

Everyone needs silence of prayer

By Father Albert Shamon
Courier columnist

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Luke 10:1-12, 17-20; (R1) Isaiah 66:10-14; (R2) Galatians 6:14-18.

Sunday's Gospel tells us about the mission of the 72. Luke tells the story, because he was probably one of the 72.

Our Lord said, "The harvest is rich but the workers are few," which shows that a priest shortage existed even in our Lord's day. His solution was not the ordination of women, nor was it communion services to replace the Mass, clericalizing the laity and laicizing the clergy, or married clergy.

Our Lord's answer was prayer: "Ask the harvest-master to send workers to his harvest." We must abandon Band-Aids and get down on our knees — especially as family — and pray to God to send us holy priests and religious.

In today's world, priests are like lambs among wolves. A most precious commodity in our Lord's day, lambs are but simple and helpless. Wolves are worthless, vicious and crafty. They love the dark and prey

on others at night. Today's wolves systematically and cleverly attack the church and her ministers. In the end, however, the lambs will conquer the wolves.

Despite the world's opposition, the Lord tells His ministers not to loiter on the way: speed is urgent. For though God has eternity, man has only time — and time is short. They had no walking sticks or traveling bags, and they didn't waste time on ceremonial greetings.

Preach the Gospel. "Woe to me," said St. Paul, "if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16). And what is the Gospel? It is peace because God offers rebellious man the olive branch of forgiveness for sins.

Not all people will respond, of course. But those who do will be blessed both physically and spiritually. Those who do not will receive a fate worse than that which befell Sodom. And the grace offered them will be given to another, as in our Lord's parable of the talent. Our Lady of Gaudalupe gave to eight million Indians the graces rejected by Europe's eight million Protestant reformers.

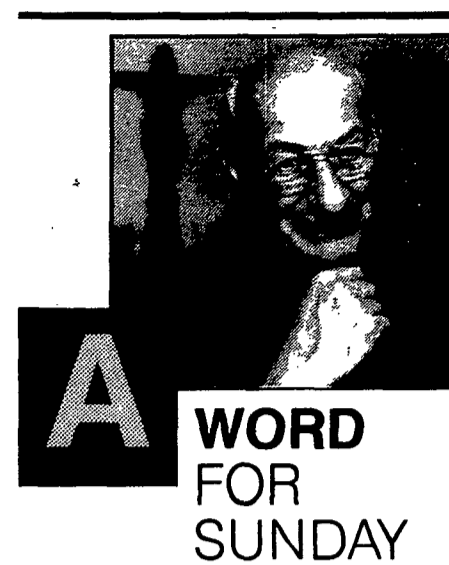
When the disciples returned, they

rejoiced because "even the demons are subject to us in your name." Demons were worshiped in the ancient world. Yet in the Christian world, they are exorcised, as William Peter Blatty so well portrayed in his book *The Exorcist*. Where the church is strong, Satan is weak; where the church is weak, Satan is strong, as now seen in our country in its trafficking with the occult.

Big Ben is located in the center of London. It strikes on the hour every hour. Due to the noise and the flurry of the traffic, very few people hear it striking the hour during the day. In the silence of the night, however, it is heard for miles around.

Such is the case with the hearts of those, when busied about many things, hear not the voice of God. What we all need are periods of silence and prayer.

We need to turn off the TV for a while each day, withdrawing to read the Scriptures and to meditate — like an annual retreat. Only when milk stands still, does the cream rise to the top. Silence is not a negative thing, it is positive. It is the stilling of one voice to hear another —

