

COLUMNISTS

Will next pope be like John Paul II?

Many people — Catholics and non-Catholics alike — continue to take it for granted that, because the current pope has created about 90 percent of the cardinals who will elect his successor, the next pope will almost certainly be a photocopy of John Paul II himself.

If the history of papal elections offers any guidance, that prediction is more likely to be wrong than right.

Although there are many precedents in the church's first millennium and still others during the second, one need only focus on the 10 conclaves of the past century and a half to make the point.

One of history's truly "reactionary" popes was Gregory XVI, a Camaldolese monk, who enlisted Austrian troops on two occasions to crush democratic uprisings in the Papal States and who prohibited gas-powered streetlights lest people gather under them to plot against authorities. He also banned railways as "roads of Hell."

After 15 years (1831-46) Gregory was succeeded by Cardinal Mastai-Ferretti (Pius IX), hailed as a moderate expected to support reforms in the Papal States.

Pius IX (1846-78) did adopt a moderate course, granting amnesty to political prisoners and exiles and approving various improvements in the administration



essays in theology

By FATHER RICHARD P. MCBRIEN

of the Papal States. But he soon became alarmed by the increased pressures for additional reforms and became as reactionary a pope as his predecessor.

In spite of the fact that his was the longest reign in papal history, Pius IX was not succeeded by a like-minded pope. Leo XIII (1878-1903) was a moderate who remained so throughout his pontificate, the second longest in church history.

Leo XIII was succeeded not by his equally moderate secretary of state but by another reactionary, Cardinal Sarto, who took the name Pius X rather than Leo XIV, signaling the direction his pontificate would take. While in office, he directed a harsh campaign to enforce his own view of orthodoxy on theologians, biblical scholars and pastoral leaders.

After an 11-year reign (1903-14), Pius

X was succeeded not by his like-minded secretary of state, Cardinal Merry del Val, but by a newly appointed cardinal, Giacomo della Chiesa, who took the name Benedict XV. His first major step was to call a halt to the heresy-hunting campaign against the church's scholars.

After a relatively brief reign (1914-22), the even-handed, mild-mannered Benedict was succeeded by a strongly authoritarian figure, Pius XI (1922-39), who insisted that even cardinals should remain on their knees during a papal audience. This is not to say that his pontificate was without significant accomplishment (including his courageous encyclical against the Nazis), but that he was a very different kind of pope from his predecessor.

Pius XI was succeeded by his secretary of state, Pius XII (1939-58). Our rule about popes not being succeeded by photocopies of themselves does not apply to this conclave. Europe was already engulfed in another world war and the cardinals looked to someone with Cardinal Pacelli's diplomatic experience.

After 19 years, the ascetical, scholarly and aloof Pius XII was succeeded by the jovial and warm-hearted John XXIII (1958-63), who convened the Second Vatican Council and set the Catholic Church on a whole new course.

However, John was succeeded by someone more like Pius XII in personality than himself, Paul VI (1963-78). Paul continued the work of the council, but then faced the difficult task of trying to hold the church together in the often turbulent post-conciliar years.

True to precedent, Paul VI was succeeded by someone very different from himself in personality and style, described by one contemporary priest-sociologist as a happy, holy man who smiles — unlike his predecessor. John Paul I had written catechetical essays on characters like Pinocchio and referred to God as our Mother as well as our Father.

The sickly John Paul I, after only 33 days in office, was succeeded by a robust, vigorous Slav, Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, who became John Paul II and who continues to reign after some 23 years.

Will John Paul II be succeeded by someone just like himself, given the fact that he, like Pius IX, Leo XIII, Pius XII, and Paul VI has been in office for more than 15 years and has named most of the cardinal-electors?

The conventional wisdom says, "Yes," but history yields a different answer.

...
Father McBrien is a professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame.

Advent calls us to awaken and be watchful

1st Sunday of Advent (Dec. 2): (R3) Matthew 24:37-44; (R1) Isaiah 2:1-5; (R2) Romans 13:11-14.

Next Sunday is the First Sunday of Advent. "Advent" is a word that means "to come." In the first reading, "come" appears three times. In the Gospel, "coming" appears five times. Advent celebrates "the coming of the Lord."

Salvation history celebrates three comings of the Lord: in the past, in the present, and in the future.

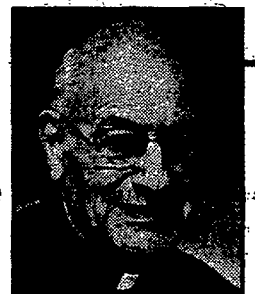
His past coming was in History, becoming visible to teach us how much he loves us and to redeem us.

