

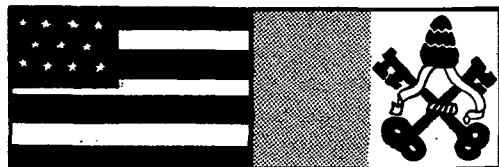
Simple books, articles can prove to be a waste of time

By Father Paul Cuddy
Courier columnist

The critics give high marks to the book *All I Really Needed to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. The book contains a lot of common sense. Common sense is also the key to the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas. I often recommend the biography, *Sr. Thomas Aquinas*, written by G.K. Chesterton.

My reaction to the first book I mentioned was: "My daily journal is no prize literature, but it is a collection of observations that are commonplace. If it were edited and published I would name the book, *Ruminations of a Simple Parish Priest: Excerpts from 1989*."

I am now reading *Confessions of a Parish Priest* by Father Andrew Greeley. He certainly dredged up a lot of unsavory history. He hates a lot of people, with Cardinal Cody topping the list. His sexy



ON THE RIGHT SIDE

novels are bestsellers about Irish Catholics — priests, bishops and wealthy lay people — who continue to hop from bed to bed while they keep a Catholic identity. He considers his books to be religiously parables; I consider them to be mean-spirited.

On June 15, I marked my 54th anniversary of ordination. How kindly God has dealt with me. I'm nearly 81 and I am still active, mobile and in fair health. How grateful I should be and am! But I am constantly distressed that I waste so much time

reading — sometimes several hours — too many magazines.

I often look at *The Wanderer*, which has been constantly attacking Bishop Matthew H. Clark. The writers of that publication constantly engage in character assassination. To counterbalance *The Wanderer*, I read *National Catholic Reporter*, which does to the pope and the Roman Curia what *The Wanderer* does to our bishop.

However, Father Fessio's *30 Days* is profitable reading, covering the universal church. I have recommended it to many, and am glad so many are reading it. Rose Wolf sends it to her nephew, who is the rector of a seminary in Germany. He reads it with great appreciation.

What should I do about this time wasting? Here are some things that might help me improve my time management:

1. Organize my time and have some plans for the day.

2. Be selective when reading. I have a tendency to read any print in front of me — including that on cereal boxes and labels.

3. Prepare better for Mass and have a more definite prayer schedule.

4. Exercise. I try to walk daily and say two rosaries while walking. That takes about 25 minutes. My physician, Dr. Tom Maher, recommends the exercise, and even more strongly, the rosary. He is strong in the faith.

5. Use the phone more effectively as a means of evangelization. Thirty years ago, *Priest* magazine had an article by an assistant priest who admired his fellow assistant for his work on the telephone. He wrote: "We have a large parish, and cannot call on everyone. My fellow assistant uses the telephone, and calls from 12 to 16 parishioners each day to make a holy contact. This is great wisdom."

I mailed a set of Butler's "Lives of the Saints" to Father Dave Russell in Washington. He is a convert and a strong advocate of the communion of saints.

The United Parcel Service (UPS) agent in Webster is a strong Catholic from St. John of Rochester Church, Fairport. His wife is a zealous promoter of devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.

As we were talking recently, he mentioned that "Father Alex Bradshaw is very concerned about people." I said, "Good heavens. Don't you think all priests are?"

He replied, "No, I do not. In California and Arizona they discount devotion to the Blessed Mother."

Bishop Sheen once said, "Decline in devotion to Mary brings decline in reverence for her Son." I wonder why any man would become a priest and not consider the people he serves his first and most enthusiastic priority. It could be that some cool down after ordination. That's worth pondering about.

One can find treasures in the teachings of Christ

By Father Albert Shamon
Courier columnist

Sunday's readings: (R3) Matthew 13:44-52; (R1) 1 Kings 3:5, 7-12; (R2) Roman 8:28-30.

An old lady in Scotland was so poor that the community had to support her even though her son had come to America and had become very wealthy. "Why doesn't John help his mother?" the neighbors often whispered.

One day a neighbor dropped in and suggested that her son would surely help her if he knew her need. Like any mother, she defended her son: "Oh, John is so thoughtful, but he needs all his money. He's a good boy. See, he writes to me every week, the nicest letters. And in every letter he sends a picture. They are strange pictures."

"Did you save them?" asked the neighbor.

"Oh sure," replied the mother, as she reached for her Bible. "I save all his letters and put the pictures in the Good Book."

Between the leaves of the Bible the visitor found hundreds of United States bank notes, more than enough to keep her in comfort. She had a treasure but she did not know it.

Sunday's Gospel has the last three of Matthew's seven parables in the third discourse. Two of them are about hidden



A WORD FOR SUNDAY

treasures. The point of the stories is that we pray for an understanding heart, as did Solomon — a heart to realize the treasure we have. But it must not stop there. To find a treasure and then leave it or to discover a pearl of great value and then do nothing with it just doesn't make any sense.

The parable of the dragnet teaches us that there are two kinds of persons: those who do something about their discovery and those who do not do anything. At the end of the world they will be separated: the good from the bad.

What is the treasure, the pearl? It is the teachings of Christ, our faith. He asks us to make a commitment to those teachings, to live that faith. What is past must be set aside for what lies ahead. It is a call to repentance, to conversion, to sell all and follow Christ because the reward is exceedingly great.

One of England's greatest statesmen was William E. Gladstone. An outstanding

leader in the Church of England, Gladstone served as prime minister of Great Britain from 1868 to 1874.

A young man once visited Gladstone and told him that he would like to study law. "Yes," Gladstone replied, "and what then?"

"Then I would like to serve in Parliament, in the House of Lords," the young man smiled. "Yes," Gladstone answered, "and what then?"

"Then I hope I will be able to retire and happily live out the rest of my days." "Yes," Gladstone said, "and what then?"

"Well," the young man replied, becoming a bit uncomfortable with Gladstone's line of questioning, "I suppose I will die."

"Yes," Gladstone soberly answered, "and what then?"

"I have no plans beyond that," the young man replied. "I have never thought any further than that."

"Then," Gladstone sternly replied, "young man, you are a fool. You need to go home and think life through."

This is the gist of the Solomon story and the parables in Sunday's readings: we must have an understanding heart and a commitment.

Ride the Rails... during Depot Days

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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 lose 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 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 first Tuesday of each month from 7:30-9:30 p.m. in the E-4 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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