

Borromeo Seminary
January 21, 1986
12 Noon
Pro-Life Liturgy

"Now everyone who loves the Father
loves the child he has begotten."

I remember this time last year very well. I was in Washington, D.C., and a reporter came up to me and asked why I participated in the demonstration against apartheid outside the South African Embassy and not in the Pro-Life events at the National Shrine and in front of the Capital Building. After I explained that I was at both events, he was taken aback, and apologized. My reward for this conversation was an interview with him for the newspaper, which has yet to be published. His final comment to me was, ^{Bishop} "I see that you are orthodox!"

Orthodoxy. Yes, we are all called to ~~be~~ ^{os} orthodox - to pursue and hold right teaching, as handed down by the Gospel and the teachings of the Church.

However, all of us are also called to orthopraxis - to right living, to correct behaviour.

Saint John in his epistle this morning invites us to both: to believe in Jesus the Christ, to accept the "testimony of the God who is greater than human testimony" and the "testimony of the Spirit of truth." ^{**This is orthodox.} St John ~~He~~ also tells us that the "love of God consists in this - that we keep his commandments." Earlier in this epistle, Saint John reminds us, "No one has ever seen God. Yet, if we love one another, God dwells in us, and his love is brought to perfection in us." And, the author of the Book of Wisdom adds, "Those who trust in him shall understand truth, and the faithful shall abide in his love." All of this, Brothers, is orthopraxis.

These two - the "doxa" and the "praxis" - teaching and action - are inseparable. For this reason, Saint John could affirm with clarity and conviction, "God is love, and he who abides in love, abides in God, and God in him."

Saint Agnes, the third century virgin and martyr, exemplifies this essential link between believing and living. So does the modern martyr Martin Luther King, Jr.. Because they both "lived the truth" and did not belong to the world, because they both understood that "no slave is greater than his master," because they identified with the name of Jesus, the world harried and hated them. Practitioners of the truth, they bore in their own bodies the brand marks of Jesus' suffering and dieing. But, "they are in peace," for "the souls of the just are in the hands of God."

My brothers, when we come to the issue of human life, we are confronted with orthodox^os and orthopraxis, right teaching and right living. The teaching is - we believe in the sanctity and dignity of human life. Let me proclaim this teaching with clarity:

God is the source of all life,
life's reason for being,
and life is a sign of God's presence.
Human life is marked with the image of God,
and from God derives its dignity and destiny.
Human life is bathed in the mystery of the Son of God:
it is precious because of His Incarnation,
redeemed because of His suffering and resurrection,
and called to eternity because of His glorification.

By the gift of the Holy Spirit,
human life grows in freedom,
develops in the community of faith,
and attain its end in response to grace.

In brief, Human life is the most perfect expression of the divine
on this earth.

My friends, I would dare say that this great and awesome teaching
of the Church on human life is a mystery of faith, a *mysterium fidei*, --
for human life, we hold in faith, is from God and is destined to God.

How profound, then, must be our respect for life - our
orthopraxis toward life? How much we must demonstrate by word and deed
our love for life?

If Saint Francis in the Canticle of the Sun could praise God
for all creatures, for Brother Sun and Sister Moon, if Saint Francis could
reverence even a piece of bread, how intensely deep must be our love for
human life - the most perfect expression of the divine we have on earth?
How unshakably definite and determined must be our reverence for human
life, our nurture and care of it, our protection and defense of it?

As disciples of Jesus, we are to be particularly vocal
and active in behalf of life in its most defenseless and powerless and
voiceless for - that is, for the life of the unborn child. Who shall defend
this helpless life, this innocent life, this unborn longing for birth --
other than those of us already born, those of us with defense, with power,
and with voice. To reduce the unborn to inhumanity destroys our own
humanity - for the both the unborn and the born are gifted with life from

God and life owned by God alone, and both are called to membership in the "household of faith" and the "Body of Christ," member for member.

How committed we are to be, Brothers, to human life in all its forms. The already born, you and me, are also images of God. "I AM SOMEBODY," "I AM A CHILD OF GOD," Martin King taught his followers to shout.

Friends, we must regard each other as "children of God." Antecedent to any human commentary or condition, we are inerascibly stamped with the mark of God. The poor, those who suffer injustice and discrimination, the mentally and physically disabled, the elderly, lonely, and alienated, any of the weakest members of our family -- these are they for whom Jesus had a "preferential option": "As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me." Thus, as a community of disciples, as future leaders and pastors in the Church, we, especially, must affirm life - from womb to tomb, in all its stages.

What a challenge this presents to our seminary community! Do we revere life in each other? Do we treat each other with understanding and compassion, with kindness and concern, with respect for each other's cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity? In a sense, it is easier to love the unborn - we do not live with them. It is easier to love the poor - they can be a vague generality or a statistic whom we do not see. Ah, but those with whom we live, / those who challenge us daily with their different personalities and backgrounds, / those who bother us with their idiosyncracies and character traits -- do we respect their lives? There is inconsistency in the consistent ethic of life, Brothers, if we do not love, support, cherish, and encourage those with whom we live.

Brothers, the Eucharist is the sign and cause of the unity of the People of God - a unity of faith and practice. As we eat the One Bread and drink from the One Cup, may we be united in our respect for human life, in our belief in human life, in our action and word in favor of human life: in this instance of orthodoxy^s and orthopraxis, may we all be one. In ~~the~~ Eucharist the Lord calls us to unity - He who came that we might have life, and have it to the full.

ASH WEDNESDAY: 12 FEBRUARY 1986
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION CHURCH
MADISON, OHIO

JOEL 2: 12-18
2 COR. 5: 20- 6:2
MATT. 6:1-6. 16-18

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS--BIRTHDAYS ARE SPECIAL DAYS.
BUT USUALLY--IF WE ARE HONEST--WE MUST ADMIT THAT WE
ENJOY OTHER PEOPLE'S BIRTHDAYS EVEN MORE THAN OUR OWN,
ESPECIALLY THE OLDER WE GET. IT SEEMS A LOT MORE FUN
TO GO SHOPPING FOR A GIFT THAT WILL PLEASE A FRIEND,
OFTEN SPENDING MORE THAN WE REALLY SHOULD--IN ORDER
TO WATCH OUR GIFT GET OPENED, AND TO SEE THE LOOK OF
SURPRISE AND DELIGHT ON THE FACE OF THE BIRTHDAY BOY
OR GIRL.

NOW IF WE ARE SORT OF INSECURE--WE STUDY THE
FACE--IS HE JUST BEING POLITE? IS SHE OVERDOING IT
JUST A BIT WITH THE DRAMATICS AND ONLY PRETENDING?
WE ARE OFTEN INSECURE IN LOVE, AND DO NOT KNOW IF ANYONE
--NO MATTER HOW CLOSE--CAN REALLY READ OUR HEART. THAT
IS WHAT SO OFTEN MOTIVATES OVERLY EXPENSIVE GIFTS.
THAT--OR MAYBE GUILT. MAYBE I AM TRYING TO MAKE UP FOR
PAST NEGLECT WITH THIS PRESENT EXTRAVAGENCE.

IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY TO GIVE A GIFT. BUT IT
IS OFTEN MUCH HARDER TO RECEIVE ONE--AND BE GRATEFUL.
CHILDREN MIGHT FIND IT EASIER--BECAUSE A CHILD OFTEN
TAKES LOVE FOR GRANTED, AND A CHILD'S DESIRES ARE UP-FRONT
AND DIRECT: A NEW TOY OR A PORTABLE RADIO, A BIKE OR
A NEW PUPPY.

BUT WHAT DO YOU GET A MAN WHO HAS EVERYTHING?

THIS IS THE HAUNTING QUESTION WE ASK IN A WORLD GLUTTED WITH POSSESSIONS--THIS IS THE BOREDOM OR UNEASE WE FEEL ABOUT OUR BIRTHDAY WHEN WE ARE SATIATED WITH TOO MANY THINGS AND WE STILL HUNGER FOR LOVE. IF THE HEART IS THERE--WE NEED SO LITTLE TO SHOW IT. BUT IF THE HEART IS IN QUESTION, THE RICHEST OF GIFTS IS UTTERLY MEANINGLESS.