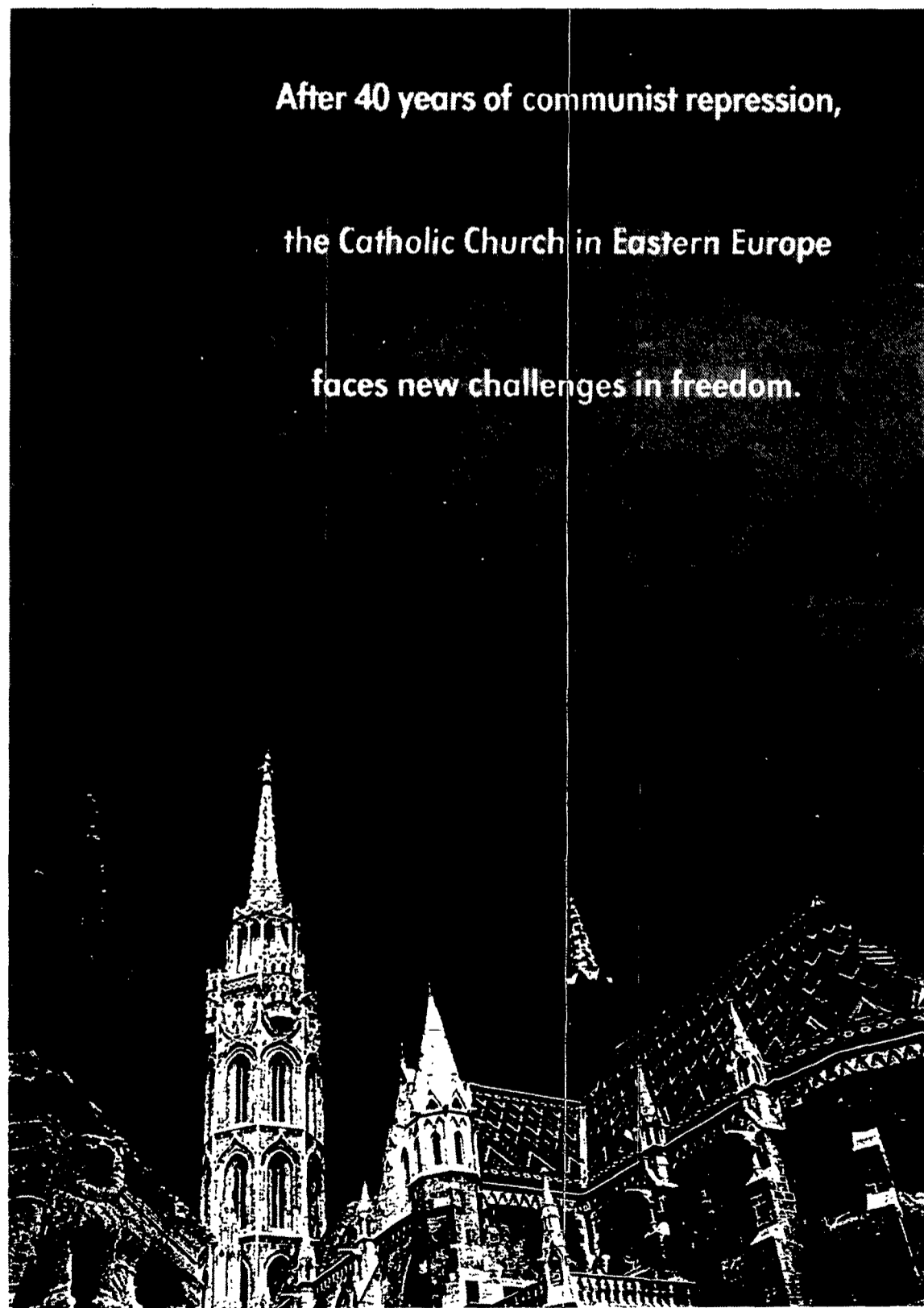


WORD
FOR
SUNDAY

God's voice.

Without these times of quiet prayer and meditation, we are in danger of not receiving Jesus such as the towns that would not welcome the disciples.

But with these times of quiet and prayer and meditation, we shall begin to see God's power. His works among men and our hearts will be glad and exult and peace will spread over us like a river (R1).



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