

Don't condemn those acting in good faith

By Father Albert Shamon
Courier columnist

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mark 9:38-43, 45, 47-48; (R1) Numbers 11:25-29; (R2) James 5:1-6.

Once there was an ecumenical crusade held in a large city. Every imaginable denomination was represented at this unprecedented spiritual event.

During one very well-attended session, a secretary suddenly rushed into the hall shouting, "The building is on fire! The building is on fire!"

At which point:

The Methodists gathered in the corner and prayed.

The Baptists cried, "Where is the water?"

The Quakers quietly praised God for the blessings that fire brings.

The Lutherans posted a notice on the door declaring that the fire was evil.

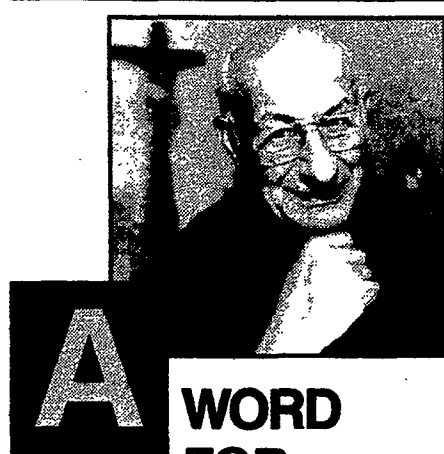
The Catholics took up a collection to cover the damages.

The Jews posted symbols on the doors hoping that the fire would pass.

The Congregationalists shouted, "Every man for himself."

The Episcopalians formed a procession and marched out.

The Christian Scientists concluded



A WORD FOR SUNDAY

that there was no fire.

The Presbyterians appointed a chairperson to appoint a committee to look into the matter and make a written report.

And the secretary grabbed a fire extinguisher and put the fire out. (from *The Catholic Digest*, Sept., 1992 p. 37).

It's amazing how many different groups call themselves Christian. The disciples were upset when someone outside their group used Jesus's name. John once said to Jesus, "Teacher we

saw a man using your name to expel demons and we tried to stop him because he is not of our company."

Jesus's response was, "Do not try to stop him. No man who performs a miracle using my name can at once speak ill of me. Anyone who is not against us is with us. Any man who gives you a drink of water because you belong to Christ will not, I assure you, go without his reward."

It seems that Jesus is saying that kindness is good even if one is in doctrinal error. St. Paul said, "If I have all faith so as to move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing."

One of the dangers of those who possess the true faith is intolerant exclusivity. Note that it was great men, such as Joshua and John, who were guilty of criticizing outsiders exercising the privileges of club members. Although we may not follow or join them, when strangers of the church preach great Christian truths and do not oppose the church, we are not allowed to forbid them. Condemn the error, yes; condemn the erring, by no means, if they are acting in good faith.

In this Sunday readings, both Moses and Jesus display magnanimity. The magnanimous person dreams impossible dreams and reaches for the unreachable stars. He is big in every way.

He never sees the good another does as a threat. Rather he rejoices with those who rejoice and encourages others in doing good, as the sun encourages every flower to grow. Vatican II's spirit was magnanimity, especially with its Decree on Ecumenism.

We must overcome error, not so much by opposing the erring as by preaching the truth. Better to light one candle than to curse the darkness. Better by far to allure persons into the right way than to forbid them the wrong. Like runners in a race, we should not try to impede the other contestants. But we should try to outstrip them using love.

*"He drew a circle
that shut me out—
Rebel, heretic,
thing to flout.
But love and I had
the wit to win —
We drew a circle
that took him in."*