SO THE SCRIPTURES COUNSEL US TODAY: FASTING, PRAYER, ALMSGIVING--ALL ARE MEANINGLESS WITHOUT THE HEART. LIKE INSECURE AND GUILTY GIFT-GIVERS, WE TEND TO OVERDO THE EXTERNALS--TO POUR IT ON HEAVY, AS IF IN A PILE OF GIFTS, IN A FLURRY OF ENERGETIC RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY, AS IF WE MIGHT CONVINCE OUR GOD--AND OURSELVES-- THAT INDEED OUR HEART IS IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

BUT GOD DOES NOT ASK US FOR OUR GIFTS--BUT FOR OURSELVES, COMPLETELY, IN ALL THE RISK SUCH GIFT ^{OF SELF} BRINGS. THIS IS HARD, BECAUSE IT IS EASIER TO GIVE EVERYTHING ELSE EXCEPT OUR WHOLE SELF. IN FACT, WE SO OFTEN SPEND MUCH OF OUR LIFE AVOIDING THIS RISK, PUTTING IT OFF, BUYING IT OFF WITH LESSER BUT MORE SPECTACULAR GIFTS.

SO THE PSALMIST WILL SAY: "I SHALL TAKE NO YOUNG BULL OUT OF YOUR HOUSE, NOR MALE GOATS OUT OF YOUR FOLDS. FOR EVERY BEAST OF THE FOREST IS MINE. THE CATTLE OF A THOUSAND HILLS!" [Ps. 50: 9-10]. GOD WISHES OUR CONTRITE AND HUMBLE HEARTS, WILLING TO LEARN FROM HIM, LONGING FOR HIS LOVE, OPEN TO MAKE ROOM FOR HIM, EAGER TO RECEIVE HIM.

THE GREATEST--INDEED THE ONLY--GIFT WE CAN BRING TO GOD, THE ONLY GIFT THAT BRINGS HIM HONOR, IS A HEART SO EMPTY, SO OPEN, SO WILLING TO BE FILLED BY HIM. THE PURPOSE OF FASTING AND LENTEN SACRIFICE IS NOT TO IMPRESS OURSELVES, STILL LESS, GOD, WITH OUR GOOD WILL AND SELF-CONTROL. ~~But~~ TRUE LENTEN DISCIPLINE IS NOT OF THE BODY BUT OF THE HEART. IT IS NOT THE MULTIPLICATION OF WORDS OR MATERIAL GIFTS--BUT THE EMPTYING OUT, THE SURRENDER OF THE SPIRIT FROM ALL OTHER CONCERNS, OF ALL ANXIETIES AND FEARS--EXCEPT FOR GOD AND HIS WILL FOR US.

FASTING AND PRAYER MUST LEAD US TO THE MIND OF CHRIST--WHO SET ASIDE HIS OWN DESIRES IN ORDER TO DO THE WILL OF HIS HEAVENLY FATHER. AND, THE WILL OF HIS FATHER IS THIS: THAT HE RECEIVE EACH AND EVERY ONE GOD DREW TO HIM. THE GREATEST GIFT OF CHRIST WAS HIS OBEDIENCE TO THE FATHER --BY WHICH HE WILLINGLY BECAME THE BROTHER OF EVERY CREATURE, THE BODILY ONENESS WITH ALL THE CREATURES GOD HAD MADE. ONE WITH GOD--CHRIST DID NOT CLING TO THIS STATUS--BUT IN OBEDIENCE SO EMPTIED HIMSELF THAT HE BECAME ONE WITH US IN THE DEPTH OF OUR FRAGILE BEING SUBJECT TO SIN AND DEATH. HE BECAME ONE WITH US--INDEED THE VERY LEAST OF US, AND HE BECAME THE VERY LEAST OF US SO THAT HE MIGHT BE ONE WITH ALL OF US, EXCLUDING NONE. HE BECAME ONE WITH US TO FULFILL THE FATHER'S GOOD PLEASURE. THIS IS THE FASTING, THIS IS THE PRAYER, THIS THE ALMSGIVING--OF CHRIST HIMSELF: THE OBEDIENT SPIRIT--ONE WITH US.

WHEN WE EXAMINE OUR CONSCIENCES--MUST WE NOT RECOGNIZE THAT OUR LIVES ARE FILLED WITH DIVISIONS? WE ARE NOT REALLY ONE WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS. MONEY SEPARATES US INTO THE RICH AND THE POOR. EDUCATION MAKES US LITERATE OR ILLITERATED. WE LIVE IN NEIGHBORHOODS SEPARATED FROM THOSE WHO HAVE MORE THAN WE HAVE, AND THOSE WHO HAVE LESS. OUR WHOLE LIVES SEEM TO REVOLVE AROUND THOSE WHO ARE "JUST LIKE US"--BUT ALSO SEPARATE FROM THOSE WHOM MONEY, POWER, ETHNIC OR RELIGIOUS ORIGIN, EDUCATION OR PRESTIGE--OR THE LACK OF ANY OF THESE--MAKES DIFFERENT FROM US. WE MOVE AWAY, WE DISASSOCIATE OURSELVES FROM HUMAN BEINGS WE DO NOT IDENTIFY WITH. AND SO, ALMOST UNCONSCIOUSLY, WE SEPARATE OURSELVES FROM THE FULLNESS THAT IS CHRIST.

OUR RELIGIOUS PRACTICES TOO SO OFTEN ISOLATE US, SEPARATE US FROM MUCH OF THE HUMAN FAMILY. RELIGION SO OFTEN BOLSTERS OUR PREJUDICES, AND DOES NOT CHALLENGE US TO GO BEYOND OURSELVES TO FIND CHRIST WAITING OUTSIDE, AT THE DOOR, KNOCKING, CALLING US. INSECURE IN GOD'S LOVE, WE CLING TO THE LITTLE WE HAVE OF SELF-SATISFACTION AND SELF-JUSTIFICATION, AND WE ARE CLOSED TO RECEIVE CHRIST IN THOSE MOST ALIEN TO OURSELVES.

THE GREATEST FAILING OF LENTEN PRACTICES IS NOT THAT SELF-INDULGENCE WILL WIN OUT OVER SELF-DENIAL. THE GREATEST DANGER IS NOT THAT WE WILL FAIL TO BE HEROIC ENOUGH, GENEROUS ENOUGH. NO: THE GREATEST DANGER IS THAT WE WILL MAKE ALL OF OUR SACRIFICES--BUT THAT NOTHING WILL

HAPPEN TO OUR HEARTS, OR OUR EYES AND EARS.

THERE IS A DISTURBING STORY TOLD IN A RECENT BOOK ENTITLED "THE HOLOCAUST: A HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF EUROPE DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR," BY MARTIN GILBERT, THE GREAT HISTORIAN. ON SEPTEMBER 27, 1941, 3,400 JEWS IN THE LITTLE LITHUANIAN TOWN OF EISISKES, NOT FAR FROM VILNIUS WERE ROUNDED UP BY SPECIAL SS UNITS, AIDED BY LITHUANIAN AUXILIARIES, DRIVEN TO THE JEWISH CEMETERY,, FORCED TO STRIP AND THEN WERE SHOT AT THE EDGE OF PREVIOUSLY DUG TRENCHES. A SIXTEEN YEAR OLD BOY NAMED ZVI MICHALOWSKI FELL INTO THE TRENCH UNHARMED, A SPLIT SECOND BEFORE THE BULLETS KILLED THOSE STANDING WITH HIM, INCLUDING HIS FATHER. WHEN NIGHT FELL, HE CLIMBED OUT OF THE MASS GRAVE, AND RAN NAKED, COVERED WITH BLOOD, TO THE NEARBY HOUSE OF A PEASANT. IN RESPONSE TO THE BOY'S ANGUISHED PLEA FOR ASYLUM, THE PEASANT SHOUTED, "JEW, GO BACK TO THE GRAVE WHERE YOU BELONG!" HE GOT THE SAME RESPONSE AT SEVERAL OTHER DOORS. FINALLY, MICHALOWSKI WENT TO THE HOME NEAR THE FOREST OF AN OLD WIDOW HE KNEW. SHE TOO DROVE HIM OFF, WAVING A FIREBRAND AT HIM, AS IF DRIVING OUT AN EVIL SPIRIT. IN UTTER DESPAIR AND SHEER TERROR, THE BOY RETURNED TO THE WIDOW CRYING: "I AM YOUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. I CAME DOWN FROM THE CROSS. LOOK AT ME--TH BLOOD, THE PAIN, THE SUFFERING OF THE INNOCENT." CROSSING HERSLEF, THE OLD WOMAN FELL AT HIS BLOODY FEET, THEN LET HIM IN, WASHED AND FED HIM AND SHELTERED HIM UNTIL HE WAS READY TO GO. [BOOK REVIEW BY A.J. SHERMAN, N.Y. TIMES BOOK REVIEW, FEB. 8, 1986]

