eventually got a first copy. Then no copy for a month. Then it's been hit or miss ever since. I'm disgusted!"

My own experience is not dissimilar. Will you please get the *30 Days* staff together and coordinate? Your subscription department is P.O. Box 6718, Syracuse, N.Y. 13217, which is only 25 miles from my home in Auburn, N.Y. I am having trouble with giving a gift subscription, and can get no response from Syracuse and there is no telephone available.

What a way to run a railroad — or a magazine so important to the church. Of course as an editor you may not be respon-

sible, but you must know those who are.

From a reader: Please send address of the priest in Nigeria you wrote about. Need same for lawyer, as I am preparing my will. Thank you for your interest.

Comment: Several have expressed interest in the work of: Father Jerry Aman, SJ, P.O. Box 579, Benin City, Nigeria, Africa.

From Father Paul Freemesser: I think it's great that St. Alphonsus, Auburn, can take care of you Holy Family boys. I wonder what Fathers Straub, Conway and Cowen would have to say about the situation. Always enjoy your articles in *Courier*. All is well here in Panama. September 1 the government ceases, so either the government parties and people get together and figure out their future, or Noriega will win by default. Unfortunately it looks like he will win. Pray that these people will get together and decide their future.

Comment: Father Freemesser's address is: Ch. (LtC) Paul Freemesser, PSC Box 2572, APO Miami 34004. Friends might drop him a note.

From an annoyed Catholic: Please send a copy of Father Markowski's article on the "gender mentality." Some are calling God a He/She — and the "Our Father/Mother Who are in heaven" has really gotten to me. Some of our lectors, and would-like-to-be-priests' nuns are the worst offenders."

Comment: Often people ask: "Father, there are so many contradicting people in the Church today. Whom should I follow?" I always reply: "If you follow the Holy Father you are on safe ground..."

Israel's citizens lament the slaying of King Saul

By Cindy Bassett
Courier columnist

Just after dawn, the bell in the center of the town of Jabesh began to ring. It tolled continually, calling every citizen from field or home. The bell ringer did not cease until the town square was filled to overflowing with people. Such a meeting was highly unusual, and everyone wondered about the cause.

As soon as one of the town elders came forward to address the crowd, the murmurings and the tolling stopped abruptly.

"Many years ago, King Nahash came here with the Ammonites not only to conquer us, but to bring disgrace on all of Israel. His terms for a peace treaty with us were cruel and humiliating — every citizen's right eye was to be put out. This terrible act never happened. When King Saul learned of this plan, he came with his army to drive out the Ammonites and make it possible for us to live with dignity."

Many of the people began to shift uneasily as they listened. "Are the Ammonites coming back to attack us again?" they asked.

"No, but the time has come for us to repay Saul for his kindness toward us in our time of need. Today I received word that King Saul and his three sons died on Mount Gilboa in the war against the Philistines."



Before the elder could continue, someone in the crowd shouted, "This is a great loss for us and all of Israel! We must begin a period of mourning." His sentiments were quickly echoed by many others in the town square.

"Let us erect a monument, here in Jabesh, in memory of Saul, the first king of Israel," another suggested.

Everyone seemed to have a different idea. The only thing that stopped their great clamor was the ringing of the bell again.

"Save your mourning and fasting for another time," the elder told them. "The Philistines seek to humiliate King Saul even in death. They have taken his body and that of his sons and nailed them to the wall in the town of Beth Shan. Messengers are going throughout the region proclaiming this as another victory for them."

A large group of people left immediately

for Beth Shan. When they found the bodies of Saul and his sons, they took them down and returned to Jabesh that same day.

As soon as they arrived, the bells tolled slowly, this time calling the citizens to come and march in silent procession behind them. After the bodies were buried, the people mourned and fasted for seven days in respect.

Israel had lost its first king. David also had lost his best friend, Jonathan. When he learned of their deaths, he tore his clothes in sorrow and ordered a fast to mourn everyone who had died in battle against the Philistines.

David composed a song for Saul and Jonathan that was taught to everyone so that the people would never forget them:

"On the hills of Israel our leaders are dead!

The bravest of our soldiers have fallen!
Saul and Jonathan, so wonderful and dear;

together in life, together in death:
swifter than eagles, stronger than lions!"
(2 Samuel 1:19, 23).

Scripture reference: 1 Samuel 31, 1 Chronicles 10:1-12.

Meditation: Sometimes, it is not enough to just feel strongly about things. A person should act on the feelings of the heart.

Lawyers guild plans Mass to observe start of fall term

The 44th annual Red Mass will take place Friday, Sept. 15, at Our Lady of Victory/St. Joseph's Church, 210 Pleasant St., Rochester. The Mass, which is sponsored by the St. Thomas More Lawyers Guild, is scheduled to begin at 12:30 p.m.

Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, auxiliary bishop of the Rochester diocese, will be the celebrant. The homily will be delivered by Father L. James Callan, guild chaplain. A luncheon and reception will follow in the church rectory.

Bishop James E. Kearney initiated the Red Mass locally in 1945 to commemorate the beginning of the fall court term. Since 1975, it has been organized locally by the St. Thomas More Lawyers Guild.

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