

# Serve God through others

25th Sunday in Ordinary Time  
(Sept. 21): (R3) Mark 9:30-37; (R1) Wisdom 2:12, 17-20; (R2) James 3:16-4:3.

One of the lessons in next Sunday's Gospel is the importance of children in the kingdom of God. "Whoever welcomes a child for my sake welcomes me." Any church that does not put its young first will not survive. That doesn't mean children are not a pain sometimes. They can keep you off balance.

As a woman was trying to get ketchup to come out of the bottle, she asked her 4-year-old daughter to answer the phone.

"It's the minister, Mommy," the child said to her mother. Then she said through the phone. "Mommy can't come talk to you right now. She's hitting the bottle."

It's not always easy dealing with children. But one of the great responsibilities of a church is to provide great teachers, great facilities and outstanding ministry to our young.

A second lesson Jesus teaches us is that there is something special about children. They have unrestrained enthusiasm. They have an exuberance for life that most of us lose somewhere along the way.

If you are a baseball fan, you recognize the name Cal Ripken Jr. of the Baltimore Orioles. A couple of years ago Ripken played in his record-breaking 2,131st consecutive ball game. His streak spanned 13 years. After the game Ripken's mother told this story on television. She said, "It was the night before Cal's first Little League baseball game. When I tucked him in that evening, I noticed he was wearing his baseball uniform. I told him he didn't need to do



Father Albert Shamon

## A word for Sunday

that; he'd have plenty of time to dress in the morning. So I made him get up and change into his pajamas."

Before she turned in, she checked on Cal again. He was sound asleep, snug and comfy — in his uniform!

We can learn something from the unrestrained enthusiasm of children. We can also learn something from their unrestrained trust.

From time to time children's letters to God are published. They reflect the trust in God that all of us could use. Letters like these:

"Dear God, I do not think anybody could be a better God. Well, I just want you to know that I am not just saying this because you are God already." (Signed) Charles.

"Dear God, I think about you sometimes, even when I'm not praying." (Signed) Elliot.

"Dear God, please send me a pony. I never asked for anything before. You can look it up." (Signed) Bruce.

"Dear God, in school they told us what you do. Who does it when you are on vacation?" (Signed) Jane.

Finally, a third lesson we can learn from the Gospel is that the sign of spiritual maturity is service to others. Among the biggest people in our churches are those who teach our

children and our youth.

These people are doing important work — life-changing work. If you ask them about their work, they would probably not describe it as life changing, but it is.

Each of us has a place in Christ's kingdom we need to be serving. Some of us don't have the gift of teaching, but there are other ministries we can be performing. This is the mark of true greatness.

A small boy wrote to President Ronald Reagan: "Dear Mr. President, You have been elected President of the United States. Now go to the Oval office and get to work."

Christ says that to each of us: Serve him and others.

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

## Daily Readings

Monday, September 22

Ezra 1:1-6; Psalms 126:1-6; Luke 8:16-18

Tuesday, September 23

Ezra 6:7-8, 12B, 14-20; Psalms 122:1-5; Luke 8:19-21

Wednesday, September 24

Ezra 9:5-9; (Ps) Tobit 13:2-4, 6-8; Luke 9:1-6

Thursday, September 25

Haggai 1:1-8; Psalms 149:1-6, 9; Luke 9:7-9

Friday, September 26

Haggai 1:15B-29; Psalms 43:1-4; Luke 9:18-22

Saturday, September 27

Zachariah 2:5-9, 14-15A; (Ps) Jeremiah 31:10-13; Luke 9:43B-45

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**Kids' Chronicle**  
Answers from page 12: Genesis, Ruth, Samuel, Chronicles, Esther, Isaiah, Daniel, Hosea, Amos, Micah, Nahum, Malachi

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