WHAT IS ASTOUNDING IN THIS STORY--IS NOT THE PIETY OF THE WOMAN, FINALLY RECOGNIZING CHRIST. BUT THE DENSITY OF THE BLIND AND THE DEAF--WHO CANNOT RECOGNIZE HUMANITY WEARING THE STRIPES OF CHRIST. HOW CAN WE LOVE THE GOD WE DO NOT SEE, IF WE IGNORE THE HUMAN BEINGS WE SEE DAILY AROUND US. BUT HOW CAN WE EVEN BEGIN TO KNOW THE GOD WE CANNOT SEE, IF WE ARE ABSOLUTELY INCAPABLE OF RECOGNIZING BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL AROUND US?

THE FAILURE OF THE HEART *BRINGS* NOT SELF-INDULGENCE AS MUCH AS IT BRINGS A TERRIBLE BLINDNESS TO THE EYE AND DEAFNESS TO THE EAR. THE BLEEDING CHILD OF LITHUANIAN JEWRY SIMPLY DID NOT EXIST--HE WAS NOT SEEN NOR WAS HE HEARD--FOR HEARTS WERE NOT OPEN. THE DREAD FAILURE OF OUR FASTING AND OUR PRAYERS--IS NOT THAT WE FAIL TO RECOGNIZE CHRIST AS OUR GOD--BUT THAT WE CANNOT SEE OUR GOD AS MAN.

REND YOUR HEARTS AND NOT YOUR GARMENTS, THE PROPHET JOEL TELLS US TODAY. RETURN TO THE LORD YOUR GOD. DO NOT DO YOUR DEEDS TO BE NOTICED BY OTHERS, TO BE HONORED OR ESTEEMED. BUT BE RECONCILED TO YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS--OPEN YOUR HEART AND EMPTY IT OUT. OPEN YOUR EYES TO SEE AND YOUR EARS TO HEAR. THE GIFT THAT YOU RECEIVE IS YOUR SELF FOR GIVING, AND THE GIFT THAT YOU GIVE IS THE LORD HIMSELF SHINING IN A MILLION FACES.

ST. IGNATIUS HIGH SCHOOL: DEDICATION OF THE LIBRARY
16 FEBRUARY 1986; 2 P.M. DT. 26: 4-10
1ST SUNDAY OF LENT [C-EXCEPT GOSP.:A] ROM. 10: 8-13
MATT. 4: 1-11

My Brother Jesuits

Skir

FATHER WELSH, [^]DEAR FRIENDS AND PATRONS OF ST. IGNATIUS HIGH SCHOOL--MEMBERS OF THE ALUMNI ANNUAL FUND, THE CENTENNIAL FUND, THE PARENTS ANNUAL FUND, THE MEMBERS OF THE CENTENNIAL COMMITTEES, THE LOYOLA SOCIETY, THE ALUMNI, THE FATHERS CLUB, THE BOARD OF REGENTS AND THE FINANCE COMMITTEE--FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS OF ST. IGNATIUS, MEMBERS OF THE LOU SEUFFERT CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, AND FINALLY--MY DEAR BROTHER JESUITS!!!

AS A FRANCISCAN--THAT IS, A FRIAR MINOR OR "LESSER BROTHER"--I TAKE THE WORDS OF OUR LORD SERIOUSLY, THAT HE SPOKE ONCE TO THE MAN WHO TOOK THE LAST PLACE IN THE BANQUET: "FRIEND, GO UP HIGHER!" THIS MAKES ME BOLD ENOUGH TO CLAIM "BROTHER" WHEN I SAY "BROTHER JESUITS"---FOR TODAY I FEEL THAT I AM WALKING ON HIGHER GROUND. IN THIS ASSEMBLY IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO AVOID THAT FEELING THAT I AM WALKING ON HIGHER GROUND. FOR WHAT A GATHERING WE HAVE HERE: ALL THIS ASSEMBLY OF MEN AND WOMEN GATHERED IN DEVOTION TO YOUR JESUIT IDEALS, YOUR SPIRIT, ALL GATHERED IN SUPPORT OF YOUR MINISTRY. BUT MORE THAN THAT, BROTHER JESUITS--ALL THESE PEOPLE ARE GATHERED TOGETHER BECAUSE THEY LOVE YOU, AND CAN ONLY RESPOND TO THE LOVE OF GOD POURED OUT IN YOUR MINISTRY TO THEM, WITH THE BEST THAT THEY HAVE TO OFFER--THIS MAGNIFICENTLY INTENSE LOYALTY AND SUPPORT THAT

JESUITS SEEM ALWAYS TO EVOKE. INDEED, BROTHER JESUITS--
HOW RICHLY GOD BLESSES YOU IN THESE PEOPLE WHO LOVE
YOU AND WHO JOIN THEIR GENEROUS SERVICE TO YOURS.

I SAY "BROTHER" AGAIN, BECAUSE I WANT TO BE
PART OF YOUR FAMILY AND SIT AT THIS TABLE, WHEN I
SEE THIS MAGNIFICENT LIBRARY AND BUILDING, AND WHEN
I THINK OF WHAT THIS MEANS. WHAT A FEAST FOR THE
HUMAN SPIRIT YOU PREPARE! A LIBRARY GATHERS TOGETHER
THE VERY BEST OF OUR PAST, ALL THE BEST MEMORIES AND
BEST THOUGHT--NOT AS A DEAD MONUMENT TO PAST GLORIES,
NOR AN EXERCISE IN EXTRAVAGANT SELF-INDULGENCE. NO--
YOU BRING TOGETHER NOT JUST BOOKS--BUT PEOPLE FOR THE
BOOKS, PEOPLE OF THE BOOKS--EAGER AND HUNGRY STUDENTS
AND COMMITTED TEACHERS TO DISCOVER NEW THINGS TOGETHER
AND PLEDGE FAITH WITH THE FUTURE THAT HUMAN LIFE BY
GOD'S GRACE PROMISES. WE SAY TODAY THAT ST. IGNATIUS
IS NOT IN VAIN--WE MAKE AN ACT OF FAITH THAT OTHERS
WILL WALK ^{these halls} AS WE HAVE WALKED, ~~THESE HALLS~~, THAT OTHERS
WILL SIT IN THESE CLASSROOMS, / STUDY AND LEARN AT THESE
DESKS / AND DRINK OF THE SAME SPIRIT LEARNING AND COMMITMENT
TO EXCELLENCE, AMONG THESE BOOKS AND THOSE YET TO BE
WRITTEN FOR YEARS AND YEARS TO COME.

THE LIBRARY IS ARGUABLY THE HOLIEST SPOT IN
ALL THIS HOUSE--WHERE THE SPIRIT FEASTS. FOR HERE THE
JESUIT COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE IS BEST SYMBOLIZED--
AND REALIZED. ~~FOR~~ EXCELLENCE IS NOT A POSSESSION PROUDLY
CLAIMED BY THE ARROGANT WHO KNOW IT ALL. JESUIT EXCELLENCE

IS A PASSIONATE LOVE OF DISCOVERY, A HUMBLE AND
TEACHABLE SPIRIT OF HUNGERING AND THIRSTING FOR THE
TRUTH, ALL AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM --FOR THE GREATER
GLORY OF GOD. TO GOD, THE BEST.

