

...a time for conversion...

Pope

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women, the elderly, immigrants, refugees, the unemployed — raise to us their cry of suffering. They implore us, hoping to be heard. How can we not open our ears and hearts and start to make available those five loaves and two fish which God has put into our hands? If each one of us contributes something, we can all do something for them. Of course this will require sacrifices, which call for a deeper conversion. Certainly it will involve changing our exaggerated consumerist behavior, combatting hedonism, resisting attitudes of indifference and the tendency to disregard our personal responsibilities.

3. Hunger is a great tragedy

afflicting humanity. We urgently need to acknowledge this fact and to offer resolute and generous support to the various organizations and movements founded to alleviate the sufferings of those who risk death from starvation, giving special consideration to those people not reached by government or international programs. It is necessary to continue the fight against hunger both in less-developed countries and in highly industrialized nations where, unfortunately, there is an ever-growing gap separating the rich from the poor.

The earth has the resources necessary to feed all humanity. We need to learn to use them intelligently, respecting the environment and the rhythms of nature, guaranteeing fairness and justice in business dealings and ensuring a distribution of wealth which takes into account the duty of solidarity. Some might object that this is a grand and unachievable utopia. Yet the social teaching and activity of the church demonstrates the contrary: Where men and women turn to the Gospel, this project of sharing and solidarity becomes a remarkable reality.

4. Even as we witness the destruction of great quantities of products necessary for human life, we are saddened to see the disturbing spectacle of long lines of people waiting their turn at soup kitchens or around convoys of humanitarian organizations committed to distributing needed supplies. Even in great modern cities, it is not uncommon to see people sorting through refuse bins once the local markets have closed.

When we consider scenes such as these, symptomatic as they are of profound contradictions, how can our hearts fail to rebel against them? How can we not feel spontaneously moved to Christian charity? Authentic Christian solidarity, however, is no mere transient feeling. Only as the result of a patient and responsible training from childhood on does solidarity become a fundamental personal attitude which affects all our actions and areas of responsibility. A general process of consciousness raising is needed, a process capable of involving society as a whole. The Catholic Church, in full cooperation with other religious denominations, seeks to offer her own distinctive contribution to such a process. This is a fundamental work of human promotion and of fraternal sharing, one which requires that the poor

themselves be involved, in whatever way they can.

5. Dear Brother and Sisters! I entrust to you these Lenten reflections, so that you can ponder them as individuals and as a community under the guidance of your pastors. I urge you to take significant practical steps which are able to multiply the few loaves and fishes at our disposal. This will provide effective help in addressing the various forms of hunger and will be an authentic way of living this providential period of Lent, a season of conversion and reconciliation.

As you carry out these demanding resolutions, I gladly impart to each of you my apostolic blessing as a pledge of strength and consolation. May the Lord grant us the grace to set out generously, in prayer and penance, on the path towards the celebration of Easter.

Signed Sept. 8, 1995, and distributed to bishops in October.

Spirituality

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This year's program was developed by representatives from the Mercy Prayer Center, the SSJ Spirituality Ministry, Asbury First United Methodist Church and Third Presbyterian Church.

It is advertised on two Catholic computer bulletin boards on America Online, according to Thomas Driscoll, deacon at St. Louis and one of

the three originators of the program. The 700-800 people who attend have come from as many as 10 counties and 50 Catholic churches (as well as other churches). And, he said, "We get phone calls year-round asking when it will be."

In addition to the talks, the fair will feature booths staffed by spirituality centers and the Divinity School Bookstore.

Keynote speaker will be the Rev. Ted Loder, Senior minister at the First United Methodist

Church of Germantown, Pa., he was designated as one of America's outstanding creative preachers by the *National Observer*.

Also on the schedule: "Behold! How Beautiful You Are," led by Almeta Whitis, storyteller and writer.

"Julian of Norwich: Spreading a Flame into Dry Hearts," by Sister Maureen Flood, RSM, Mercy Prayer Center.

"Passionate Living: The Fruit of Contemplative Prayer," by Sister Mary Louise Heffernan, SSJ, SSJ Spirituality Center.

"Caring Compassionate Children: A New Generation," by Mary Presutti, minister of Christian formation at Transfiguration.

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Saint Anne Church

near Strong Memorial Hospital
1600 Mt. Hope Avenue
Rochester, NY 14620



Ash Wednesday
8:00 Morning Mass/Ashes
12:10, 5:30, 7:30 Liturgy of Word/Ashes

Monday through Saturday
8:00 Morning Mass

Wednesdays
12:10 Midday mass

Fridays
7:30 Evening Way of the Cross

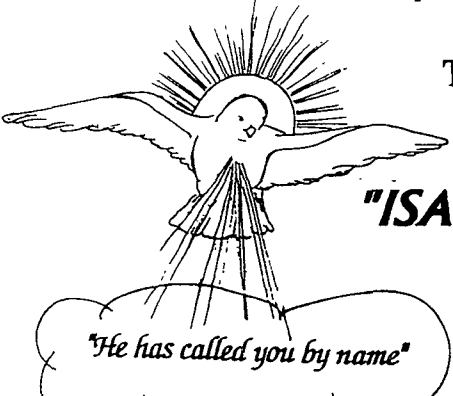
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5:15 on Saturday evening
8:00, 9:30, 11:30 (choir) on Sunday morning

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