1994 Wedding Guide

<p>APARTMENTS</p> <p>PINES OF PERINTON 1635 W. Ridge Rd. • (716) 621-2060 797 E. Henrietta Rd. • (716) 427-0130</p>	<p>HOTELS</p> <p>Wellesley Inns 1635 W. Ridge Rd. • (716) 621-2060 797 E. Henrietta Rd. • (716) 427-0130</p>	<p>FLORISTS</p> <p>Fioravanti Florist Inc. For that one special occasion you'll want perfection. 2279 Clifford Ave. (near Culver Rd.) 482-1001</p>	<p>NEWSPAPERS</p> <p>READ The New York Times Distributed By MANSON NEWS DISTRIBUTORS 633 South Ave. Roch. NY 244-3880</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>THE BRASSERIE For private, intimate parties up to 150 people. Eastman Place • 387 E. Main St. 232-3350</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>RED MEN'S PARTY HOUSE WEDDINGS • RECEPTIONS • SHOWERS • BANQUETS • MEETINGS ACCOMODATING 50-800 1001 Lexington Ave. 254-6220</p>
<p>BAKERIES/CAKES</p> <p>CALABRESE'S CULVER BAKERY WEDDING CAKES • SWEETS TABLES COOKIE TRAYS • ITALIAN PASTRIES 1352 Culver Rd. (near Merchants) 482-4080</p>	<p>CANDY FAVORS</p> <p>Steve's Homemade Candles Wedding Candy Specialties Open Daily 10-6 623 Park Avenue • 473-2088</p>	<p>FURNITURE</p> <p>Becher's FURNITURE A Great Place for Getting Started 436-5129 1461 BUFFALO RD. at Howard</p>	<p>PHOTOGRAPHERS</p> <p>TUMATS PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY SPECIAL EVENTS/ON-SITE WEDDING SPECIALISTS 716/442 1022 716/425 4954</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>DAISY FLOUR MILL • Receptions • Rehearsals • Showers 381-1880 1880 Blossom Rd. "An American Restaurant"</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>Wedding Package with open bar All for \$14.95 (716) 464-0007</p>
<p>SAVOIA PASTRY SHOPPE 482-1130 Wedding Cakes, Cookie Trays and Sweets Table 2267 Clifford Ave. Rochester NY 14609</p>	<p>FAVORS</p> <p>DAN'S CRAFTS & THINGS 352 EMPIRE BLVD., ROCHESTER, NY 14609 716-654-8388 SAVE - DO IT YOURSELF! • Wedding Accessories • Silk Flowers • Instruction Books • Vellum • Bridal Bouquets • Ribbons • Favor Supplies • Cake Toppers</p>	<p>JEWELRY</p> <p>Irish Impact Shop IRISH WEDDING BANDS JEWELRY & GIFTS 3821 Ridge Road West (716) 225-1050</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>ARENA'S "For Beautiful Banquets" Call Jay Arena 787 Holt Rd. Webster (716) 872-4000</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>Holiday Inn Airport-Rochester 911 Brooks Avenue (716) 328-6000 WEDDING SHOWERS • REHEARSAL DINNERS SPECIAL ROOM RATES FOR YOUR GUESTS</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>Logan's "From 50 to 1000 People" Since 1955 FOR PRIVATE PARTIES 3 Distinctive Dining Rooms Spacious Private Cocktail Lounges 235-6976 1420 Scottsville Road Rochester, NY 14621 Robert O'Connor Richard O'Connor</p>
<p>CAKE DECORATING</p> <p>ANNJER Cake Decorating and Candy Supplies Genesee Valley Regional Market 900 Jefferson Road Rochester • 272-8608</p>	<p>WIDMER Customized labeling in honour of your Wedding, Bridal Toast, Rehearsal Dinners and Wedding Favors. Widmer's Wine Cellars - Naples, NY 716-374-6311 Liz or Susan</p>	<p>MUSIC</p> <p>Mary Ellen and Dennis Menzies Aspir for Your Wedding Ceremony and Reception 716-586-8354</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>The Historic Avon Inn *10-200 Guests *Sitdown & Buffet 716-226-8181 Avon, NY</p>	<p>RECEPTIONS</p> <p>Mapleleaf PARTY HOUSE "ROCHESTER'S MOST ELEGANT PARTY HOUSE" ACCOMMODATIONS FOR 50-1500 GUESTS 1020 MAPLE STREET 436-2112</p>	<p>RENTALS</p> <p>albano Tent & Special Event Rentals 425-1285</p>
					<p>VIDEOGRAPHERS</p> <p>VIDEO CONCEPTS UNLIMITED Specializing in Wedding Memories Creative Video Production Services Free offers for the bridal couple Denise Dusinberre (716) 293-2455</p>