AN OLD FRANCISCAN NOVICE MASTER USED TO SAY
THAT THE REFECTORY--OR DINING HALL--WAS THE HOLIEST
SPOT IN OUR COMMUNITY AFTER THE CHAPEL. THE CYNIC
MIGHT WONDER WHY WE PREFER THE PLACE WHERE WE EAT TO
THE PLACE WHERE WE READ. THE ARGUMENT, I SUPPOSE,
MIGHT BE--NOT THAT WE ARE WORSHIPPING THE GOD OF OUR
BELLY--BUT RATHER THAT WE FRIARS NEED TO BEGIN WITH
BASICS. THE FAMILY THAT CAN EAT TOGETHER IN PEACE
MIGHT ONE DAY LEARN TO STUDY TOGETHER AND PRAY TOGETHER.
DEUS MEUS ET OMNIA WAS FRANCIS OF ASSISI'S SAYING--
"MY GOD AND MY ALL." IF YOU LEARN TO GIVE GOD EVERYTHING--
THE GOOD AND THE BAD--AT LAST YOU MIGHT LEARN TO GIVE
HIM THE BEST.

~~AND~~ THAT IS WHY WE LOOK TO YOU, MY BROTHER
JESUITS--THE FRANCISCANS, AND THE WHOLE CHURCH AS WELL.
WE HAVE ALWAYS LOOKED TO YOU TO SHOW US THE WAY. TO
GOD, THE BEST.

TO GIVE GOD THE BEST--IS NOT A LESSON TAUGHT BY
THE SMUG AND SELF SUFFICIENT, THE ARROGANT AND CONTEMPTUOUS.
YOU KNOW THE HIDDEN SECRET OF EXCELLENCE--THAT ONCE
DAVID THE KING SPOKE ABOUT WHEN HE BEHELD THE GIFTS
OF HIS PEOPLE FOR THE TEMPLE: "WHO AM I AND WHO ARE
MY PEOPLE THAT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO GIVE AS GENEROUSLY

AS THIS? FOR ALL THINGS COME FROM YOU, AND FROM YOUR OWN HAND WE HAVE GIVEN BACK TO YOU!" [1 CHRON. 29:14] --INDEED, THE SECRET OF GIVING GOD THE BEST--IS IN THE KNOWLEDGE OF WHO IS THE BEST, AND WHO IS THE SOURCE OF ALL THAT IS BEST. "ALL THINGS COME FROM YOU, OH GOD--AND FROM YOUR OWN HAND WE GIVE BACK TO YOU." IN THE SPIRIT OF DEUTERONOMY, YOU BRING YOUR GIFTS BEFORE THE LORD, THE FRUIT OF YOUR LABOR, SO MUCH LOVE AND GENEROSITY--NOT AS A PROUD BOAST, BUT IN HUMBLE GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S MAGNIFICENT BOUNTY TO HUMAN BEINGS. YOUR GENEROSITY IS A POWERFUL TESTIMONY OF YOUR HOPE FOR SINFUL MAN. LOOK WHAT WE CAN ACCOMPLISH WHEN WE SET OUR HEARTS ON SERVING GOD, SERVING LIFE AND COMMITTING OURSELVES TO THE GOD-GIVEN HUMAN POTENTIAL FOR GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. OH, LORD--PROSPER THE WORK OF OUR HANDS! AD MAJOREM DEI GLORIAM!

THIS SECRET OF GIVING GOD THE BEST IS THE HIDDEN TRUTH OF GOD'S WORD--DEEP IN THE HUMAN HEART, WHICH YOU PLUMB, LIKE JESUIT GOLD. YOU FIND IT IN THE MIDST OF PEOPLE AND THEIR YOUNG--HUNGERING FOR TRUTH, EAGERLY LONGING TO BE SET FREE FROM IGNORANCE AND PREJUDICE AND HATE. THIS IS THE WORD ST. PAUL TELLS US ABOUT, THAT IS SO VERY NEAR TO US, EMPOWERING US TO GROW TO FULL MANHOOD IN CHRIST, MEMBER TO MEMBER--ONE BODY GROWN TO THE FULL STATURE OF CHRIST ALIVE IN THE WORLD.

THE TEMPTATION OF THE DESERT IS OF COURSE OUR TEMPTATION AS WELL: "COMMAND THAT THESE STONES BE MADE

INTO BREAD!"--THE BREAD OF OUR OWN CONSUMPTION, OUR OWN PRIVATE AND EXCLUSIVE GAIN, OUR OWN BENEFIT. THE TEMPTER WHISPERS: LET US BE FORGETFUL THAT WHAT WE HAVE IS A GIFT, AND TAKE IT FOR GRANTED, ASSUME IT IS OURS BY RIGHT, AND GROW GREEDY FOR STILL MORE. LET US TAKE HISTORY INTO OUR OWN HANDS AND USE THE FINE JESUIT EDUCATION WE HAVE TO BUILD UP "ALL THE KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD IN THEIR MAGNIFICENCE." THE TEMPTER SPEAKS TO US IN THE DESERT AS ONCE HE SPOKE TO CHRIST.

BUT THIS BUILDING IS NOT THE TEMPLE OF THE HOLY CITY, NOR IS ALL THE POWER, HUMAN EXPERTISE, SKILL, LEARNING, LOYALTY AND COMMITMENT GATHERED TOGETHER IN THIS ROOM --ALL THIS IS NOT "THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD IN THEIR MAGNIFICENCE." NO--THIS IS ONLY A BUILDING, IN ITSELF--ONLY A BUILDING FOR BOOKS. AND YOU ARE ONLY MORTAL MEN AND WOMEN--AND THIS IS A PLACE FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND CHILDREN YET TO BE BORN. ALL THESE THINGS ARE SHADOWS AND SIGNS OF BLESSINGS YET TO COME.

"NOT BY BREAD ALONE IS MAN TO LIVE"--THE WORD TELLS US TODAY--AND FAITH TEACHES US IN THESE SIGNS OF YOUR LOVING GENEROSITY. "HE BROUGHT US OUT OF EGYPT WITH HIS STRONG HAND AND OUTSTRETCHED ARM... AND HE GAVE US THIS LAND FLOWING WITH MILK AND HONEY." THIS IS THE SUBSTANCE OF YOUR GRATEFUL PRESENCE AND PRAYER TODAY,

INDEED, AS ST. PAUL TEACHES US--THE WORD IS VERY NEAR TO US TODAY--IN THE LIBRARY BOOKS LOVINGLY GATHERED, IN THE WISE PLANNING AND ENTHUSIASTIC DEDICATION

OF LOYAL SONS AND DAUGHTERS, FRIENDS OF ST. IGNATIUS,
THE WORD IS NEAR US AS WE GATHER AROUND THE TABLE
OF THE LORD WITH THE NOBLE SONS OF ST. IGNATIUS, THE
SOCIETY OF JESUS--IN THE GIFT OF BREAD BROKEN AND
SPIRIT SHARED IN GRATEFUL MEMORY AROUND THIS ALTAR.
MAY THE LIGHT YOU CAST DISPEL ANY DARKNESS, THE SEED
YOU SOW REAP A BOUNTEOUS HARVEST, THE LIVES YOU LIVE
AND THE HOPE YOU GIVE GROW STRONG AND BRIGHT IN YEARS
OF HEARTS AND MILES OF LOVE.

Amen!!

URBAN REGION CYO: YOUTH GATHERING CLOSING

23 FEBRUARY 1986

2ND SUNDAY OF LENT

GEN 15: 5-12; 15-17

PHIL. 3: 17--4:1

LUKE 9: 28-36

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS--ON THE 28TH OF JANUARY
ALL OF AMERICA SAT GLUED TO THEIR TELEVISION SETS,
DAZED AND DISBELIEVING. SEVEN BEAUTIFUL, BRAVE YOUNG
AMERICANS ON THEIR WAY INTO SPACE WERE DESTROYED IN
A SPLIT SECOND, IN A TERRIBLE EXPLOSIONG. A FRIEND
OF MINE WROTE A POEM TO REMEMBER THAT DAY.

