

God's covenant has no end

Corpus Christi (June 22): (R3) Mark 14:12-16, 22-26; (R1) Exodus 24:3-8; (R2) Hebrews 9:11-15.

Our faith goes all the way back to Abraham when God chose a special people to be his own. Our faith began with a covenant God made with the people of Israel. Moses sealed that covenant with the blood of an animal. Half of the blood he sprinkled on an altar and half of it he sprinkled on the people as a sign of the bond God had made with his people.

At the Last Supper, Jesus affirmed that covenant. Taking a cup of wine, he said to his Apostles, "This is the blood of the covenant to be poured out for many." Our faith is a continuation of the covenant relationship between God and his people.

This covenant relationship means first of all that God is proactive. He doesn't wait for us to come to him, he comes to us. Thus the Gospel presents Jesus as the Good Shepherd searching for the lost lamb, knocking at the door of hearts, seeking entrance. As God came looking for Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, so God comes looking for each and every one of us in the garden of life.

Most of us have heard of Graham Kerr, the "Gallop Gourmet." Kerr was successful and famous. But he had a terrible cross at home. His lovely wife, Treena, was emotionally and physically sick to the point that she was doped up on Valium. Kerr's maid saw the terrible state of Treena. One day she asked Treena to turn her problems over to the Lord. Treena did, and a profound change came over her. She regained her emotional balance and found peace and happiness she had not known for years. The doctors called her restoration a miracle. But Treena knew it was because she had called out to God and he restored her.

Another point is that our indifference cannot cancel out the covenant. Christ is our advocate before the Father. No matter what we've done, he is always before his Father pleading our cause. If anybody needs a good



Father Albert Shamon

A word for Sunday

lawyer before God, it is you and I. Many people feel unworthy of God's love. They may have done a great wrong in the past. They may have been unfaithful as a spouse. They may have committed an abortion, been a thief. They wonder, "How can God love me? How can he forgive me?" But that's the whole point of the covenant relationship. God commits himself to us for better or for worse. "I love you with an everlasting love." Neither sin nor death can cancel God's commitment.

But there is a third element in covenant relationship — our response. Our response is obedience.

In the summer of 1993, the rivers of the Midwest — the Mississippi, Missouri and others — surged over levees into communities and farmlands. During this worst flooding in regional history, heroic volunteers worked to near exhaustion filling sandbags around the clock. In one instance, they were joined by a group of convicts from a boot-camp prison nearby. The convicts had been sent to help with sandbags for shoring up a levee. If it failed, the little town of Inota on the Iowa-Illinois border faced destruction.

The criminals worked with furious passion and energy. They refused to sleep. Still the levee gave way and the town, with its two hundred houses, was lost. The convicts wept openly in frustration and compassion. Why had these men suddenly become good Samaritans? Because after dealing in drugs, violence and destruction, they had a positive purpose in life, perhaps for the first time. They had a mission to

save a town. Observing people who cared for each other working as one for the same goal, they began to care.

So God works in people's lives. We might have waited until those convicts had cleaned up their lives before trying to get them to do anything positive. But circumstance forced them to be taken just as they were. And something good and noble happened to each of these wretched men. That is God's approach to us. He takes us as we are. How many a great saint he has made out of a sinner!

God acts. Sin does not cancel his covenant. All we need to be is obedient to his will.

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

Daily Readings

Monday, June 23
Genesis 12:1-9; Psalms 33:12-13, 18-20; 22; Matthew 7:1-5

Tuesday, June 24
Isaiah 49:1-6; Psalms 139:1-3, 13-15; Acts 13:22-26; Luke 1:57-66, 80

Wednesday, June 25
Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18; Psalms 105:1-4, 6, 9; Matthew 7:15-20

Thursday, June 26
Genesis 16:1-12, 15-16 or 16:6B-12, 15-16; Psalms 106:1-5; Matthew 7:21-29

Friday, June 27
Hosea 11:1, 3-4, 8C-9; (Ps) Isaiah 12:2-6; Ephesians 3:8-12, 14-19; John 19:31-37

Saturday, June 28
Genesis 18:1-15; (Ps) Luke 1:46-50, 53-55; Matthew 8:5-17



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May through October - All Saints Mausoleum Chapel

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Kids' Chronicle

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SAMUEL LAMENTATIONS SAMUEL LUKE ESTHER RUTH
HAGGAI ISAIAH HABAKKUK KINGS