His present coming is in Mystery. He comes invisibly at Mass in the Liturgy of the Word and in the Liturgy of the Eucharist. He also comes invisibly in grace. Both are to help us cast off the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.

Finally, his future coming will be in Majesty — as a judge to separate the good from the bad for all eternity.

For us, the most important coming of Jesus is his coming in the present, in mystery. How we respond determines how he will judge us when he comes in majesty as judge of the living and the dead.

The key words of Advent are: Wake Up! and Watch! St. Paul urges us to wake



a word for sunday

By FATHER ALBERT SHAMON

from sleep; Jesus tells us to stay awake.

We can be lulled into sleep by the world around us, thinking that all that matters is this world, that since nothing has happened, nothing will happen.

In Noah's time people were lulled to sleep regarding worldliness. God used Noah to try to jar them out of their lethargy by having Noah build a boat on dry land. Instead of waking up, they laughed at Noah. They just wouldn't believe there would ever be a flood. There never had been. Poor Noah was crazy, so they thought. Yet the flood came.

In Advent the church warns us that salvation is closer than we think; that time is running out; that our lives, like burning candles, are getting shorter and will one day be snuffed out. Therefore, Paul

warns us to put off the deeds of darkness and to put on the armor of light.

Paul enumerates four deeds of darkness. First, carousing, that is, living like the Epicureans of Paul's day: eating, drinking excessively, making merry as if this were the only life. Secondly, drunkenness. For some families preparation for Christmas will be an agony, because one or both parents drink excessively. Thirdly, sexual excess and lust. The greatest causes of divorce are premarital sex, artificial contraception and third parties. Lastly, Paul warns of quarreling and jealousy. Some people love things and use people when they should be loving people and using things.

St. Paul calls these sins "deeds of darkness" because they go against the light of reason and of faith and spring from Satan, the prince of darkness. These sins were once deemed so shameful that they were done under the cover of darkness.

The second Advent word is Watch! Don't let your work or this world crowd out God and the world to come.

In the Gospel two men work in a field: Only one goes to heaven. In a home two women are busy grinding meal: only one goes to heaven. Why? They let work push God out of their lives.

Advent calls us to wake up from sleep, from our "I don't care" attitude about the future and to look ahead, to keep watch, to put on the armor of good deeds: monthly confession, daily rosary and kindness to and love for others.

...
Father Shamon is administrator of St. Isaac Jogues Chapel, Fleming

Daily Readings

Monday, December 3
Isaiah 2:1-5; Psalms 122:1-9; Matthew 8:5-11

Tuesday, December 4
Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalms 72:7-8, 12-13, 17; Luke 10:21-24

Wednesday, December 5
Isaiah 25:6-10A; Psalms 23:1-6; Matthew 15:29-37

Thursday, December 6
Isaiah 26:1-6; Psalms 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27A; Matthew 7:21, 24-27

Friday, December 7
Isaiah 29:17-24; Psalms 27:1, 4, 13-14; Matthew 9:27-31

Saturday, December 8
Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Psalms 98:1-4; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1:26-38

ITALY

May 26 - June 10, 2002

16 Day tour includes:

- Five nights in Florence
- Five nights in Siena
- Four nights in Assisi

TUSCANY AND UMBRIA
MIEVEAL, AND RENAISSANCE
ART AND CULTURE TOUR

Seats are limited.
For more information
call Sharyon at

716-243-4155

Geneseo Travel
79 Main St., Geneseo, NY 14454

Approaching age 70 1/2?

Don't let your IRA
benefit the IRS!

Attend a free seminar covering:

- New minimum distribution rules
- Withdrawing money tax-free
- Creating a family legacy
- 401(k) tax consequences

Call 295-6005 for details.



ROCHESTER
WEALTH
ALLIANCE

DAVID B. OLTMANN, CHFC
INDEPENDENT FINANCIAL ADVISOR

1100 University Ave • Suite 214 • Rochester, NY 14607
www.rochesterwealth.com

Securities offered through Wall Street Financial Group
Member NASD, SIPC Rochester, NY (716) 442-7500

Darkness

to
Light

Advent
Prayer Service



Thursday
December 6
7:00 p.m.

All are welcome!

On Friday, December 7, Sisters in religious congregations throughout the United States invite the public to join them in prayer and fasting for the healing of broken relationships in our world. This prayer service on December 6 is a prelude to that day.

SSJ Motherhouse
4095 East Avenue

Letters@catholiccourier.com

E-mail
your
opinions
to