CHALLENGER: FOR CHRISTA MCAULIFFE

THE TEACHER CHALKED UP YESTERDAY
IN TIMELESS MILES OF YOUTH
BUT SUNRISE BROKE APART THE DAY
IN SHOWERS OF ENDLESS TRUTH ,

BY CHILDREN BOLTED TO THE EARTH
IN VIDEOED SURPRISE,
WE CAUGHT THE DUST OF VAPORED DAYS
IN POOLS OF ENDLESS WHYS.

THE POWDER OF OUR EAGER LIGHT
FLOATS PLUMBLESS TO THE DEEP--
THE DUST GROUND FINE FROM YESTERDAY
IN CLOUDS WE CANNOT KEEP.

SO SLEEPLESS LIES OUR MEMORY
UNDYING FALLS THE SUN.
THE ANGELS GATHER UP OUR WINGS
WHICH ICARUS HAD WON.

"TIMELESS MILES OF YOUTH"--WHAT IS IT TO BE
YOUNG? "SHOWERS OF ENDLESS TRUTH...POOLS OF ENDLESS
WHYS..." YOUTH IS NATURE'S COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE.

YOUTH IS NATURE'S PROMISE OF LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES.

THAT IS WHY WE ALL FELT THE TRAGEDY OF THE CHALLENGER SO KEENLY--FOR WHAT THE ASTRONAUTS WERE DOING--IS MAKING US ALL YOUNG AGAIN, ALL OF US WERE ADVENTURERS WITH THEM, EAGER TO FACE THE FUTURE, AND ALL OF A SUDDEN IT WAS GONE, OVER WITH. WE ALL FELT DIMINISHED AND CHEATED. SOMETHING OF OUR HEART, OUR SPIRIT, SEEMED IRRETRIEVABLY LOST, AND BETRAYED.

CHRISTA McAULIFFE WAS A GREAT TEACHER BECAUSE IN HER ENTHUSIASM SHE SEEMED PERPETUALLY YOUNG. EVERYTHING WAS ALWAYS FRESH AND NEW, FILLED WITH SURPRISE, DELIGHT AND JOY. SHE MADE US WANT TO BELIEVE IN OURSELVES, BECAUSE SHE BELIEVED SO PASSIONATELY IN THE FUTURE, IN THINGS ALWAYS LEFT TO DO, TO EXPLORE AND BECOME. OUR OWN ASTRONAUT FROM AKRON, DR. JUDITH RESNIK PUT IT THIS WAY: "I WILL NEVER BE OLD." "MILES OF ENDLESS YOUTH... SHOWERS OF ENDLESS TRUTH..."

THESE LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES, THIS COVENANT OF NATURE WITH OUR RACE MAKES THIS PROMISE: THERE WILL BE A FUTURE. THIS IS YOUTH, AND THE PROMISE OF YOUTH, --THIS PROMISE OF THE LIFE TO COME. THIS IS THE GREAT POWER AND STRENGTH OF YOUTH, ^{It is} ~~AND~~ ALSO THE GREATEST SOURCE OF ANGUISH, WHEN HUMAN POTENTIAL IS NOT RECOGNIZED, OR NOT GIVEN OPPORTUNITY OR CHALLENGE. ALL THIS ENERGY, ALL THIS POWER AND PROMISE--NEEDS, DEMANDS THE CHANCE TO GROW, TO EXPLORE, TO MAKE MISTAKES AND TO LEARN.

TO GROW OLD IS SOMETHING ELSE--SAD SOMETIMES, HUMBLING TO BE SURE, BUT GOOD. SOMETIMES AGE IS DESCRIBED AS 'A LOSS OF INNOCENCE,' WHICH REALLY MEANS, THE GAINING OF A SENSE OF LIMIT. WHEN WE "LOSE OUR INNOCENCE" WE REALLY GAIN A SENSE OF SIN OR A SENSE OF LIMIT. WE BECOME AWARE THAT WE CANNOT ACCOMPLISH WHAT WE WANTED TO DO. WE ARE MORTAL AND INCOMPLETE ALWAYS. WE BECOME AWARE OF OUR LACK OF CAPACITY TO ACCOMPLISH THE GOOD WE DESIRE--AND WE ARE HUMBLING TO DISCOVER THE CAPACITY WE HAVE TO BE SMALL-MINDED, PETTY, GREEDY AND SINFUL. EVIL LIES WITHIN OUR OWN HEART, AND IN OUR WILLFUL REFUSAL TO ACCEPT OURSELVES. WE LEARN WHAT YOUTH CANNOT KNOW: EVIL DOES NOT COME FROM THE OUTSIDE, BUT FROM WITHIN THE HEART, FED BY DISAPPOINTED HOPES AND BROKEN DREAMS--THE CAPACITY NOT TO CARE ANYMORE--THIS THE GREATEST TREASON.

TODAY'S LITURGY GIVES US THE YOUTHFUL CHRIST CHALLENGED TO THE CORE OF HIS BEING TO BECOME THE MAN OF DESTINY, THE MAN HE IS CALLED TO BE. JESUS DARES TO PRAY, AND TO SEEK: NOT LIMITLESS POSSIBILITIES, NOT THE ENDLESS FUTURE OF EVER EXPANDING SELF-EXPLORATION AND GRATIFICATION, BUT HIS GOAL IS HIS FATHER'S WILL FOR HIM. JESUS DARES TO PRAY--NOT ALONE--BUT AS A MEMBER OF A FAMILY, IN THE COMMUNITY OF THOSE THE FATHER GAVE TO HIM.

JESUS IS NOT AFRAID TO BE TAUGHT--MOSES AND ELIJAH ARE THE GREAT TEACHERS OF HIS HISTORY, AND JESUS IS NOT

TOO PROUD TO BE INSTRUCTED AND LED BY THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE, THOSE WHO PASS ON THE TRADITION OF HIS PEOPLE. JESUS WAS A LEARNER ALL HIS LIFE, FROM BETHLEHEM AND NAZARETH, CANA OF GALILEE AND CAPERNAUM, FROM ZACHARY AND ELIZABETH AND JOHN THE BAPTIST, FROM JOSEPH AND MARY, SIMEON AND ANNA AND THE TEMPLE DOCTORS, FROM HIS JOURNEYS THROUGH HIS NATIVE LAND, TO JERUSALEM AND THE CROSS.

ST. PAUL TEACHES US TODAY, THAT IT TAKES A SPECIAL KIND OF COURAGE TO LEARN AND TO FOLLOW THE WAYS OF CHRIST. WE HAVE TO SET ASIDE OUR OWN SELF-CENTERED AGENDA, OUR OWN NARROW WANTS AND URGES-- ^{TO} ~~IN~~ LEARN WHAT IT MEANS NOT TO BELONG TO OURSELVES ALONE, BUT TO BELONG TO ANOTHER PERSON, TO BELONG TO CHRIST. WE ARE NOT MADE TO BE ALONE--WE ARE MADE TO BELONG, TO BE A BELONGING PERSON, WITH ATTACHMENTS AND COMMITMENTS. WE ARE MADE FOR OTHERS. WE BELONG TO CHRIST, NOT TO OURSELVES ALONE.

Ⓟ ABRAM LEARNED THAT SECRET LONG BEFORE --WHICH OUR FIRST READING TELLS US TODAY. GOD COMMITS HIMSELF TO US SO THAT HE BELONGS TO US, ~~AND~~ HE INVITES US, AND GIVES US THE POSSIBILITY AND THE POWER, TO BELONG TO HIM ALONE.

