

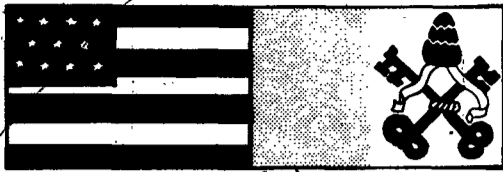
# 'Archbishop' offers valuable insight on issues

By Father Paul Cuddy  
Courier Columnist

Father Edward O'Connor of Camden, N.J., has been a friend of mine since seminary days. After two years of philosophy at St. Bernard's, his bishop sent him to Rome for theology. He was ordained there, but he still retains his claim to membership of St. Bernard's class of 1940, which includes the dynamic Fathers Bart O'Brien and Albert Shamon.

Father O'Connor phoned me from Ocean City, N.J., on December 8. "Today is the 50th anniversary of my ordination. I'm calling to have you share in my happiness."

Later in the conversation, he said "I'm reading a great book, *Archbishop*, by



## ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Father Thomas J. Reese, S.J. It's about the power structure of the church in the states."

"I'm reading *The Marginal Catholic* by Father Joseph Champlin," I said. "It's a practical book about dealing with Catholics who have a modicum of faith, but little practice."

We agreed to swap books. I did better

since *Archbishop* sells for \$17.95, and *The Marginal Catholic* sells for only \$6.95.

On Friday, Dec. 22, Father Albert Shamon and I drove through a terrific snow storm to attend the annual *Catholic Courier* Christmas dinner at Tiffany's in Webster. The dinner was hosted by Bishop Dennis W. Hickey, general manager, and Karen Franz, editor.

We two bulwarks of orthodoxy flanked the bishop at the table and discussed *Archbishop*. Bishop Hickey commented that he had read parts of the book, but did not think it would interest many people unless they were involved with episcopal concerns. Having finished the book, his opinion seems well founded. There are some nuggets, however, that would interest many Catholics concerned about the

church.

Chapters on the selection of bishops, personnel, finances, and Catholic education are especially interesting to the ordinary Catholic.

**PERSONNEL:** "In dealing with priest personnel issues, bishops and personnel directors are always trying to balance the good of the priest with the good of the diocese. In a sense, the personnel problems faced by a bishop are similar to those faced by any family business. A family business thrives on the dedication and enthusiasm of the family members, who are willing to work long hours at low pay. Dean Hoge found that Catholics pay much less for religious leadership than Protestants. But in a family business you do not fire Uncle Charlie because he can be replaced by someone more efficient. (P. 193)

**EDUCATION:** While all archbishops view Catholic schools as the ideal, they also recognize that most Catholic children are in public schools. There are almost two million children in Catholic elementary schools, and 708,000 in Catholic high schools. But there are three million elementary students and 804,000 high school students in parish religious education programs (CCD). Most of these students are taught by volunteers. These programs are judged to be ineffective by 37 percent of the religious education directors who run them.

A difficult problem facing any archbishop is how to stress the importance of Catholic schools without seeming to denigrate the importance of religious education, and vice versa." (P. 260)

**SELECTION OF BISHOPS:** "An official who has been in the Vatican since 1977 reports that John Paul takes a deep and personal interest in the appointment of bishops, especially to larger sees. It is a major theme on his agenda. In the first 10 years of John Paul's reign, approximately 1,200 new bishops (worldwide) were appointed. (P. 37)

# Epiphany revealed Christ's coming to Gentiles

By Father Albert Shamon  
Courier columnist

Sunday's readings: (R3) Matthew 2:1-12; (R1) Isaiah 60:1-6; (R2) Ephesians 3:2-3, 5-6.

Epiphany marks the climax of the Christmas season.

Christmas celebrates the manifestation of Jesus to the Jews. Epiphany celebrates His manifestation (epiphany means "manifestation") to the Gentiles.

The Baptism of the Lord (Jan. 8) dramatically closes Christmastime by manifesting why Jesus came to Jews and Gentiles: to give them divine life through water and the Holy Spirit. "I am come that they may have life ..."

Epiphany is a feast of light. Splendor and light, radiance and glory leap up from Isaiah in the first reading. The feast celebrates the rising of the light of revelation to the Gentiles.

St. Paul said this was God's secret plan: to reveal that the light shines in the darkness for Gentiles, as well as for Jews; that the Gentiles are now co-heirs with the Jews (R2).

In the gospel, St. Matthew shows how the light was received. The tragedy: He came unto His own and His own received Him not. Like signposts, the Jews pointed the way for the Magi to the Light of the World, but they themselves did not go. Jerusalem (Jews) rejected Him, but the East (Gentiles) welcomed Him and Egypt sheltered Him. That is the gist of Matthew's Magi story and the flight into Egypt.

Persons of little faith would have conjured up all kinds of problems to excuse their following the star: the length of the journey; its arduousness; crossing mountains, streams and deserts; enduring heat,

cold, rain and storms; the cost; the danger of arrest as spies by a people whose language they did not speak; and what if the star meant nothing at all?

Not so with the Magi. They were men of faith who went gaily in the dark.

Literally, they went gaily in the dark because the star appeared only at night, as stars do. In searching for God, natural habits often have to be interrupted.

When the Magi arrived at the poorest house in the poorest town of Judah, they did not say, "impossible." They entered, adored the Child on the altar of His mother's lap, and gave gifts. Like the Magi, we too should approach God at holy Mass adorned in proper attire, full of faith, bearing the gold of charity, the frankincense of prayer and the myrrh of sacrifice.

Following the homily on Epiphany, it would be well to reintroduce the beautiful tradition of proclaiming the date of Easter and the principal feasts determined by Easter. A cantor might chant this Proclamation or a lector recite it.

Dear brothers and sisters, we have recently rejoiced over the birth of Our Lord Jesus Christ; now through the mercy of God, we must tell you about the happiness



## A WORD FOR SUNDAY

that will stem from the resurrection of this same Lord Jesus Christ.

Between the evening of April 12 and the dawn of the April 15, we shall joyfully celebrate the Easter Triduum of the Lord: His crucifixion, His burial, His rising.

Each Easter, each Sunday, the holy Church makes present the saving deed by which Christ has forever conquered sin and death.

From Easter comes forth and are reckoned all the days we keep holy.

- February 28 will be Ash Wednesday, the start of Lent.

- May 24 Will be the Ascension of Our Lord.

- June 3 will be the feast of Pentecost.

- December 2 will the first Sunday of the Advent Season of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- To Christ who was, who is, and who is to come, Lord of time and history, be endless praise for ever and ever. Amen.

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### THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

**EDWIN SULEWSKI**  
FUNERAL DIRECTOR

**Grief... is help available?**

Grief is the name of a complex combination of physical, emotional, and spiritual experiences. It occurs when we loose someone or something very important to us.

It is a natural reaction to the realization that we are not all-powerful, that we ourselves are mortal.

Everyone deals with grief in a different personal way.

**GRIEF RESOURCE INFORMATION FORUM and the PASTORAL CARE CENTER** at Rochester General Hospital jointly sponsor a monthly bereavement group called **WORKING THROUGH LOSS**.

The group provides information, education and peer support for adults recovering from the death of a significant person in their lives.

The group meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the E-5 conference room at Rochester General Hospital.

Easy-to-follow signs are posted upon entering the hospital from the parking ramp.

Open to all adults. There are no dues or fees. You may attend as long as you choose.

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