

## Contest draws enthusiastic response

As I was saying ...

Last week, stimulated by an article Dennis O'Brien wrote for *The Key Reporter*, a publication of the Phi Beta Kappa Society, I offered some reflections about what we can and must learn from the past, and how we must continue to learn in and about the future.

In reading Dennis' article, I came across a sentence I could not understand at first because he used the word "palimpsest," and I was totally unfamiliar with it. I looked up palimpsest in my dictionary, grasped his meaning and went on with the article.

It has been a habit of mine for many years to read with a dictionary close by whenever possible so that I can look up unfamiliar words immediately. That habit developed first through encouragement from my father who introduced me to crossword puzzles at a very early age. In later years, I was blessed to have several teachers who encouraged vocabulary development in similar ways.

At the end of my column I said that I would give a prize to the first person who sent me a definition of palimpsest.

Now I need your understanding. Because of obligations in Washington, I was away when responses to my offer of a prize began to arrive. Upon my return

### along the way



BY BISHOP MATTHEW H. CLARK

from those travels there was no way for me to determine which response was first. Nor had I made provision for anyone else to do so in my absence. I hope you will judge it a fair solution that on Monday afternoon, I placed all responses in a lottery and asked a co-worker to draw the winning name.

The winner is F. Ross Attinasi of Rochester and his prize is two tickets to the Oct. 25 Captain and Tennille concert at the Theater on the Ridge sponsored by our Sisters of Mercy. I am sure that Ross and his guest will find it a most enjoyable evening.

Some notes about the contest:

1. Palimpsest is defined as: a manuscript, typically of papyrus or parchment, that has been written on more than once, with the earlier writing incompletely erased and often visible.

2. Several respondents wondered

about the context in which Dennis O'Brien used the word. Here it is: "Whereas the denominational faculty of the American colleges read the Bible as a source of immutable moral instruction, German higher critics dissected 'the Book' as a palimpsest of differing texts and traditions. If the Bible itself was up for critical 'deconstruction,' all other subjects were certainly fair game."

3. Forty-seven readers sent definitions. These came by mail, fax, e-mail, hand delivery, phone and in conversation. They came from all areas of our diocese. The variety of transmission and the widespread locations convince me that a lottery drawing from the entries is a fairer system for selecting a winner than is a first-received standard. The lottery system gave everyone an equal opportunity.

4. Many readers included delightful notes with their entries. I want to express sincere thanks to all of them and to Dennis O'Brien who, quite unwittingly, got the whole thing going.

5. While I do not have any specific plan just now, I had so much fun with the palimpsest contest that we might have another one before too many months go by. Stay tuned.

Peace to all.

To our friends  
in Rochester

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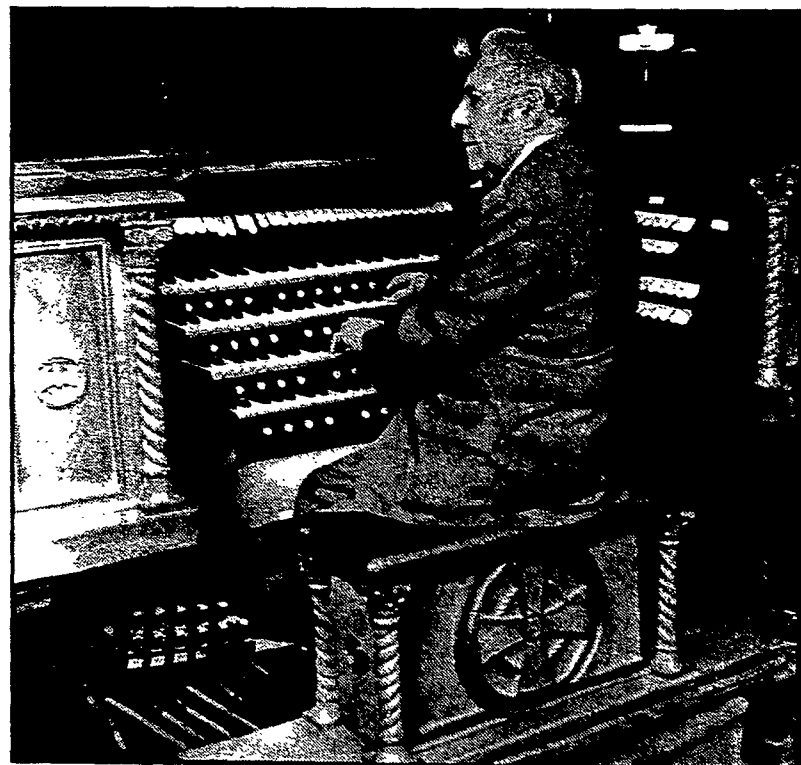
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