THE GIFTS WE HAVE GOD GIVES TO US--BUT WE LEARN THAT SECRET OF WHO WE ARE ONLY WHEN WE FIND THE WAY TO GIVE OURSELVES, ONLY WHEN WE FIND HOW TO BELONG, TO BE A PART OF OTHERS, TO BE A PART OF GOD. WE ARE NOT ALONE, WHETHER WE ARE YOUNG AND FIND OUR FUTURE STRETCHING OUT

"IN MILES OF ENDLESS YOUTH," OR WHETHER OUR YEARS
ARE MANY AND OUR FUTURE SEEMS LIKE "DUST GROUND
FINE FROM YESTERDAY / IN CLOUDS WE CANNOT KEEP,"--
WHAT MAKES US ONE PEOPLE IS THIS: WE ARE NOT ALONE.
WE BELONG TO CHRIST, AND SO, WE BELONG TO ONE ANOTHER.
SO ALSO WE SHARE IN THE SAME POWER OF GOD:

WHO GIVES STRENGTH TO THE WEARY,
AND TO HIM WHO LACKS MIGHT HE INCREASES POWER.
THOUGH YOUTHS GROW WEARY AND TIRED,
AND VIGOROUS YOUNG MEN STUMBLE BADLY,
YET THOSE WHO WAIT FOR THE LORD WILL GAIN
NEW STRENGTH.
THEY WILL MOUNT UP WITH WINGS LIKE EAGLES,
THEY WILL RUN AND NOT GROW TIRED,
THEY WILL WALK AND NOT BECOME WEARY.

[ISAIAH 40: 29-31]

ST. PATRICK CHURCH (WEST PARK)
17 MARCH 1986, 10 A.M.
ST. PATRICK DAY LITURGY

EZEK. 34: 11-16
JOHN 10: 11-16

TODAY THE WHOLE WORLD SEEMS TO BE IRISH! THE BARS FLOW WITH GREEN BEER AND THE HALLS RING OUT WITH THE WILD SONGS AND LILTING AIRS OF IRELAND. BEFORE THE SPRING BARELY SHOWS IN THE AIR, THE GREEN OF SHAMROCKS BURST OUT EVERYWHERE. THE WHOLE WORLD SEEMS TO BE IRISH TODAY. CERTAINLY CLEVELAND.

IT IS STRANGE--AND THEN NOT SO STRANGE--THAT WE CELEBRATE A PEOPLE TODAY, MORE THAN A SAINT. OH I WOULD GET INTO A REAL FIGHT IF I WERE TO SAY ANYTHING QUESTIONING THE AUTHENTICITY OF ST. PATRICK---BUT TRUTH TO TELL, NO ONE REALLY KNOWS VERY MUCH ABOUT THE MAN,--THE SAINT OF HISTORY. WE CELEBRATE, REALLY, NOT WHO ST. PATRICK WAS, BUT WHAT HE MEANS--WHAT HE HAS MEANT AND WHAT HE STILL MEANS TODAY--IN THE HEART OF THE PEOPLE HE LOVED, AND IN THE PEOPLE WHOSE HEART HE STILL IS AND EVER DWELLS...

BUT IF WE CELEBRATE A PEOPLE RATHER THAN A MAN, AND ^{it} WE CELEBRATE A MEANING MORE THAN A HISTORY, IT IS STILL WELL TO CALL TO MIND WHAT IN THE MAN MAKES A PEOPLE, AND WHAT IN THE HISTORY GIVES MEANING TO THE MAN AND TO HIS PEOPLE.

ST. PATRICK BEGAN HIS JOURNEY AND HIS LIFE WITH GOD AS A CAPTIVE, A KIDNAPPED SLAVE BOY IN A FORIEGN LAND, HAVING LOST ALL, UTTERLY ALONE IN A STRANGE LAND, WITHOUT HOME OR ANY POSSESSION. GOD BECAME HIS TRUE TREASURE, RELYING ON GOD ALONE, AND FILLED WITH THE RICHES OF GOD'S

LOVE, HE BRIMMED OVER WITH SPIRITUAL RICHES, AND PREACHED THE GOSPEL OF FREEDOM AND DIVINE LOVE TO THE VERY PEOPLE WHO ENSLAVED HIS BODY BUT WHO COULD NEVER CHAIN HIS SPIRIT. THE MASTERS OF HIS OPPRESSION, HE HIMSELF SET FREE IN CHIRST, AND THE SLAVE BOY BECAME THE GREAT LIBERATOR OF THE IRISH SPIRIT AND THE APOSTLE OF THE ~~WILD AND~~ BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY KNOWN AS "THE LAND OF SAINTS AND SCHOLARS."

HOW LIKE ST. PATRICK IN HIS SPIRITUAL JOURNEY HAS IRELAND EVER BEEN. IRELAND, DOWN THE CENTURIES, ALMOST ALWAYS OPPRESSED AND IN CAPTIVITY, ALMOST ALWAYS IN POLITICAL BONDAGE. BUT ALWAYS THE SPIRIT IS FREE--FOR IRELAND HAS NEVER LOST HER GREATEST TREASURE, HER FAITH IN GOD. IT IS THIS FAITH AND THE BLOOD SHED FOR IT, THAT GIVES BIRTH TO THE FREEDOM OF IRELAND, GENERATION AFTER GENERATION. PATRICK, THE SLAVE BOY--AND IRELAND, THE CAPTIVE LAND--COME TO SET THE PEOPLE FREE WITH THE VERY LOVE OF GOD MADE MANIFEST IN THE FAITH THEY PROUDLY PROFESS IN THE MAN WHO DIED TO MAKE US FREE.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS--SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF IRELAND AND ST. PATRICK--IF IRELAND IS THE HOME OF YOUR HEART, AND ST. PATRICK YOUR SPIRITUAL FATHER--THEN YOU ARE INDEED SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF SLAVES--AND SO AM I. YOU HAVE A PRECIOUS HERITAGE OF FREEDOM--FOR ONLY CHILDREN OF SLAVES CAN CHERISH SO DEEPLY THE SWEETNESS OF FREEDOM--AND THAT PRECIOUS HERITAGE OF YOURS---SO HAVE I! SO HAVE ALL OF

US CHILDREN OF THE TASK-MASTERS' LASH--FROM JACOB'S
 SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN EGYPT UNDER THE CRUEL PERSECUTION
 OF THE PHAROAH, AND ALL THE CHILDREN OF EVERY TYRANNT OF
 HISTORY--TO THE CHILDREN OF IRELAND, SONS AND DAUGHTERS
 OF THE PENAL CODES OF RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION--TO THE
 CHILDREN OF AFRICA AND THE SLAVE BOATS AND SLAVE
 DEALERS, THE JIM CROW LAWS AND THE LYNCH MOBS, AND TO
 THE CHILDREN OF THE FAR EAST, SET ASEA IN BOATS, OR THE
 CHILDREN OF CENTRAL AMERICA HOUNDED BY DEATH SQUADS FROM
 THE RIGHT OR FROM THE LEFT. WE ARE SLAVE-CHILDREN,
 FREEDOM CHILDREN--ALL OF US--BROTHERS AND SISTERS ALL.....

ALL OF US, MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS--FROM EGYPT TO
 IRELAND, FROM AFRICA TO SOUTH EAST ASIA AND CENTRAL
 AMERICA--ALL OF US ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF SLAVES--AND
SO WE WERE ALL SCHOOLED IN THE SPIRIT TO HUNGER FOR FREEDOM
AND TO THIRST FOR JUSTICE, TO LONG FOR GOD OUR LIBERATOR.
 WE KNOW OUR TREASURE. WE KEEP THE FAITH. WE SHALL
 OVERCOME.

THE LOVE OF GOD PREACHED BY THE SLAVE BOY PATRICK--MEANS
FREEDOM! THIS IS THE MEANING OF THE MAN, THIS IS THE
HEART OF THE PEOPLE! FOR GOD'S LOVE MEANS NOTHING AT ALL
 UNLESS IT SPEAKS TO THE HEART: BEHOLD I CREATE YOU THIS
 DAY: I HAVE SET YOU FREE! TO LOVE IS TO SET FREE, AND TO
CLAIM THE LOVE OF GOD IS TO LAY CLAIM TO HUMAN RIGHTS.
 OTHERWISE ST. PATRICK--YES EVEN CHRIST HIMSELF! IS
 INCOMPREHENSIBLE TO US. THIS IS LOVE POUED OUT FOR US:
 THE FREEDOM OF THE SPIRIT WHICH GIVES US THE DIGNITY

WHICH IS OUR BIRTHRIGHT.

