

# Guidance available to help with understanding Bible

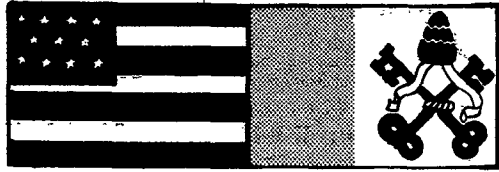
By Father Paul Cuddy  
Courier columnist

Although the Bible is the word of God, nothing has divided Christians so much as that Holy Book. The free-wheeling interpretations that pervade many confident souls is the reason for this.

The weirdest interpretation I ever came across was at the Midtown Mall in downtown Rochester in July, 1978. Our Legion of Mary set up a booth for a week to display religious articles and disseminate information to passers-by. I spent five hours at the booth to explain our religion to anyone who was interested.

A tense woman — who was about 25 years old — asked me, "Are Catholic priests allowed to smoke a pipe?" Visualizing my favorite picture of Monsignor Ronald Knox with his beloved pipe, I replied: "Why, yes. If they want to."

She then demanded, "Where in the Bible does it say you can smoke a pipe?" I replied, "Where in the Bible does it say you can eat tomatoes? This is no way to use the Word of God."



## ON THE RIGHT SIDE

Completely ignoring the question, she persisted: "Have you been baptized in the Holy Spirit?" I answered, "Yes, when I was an infant I was baptized in the Name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit took possession of my soul at that moment."

She retorted confidently, "You must be baptized in the name of Jesus. Paul wrote we must be baptized in the name of Jesus." (Evidently she was referring to Acts 27:19).

"Of course," I said. "Jesus is the second Person of the Blessed Trinity. He told us in Matthew 28 that we must be baptized in the Name of the Father, the Son and the

Holy Spirit."

She persisted: "Paul said we must be baptized in the Name of Jesus. The Father is Jesus. The Son is Jesus. The Holy Spirit is Jesus."

This weird exposition of the Bible texts she insisted is the one true interpretation of baptism. Many have experienced the fatuousness of exchanging Bible quotations like ping pong balls with Bible "verse-tossers."

In recent years there has been a surge of interest in Bible reading among Catholics. This has had both bad and good results. I know Catholics who have gotten so twisted up by fundamentalist interpretations that they are sucked in by selected texts that distort true interpretation. Thus, they have left the church to join some freelance Bible denominations.

One of the best explanations of their problem is on a cassette made by a former non-Catholic minister, Scott Hahn. His earlier studies had convinced him of the errors of the Catholic Church. As Hahn continued to study the Bible, however, he

became convinced that Christ established the Catholic Church. He became a Catholic, and now lectures extensively to explain Bible interpretations and the church.

Earlier this month, Father Robert Mac-Namara invited me to substitute for him at Perinton's St. John of Rochester Church. I discovered there was going to be a Bible Study group conducted by the associate pastor, Father Don McCarthy, CSB.

I asked, "Do you mind if I sit in with your group?" I was surprised to find nearly 40 people with Bible and notes in hand, earnestly discussing passages from Genesis for two hours. A group met in the morning and the evening.

Members of the group used texts called *Little Rock Scripture Studies*, presented through the Liturgical Press of Collegeville, Minn. The studies were brought to Rochester from St. Louis, Mo. by Mr. and Mrs. William Dempsey. The competence of Mrs. Dempsey — who opened up the morning session — and Father McCarthy and the earnestness of the study group was an inspiration.

I made a quick survey of parishes that have used the Little Rock Studies successfully. The parishes include: St. Pius X, St. John's on Humboldt St., and St. James, all of Rochester; St. Paul's and St. Rita's in Westchester.

Since Vatican II urges Bible Study, it is good to know of programs such as Little Rock Bible Study.

In Hahn's cassette talk, the speaker asked, "How many of you have relatives or friends who have left the Catholic Church to join some fundamentalist Bible group?" The answer was more than half of the audience. And that I think is the experience of many of us.

Anyone wishing a copy of this superb cassette tape should send \$3, plus \$1 for handling, to me at 10 Lewis St., Auburn, N.Y. 13021.