TO BE HUMAN IS TO BE SET FREE--THAT IS WHY EZEKIEL IN TODAY'S READING SAYS THAT OUR GOD COMES AS A SHEPHERD, TO GATHER UP HIS SCATTERED, LOST AND HUNGERING AND THIRSTING PEOPLE AS SHEEP INTO ONE FLOCK. I KNOW MY OWN, AND MY OWN KNOW ME, JESUS SAYS IN TODAY'S GOSPEL --AND THERE MUST BE ONE FLOCK AND ONE SHEPHERD, FOR ALL HEAR THE SAME VOICE AND ALL CRY THE SAME PRAYER: LORD SET US FREE.

THIS IS THE VOICE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT--WHICH PATRICK SPOKE ONCE AND STILL SPEAKS TO HIS PEOPLE AND OURS TODAY. THIS IS THE VOICE WHICH ALWAYS ECHOES IN OUR PROPHETS-- JOHN F. KENNEDY AND ROBERT KENNEDY, MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., OSCAR ROMERO, JEAN DONOVAN, AND IN THE HEARTS OF PEOPLE EVERYWHERE SUFFERING IN OPPRESSION AND POLITICAL BONDAGE, IN ECONOMIC DEPRESSION, IN FAMINE AND PESTILENCE, PEOPLE LOST AND HURT, HUNGRY FOR FREEDOM, THIRSTING FOR JUSTICE, LONGING FOR GOD EVERYWHERE.

TODAY INDEED WE ARE ALL IRISH--SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF THE SLAVE BOY WHO SETS HIS PEOPLE FREE!!!!!!

15TH ANNIVERSARY MASS
ERIEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL
19 APRIL 1986, 6:30 P.M.
ST. PETERS CHURCH

4TH SUN. OF EASTER
ACTS 13; 14. 43-52
REV. 7: 9. 14-17
JOHN 10: 27-30

MY DEAR SISTERS OF THE HUMILITY OF MARY, / DEAR TEACHERS, /
STAFF AND STUDENTS OF ERIEVIEW, / BROTHERS AND SISTERS, /
FRIENDS AND GRADUATES OF ERIEVIEW, / PARENTS AND FAMILY: /
TODAY IS AN EXCITING AND HISTORIC MOMENT OF GRACE IN OUR
LIVES AND THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH AT CLEVELAND. WE ARE
GATHERED TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE / THE FIFTEENTH ANNIVERSARY
OF ERIEVIEW HIGH SCHOOL -- YOUR SCHOOL, OUR SCHOOL. YOU
BELONG TO US ALL, AND WE ARE HERE, BECAUSE WE, THE
CHURCH, BELONG TO YOU. WE'VE COME / THIS FAR / BY FAITH!

IT IS EXCITING TO CELEBRATE THIS LITURGY IN ST.
PETER'S CHURCH, HERE IN THE DOWNTOWN OF CLEVELAND, IN
ONE OF THE OLDEST CHURCHES IN OUR CITY. ST. PETER'S WAS
FOUNDED BY GERMAN CATHOLICS / IN 1853!! THEY WOULD BE
PROUD OF YOU TODAY. ~~AND~~ IT IS FITTING THAT WE CELEBRATE
FIFTEEN YEARS IN A PLACE FOUNDED / OVER A HUNDRED THIRTY
YEARS AGO -- BECAUSE THE IMMIGRANT GERMAN PEOPLE WHO LAID
THESE FIRST STONES KNEW VERY WELL WHAT WE CELEBRATE
TODAY. THEY / CAME FAR INDEED / BY FAITH -- AND LAID IN THE
GROUND, NOT STONES, BUT THEIR ENERGY AND THEIR LOVE --
NOT FOR A MATERIAL BUILDING, BUT FOR THE BUILDING UP
OF THE FAITH COMMUNITY, FOR WORSHIP, FOR EDUCATION, FOR
SCHOOLS!

INDEED, WE'VE COME / THIS FAR / BY FAITH!

WHAT IS ANCIENT AND LASTING--THE FAITH RECEIVED--
 IS INDEED EVER AND ALWAYS FRESH AND NEW. JUST AS PAUL
 AND BARNABAS HAD TO LEAVE THE COMFORT AND SECURITY OF
 THEIR HOMELANDS TO CARRY THE GOSPEL, AND WHEN THEY WERE
 REJECTED, TO TAKE TO EVEN MORE DISTANT AND DANGEROUS
 PLACES THE WORD OF GOD, EVEN TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH,
 SO ALSO THE IMMIGRANT EUROPEANS OFTEN HAD TO LEAVE THEIR
 NATIVE PLACES IN MUCH POVERTY AND PERSECUTION, TO FIND THE
 WORD OF GOD'S FREEDOM IN DISTANT PLACES. THE WORD OF
GOD SEEMS ALWAYS TO LEAD TO PILGRIMAGE IN ^{DIFFERENT} STRANGE LANDS.

SO ALSO FIFTEEN YEARS AGO--THERE WAS A LOT OF
 DISLOCATION, OFTEN HURTFUL AND DIFFICULT, HOWEVER
 NECESSARY. JUST LIKE THE GERMANS AND OTHER IMMIGRANTS
 WENT THROUGH PAINFUL LEAVE-TAKINGS, AND FORMER SLAVES
 FLEEING OPPRESSIVE POVERTY AND OPPRESSION, CAME SEEKING
 FREEDOM AND THE DECENCY OF HUMAN DIGNITY--FOLLOWING IN
 THEIR BRAVE FOOTSTEPS, WALKING IN THEIR SHADOWS, THE
 FOUNDERS OF ERIEVIEW MADE THEIR SACRIFICES FOR THE LIBERTY
 AND GRACE WE CELEBRATE TODAY.

IT WAS NOT EASY TO CLOSE THE DOORS OF ST. PETER
 HIGH SCHOOL, LOURDES ACADEMY AND ST. STEPHEN'S HIGH
 SCHOOL--TO LEAVE BEHIND THE BELOVED AND FAMILIAR, AND TO
 TAKE UP A NEW RESIDENCE, IN INSECURITY AND DOUBT--IN
 WHAT NO DOUBT COULD HAVE BEEN EXPERIENCED AS A FOREIGN
 AND EVEN A HOSTILE LAND.

BUT LIKE THE MIGHTY CROWD OF MANY NATIONS AND RACES
 OF OUR SECOND READING TODAY, YOU ARE "THOSE WHO HAVE

SURVIVED THE GREAT PERIOD OF TRIAL. YOU HAVE WASHED YOUR ROBES AND MADE THEM WHITE IN THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB."

WE'VE COME/THIS FAR/BY FAITH. YOU ADOPT THIS BELOVED SPIRITUAL AS YOUR MOTTO, IN WITNESS OF THE SAME FAITH AND VICTORY CELEBRATED BY YOUR BLACK BROTHERS AND SISTERS EVERYWHERE. YOU REJOICE IN THE FAITH OF YOUR COURAGEOUS ANCESTORS WHO SUFFERED SO MUCH WITH CHRIST FOR YOU AND ME--THAT WE MIGHT HAVE THE BLESSINGS OF FREEDOM THAT THEY SO HOPED FOR AND LONGED FOR, LIVED FOR AND EVEN DIED FOR, FOR OUR SAKES.

ERIEVIEW--LIKE THIS BEAUTIFUL OLD SPIRITUAL, IS AN ACT OF FAITH. THE SISTERS OF THE HUMILITY OF MARY AND FELLOW FACULTY, STAFF AND STUDENTS, "HAVE COME THIS FAR BY FAITH, LEANING ON THE LORD." YOU "WALK THE WALK"--AS THE SAYING GOES, PUTTING YOUR LIVES DOWN IN PLACE OF MERE WORDS. FOR THIS IS YOUR WITNESS. AS THE GOSPEL SAYS, YOU HEAR THE WORDS OF CHRIST AND DEMONSTRATE THAT FAITH BY FOLLOWING HIS VOICE. A VOICE CRIES. A VOICE CHALLENGES. A VOICE CALLS FOR HELP. IN THE MIDST OF A WORLD OF VIOLENCE AND OPPRESSION, YOU BRING LOVE. IN THE MIDST OF DESPAIR AND URBAN DECAY, YOU BRING THE HOPE OF PRACTICAL PLANS OF RECONSTRUCTION AND NEW LIFE. TO A CULTURE BUILT UPON ABUSIVE AND UNCARING CASUAL RELATIONSHIPS, DRUGS, ALCOHOL AND INFIDELITY--YOU BRING CARE AND COMMITMENT, HUMAN DECENCY AND DIGNITY.