# Love of neighbor generated through love of God

By Father Albert Shamon  
Courier columnist

Sunday's readings: (R3) Matthew 22:34-40; (R1) Exodus 22:20-26; (R2) 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10.

When St. John was an old man on the Isle of Patmos, he always preached the same sermon: "Little children, love one another."

People thought he was getting senile. One day someone asked, "Why do you always preach the same thing?"

John answered, "It is the command of the Lord: If you do this, it is enough."

Today we hear so much about loving people. That is wonderful, but we must never interpret love as license to "do what I please." What sexual aberrations are being allowed in the name of compassion.

Nor must love be seen only in terms of social welfare. How many have reduced the Gospel to social works! How many good-old American values have been destroyed by self-flagellation, self-criticism and unbridled individualism.

So, what is love all about?

First, love is hierarchical. Christ said to love God and everything else flows from that. The great apostle of charity, St. Vincent de Paul, said, "The poor did not lead



## A WORD FOR SUNDAY

me to God. God led me to the poor." Love of neighbor flows from the love of God.

Love also is active and dynamic. Where love exists it does great things. Love is not a blotter that sops up, but a dynamo that generates action. Thus, love of God generates love of neighbor.

And who is my neighbor? Everybody, especially one in need. The Sunday readings single out three classes: aliens — those who don't belong, who are friendless, lonely or disadvantaged; widows and orphans — those who are helpless, the easy marks; and the poor — the rejected and neglected.

How must I love them? As myself.

Don't I love myself — whether I deserve it or not? Don't I always give myself the benefit of the doubt? And don't I always put the best interpretation on my actions?

Well, I should do likewise for my neighbor. I must not judge rashly. I must

give him or her the benefit of the doubt. I must determine my service to him or her, not by their merits, but by their needs. I must respect him or her because they are children of God. I must also be charitable. I must do what I can to serve their needs whether it be personally, or through a group or political action.

Atheistic Communism would never have taken a foothold anywhere in the world had Christian justice and charity been practiced by all Christians.

We cannot convert the entire world, but if each of us would sweep in front of his own home, we would have clean streets. If we loved our neighbors out of love for God — whether or not they deserved our love — then all would be well in the world.

## FLOSM accepting requests for emergency food grants

GENEVA — The Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry is now accepting applications for food grants from emergency food providers in Ontario, Seneca, Wayne, Yates and Cayuga counties. Grants are available to not-for-profit agencies that provide food on an emergency and no-cost

basis. Application forms are available at FLOSM's Operation Breadbox office, which is located at 110 Exchange St., Geneva, 14456. Completed forms are due by Nov. 2.

For information, call 315/789-2686.

When Your Children Need the Best Care... Think of Us.

**CareFinders**  
Formerly Childcare Connections

A Childcare Referral Service

Pre-screened, experienced, quality caregivers, nannies and Red Cross certified teen sitters. Full time, Part time and Temporary.

Call Today 361-4840

One Grove Street, Suite 112, Pittsford, New York 14534

**A GOOD SHOE IS HARD TO FIND.**

Until you discover...  
EXTRA DEPTH  
**THERMOLDS**  
F.W. MINOR & SON, INC.

Over 120 years of superior Craftsmanship, Quality, Comfort, and Support with the latest orthopedic technology, Perfect for **Arthritis and Diabetics!** And, available in a full range of sizes, widths, styles and colors for men and women.

**LOTEPIO SHOE STORE**

790 Ridge Rd., Webster • 671-8289

**The Medical Arts Pharmacy**  
Opposite Genesee Hospital  
215 Alexander St.

Call or have your doctor Call 454-1474 for FREE County-wide prescription & drug delivery.

Ask about our Senior Citizen Program

**HIDDEN MEADOWS**  
COMMUNITY

**Florida-Style Living for 55 years or older**

**A Friendly Atmosphere Providing**

- Club House for Community Activities
- Golf League
- Card Club
- Organized Trips
- Much More

OPEN FOR INSPECTION SUNDAYS 1 PM-4 PM (OR SHOWN BY APPT.)

CALL: 494-1424  
7289 LAKE RD. BERGEN, NY 14416  
1 Mile South of Rte. 33 & 19

**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.

**SCHAUMAN-SULEWSKI FUNERAL HOME**  
2100 St. Paul St. 342-3400