INDEED, WE'VE COME/THIS FAR/ BY FAITH ! !

FIFTEEN YEARS IS NOT A LONG TIME--IF YOU LOOK AT DINOSAUR BONES, HALLEY'S COMET, HISTORY BOOKS, MUSEUMS, OR EVEN THE WALLS OF THIS CHURCH OF ST. PETERS. BUT THE YEARS WE CELEBRATE ARE NOT MEASURED BY DAYS AND MONTHS, DECADES AND AGES THAT CALANDERS, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL SYSTEMS LOVE TO WEIGH AND ASSESS. WE'VE COME /THIS FAR/ BY FAITH--AND THE FAITH THAT IS ETERNAL IS AS SMALL AS A MUSTARD SEED, AS FRAGILE AS BEGINNINGS OF SPRING FLOWERS, AS MIGHTY AND INDESTRUCTABLE AS MARTYR'S BLOOD, THE WIDOW'S COPPER COINS, OR THE TENTATIVE HOPE OR TEARS IN THE EYES OF A LITTLE GIRL. YOU HAVE FOUND THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE.

WE'VE COME /THIS FAR/ BY FAITH . . .

Jn 10, 11-18

52 FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER **G**

READING I

Acts 13, 14. 43-52

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

Many became believers.

Paul and Barnabas travelled on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. On the sabbath day they entered the synagogue and sat down. Many Jews and devout Jewish converts became their followers and they spoke to them and urged them to hold fast to the grace of God.

The following sabbath, almost the entire city gathered to hear the word of God. When the Jews saw the crowds, they became very jealous and countered with violent abuse whatever Paul said. Paul and Barnabas spoke out fearlessly, nonetheless: "The word of God has to be declared to you first of all; but since you reject it and thus convict yourselves as unworthy of everlasting life, we now turn to the Gentiles. For thus were we instructed by the Lord: 'I have made you a light to the nations, a means of salvation to the ends of the earth.'" The Gentiles were delighted when they heard this and responded to the word of the Lord with praise. All who were destined for life everlasting believed in it. Thus the word of the Lord was carried throughout that area.

But some of the Jews stirred up their influential women sympathizers and the leading men of the town, and in that way got a persecution started against Paul and Barnabas. The Jews finally expelled them from their territory. So the two shook the dust from their feet in protest and went on to Iconium. Their disciples knew only how to be filled with joy and the Holy Spirit.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 100, 1-2. 3. 5

R. (3) We are his people:
the sheep of his flock.

Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;
serve the Lord with gladness;
come before him with joyful song.

R. We are his people:
the sheep of his flock.

Know that the Lord is God;

he made us, his we are;

his people, the flock he tends.

R. We are his people:
the sheep of his flock.

The Lord is good:

his kindness endures forever,
and his faithfulness, to all generations.

R. We are his people:
the sheep of his flock.

R. Or: Alleluia.

READING II

Rv 7, 9. 14-17

A reading from the book of Revelation

The Lamb who is at the throne will be their shepherd and will lead them to springs of living water.

I, John, saw before me a huge crowd which no one could count from every nation and race, people and tongue. They stood before the throne and the Lamb, dressed in long white robes and holding palm branches in their hands.

Then one of the elders said to me: "These are the ones who have survived the great period of trial; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

"It was this that brought them before God's throne:

day and night they minister to him in his temple;

he who sits on the throne will give them shelter.

Never again shall they know hunger or thirst, nor shall the sun or its heat beat down on them,

for the Lamb on the throne will shepherd them.

He will lead them to springs of life-giving water,

and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

This is the Word of the Lord.

GOSPEL

Jn 10, 27-30

Alleluia Jn 10, 14

R. Alleluia. I am the good shepherd, says the Lord;

I know my sheep, and mine know me.
R. Alleluia.

✠ A reading from the holy gospel according to John

I give my sheep eternal life.

Jesus said:

"My sheep hear my voice.

I know them,
and they follow me.

I give them eternal life,
and they shall never perish.

No one shall snatch them out of my hand.
My Father is greater than all, in what he has given me,

and there is no snatching out of his hand.
The Father and I are one."

This is the gospel of the Lord.

53 FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER **A**

READING I

Acts 6, 1-7

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles

They elected seven men filled with the Spirit and wisdom.

In those days, as the number of disciples grew, the ones who spoke Greek complained that their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food, as compared with the widows of those who spoke Hebrew. The Twelve assembled the community of the disciples and said, "It is not right for us to neglect the word of God in order to wait on the tables. Look around among your own number, brothers, for seven men acknowledged to be deeply spiritual and prudent, and we shall appoint them to this task. This will permit us to concentrate on prayer and the ministry of the word." The proposal was unanimously accepted by the community. Following this they selected Stephen, a man filled with faith and a Holy Spirit; Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolaus of Antioch,

Please complete this form and return it at least two weeks prior to the Bishop's visit to: ^{1/14-86}
JEAN M. SWATEL
Secretary for Bishop James P. Lyke, O.F.M., Ph.D.
The Catholic Center
1031 Superior Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114 (696-6526, Ext. 264, 265)

LITURGICAL SCHEME FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE EUCHARIST

WE'VE COME THIS FAR BY FAITH

GENERAL INFORMATION

Occasion 15th Anniversary Mass - beginning of interview Catholic
Date of Celebration April 19, 1986 Time 6:30 pm Liturgical Color white
Place St. Peter's Church

Contact Person Sr. Jo Marie Chircosniak HM Phone 861-3750

Address 1736 Superior

City/Zip Cleve. 44114

Presider Bishop Lyke OFM Master of Ceremony Fr. Lou Miola - ~~gambly~~

Deacon (s) None

Readers 2 Faculty members Cantor None

Number of Priest Concelebrants 5

Will an Honor Guard (e.g., Knights of Columbus, Knights of Peter Claver) be participating? No If yes, how many? —

Will INCENSE be used? No When? —

Are you planning a procession at the Preparation of the Gifts? Yes

If yes, how many participants. 5

Are you using any symbolic gifts? (list) no

Is the Eucharist to be distributed under both species? No

If there are not enough concelebrants, will you provide Eucharistic Ministers? —

How many? —

(OVER)

SCRIPTURAL CITATIONS

Readings of the Secondary Liturgy

First Reading *Act 13:14, 43-52*

Second Reading *Rom 7:9, 14-17*

Gospel *John 10: 27-30*

Notes

1. Is there anything regarding this occasion about which the Bishop should be apprised (e.g., historical significance)? Please indicate.

15th anniversary of the beginning of Inverew. Theme of Liturgy is "We're Come Plus for by Faith" (we enclosed article for some background)

2. Would you like the Bishop to give particular attention to some point in his homily (e.g., the generosity of the people for charitable cause)? If so, explain why. (Use additional sheets, if necessary.)

A commitment to university teaching of both the U.M. community and the Diocese

3. If this is a Liturgy of Confirmation, please give the number to be confirmed:

Youth _____ Adults _____

not applicable

We've Come This Far By Faith! Erieview Celebrates 15 Years

"Something special in the heart of Cleveland" is the motto for an extraordinary diocesan high school staffed by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary and lay men and women. Celebrating fifteen years in 1986, the theme for Erieview Catholic High School's anniversary is, "We've come this far by faith."

Established in 1971, Erieview Catholic High School was a merger of St. Peter High School, Lourdes Academy and St. Stephen High School. Because of its location, 1736 Superior Avenue, the name was chosen to signify the support of the Diocese of Cleveland for urban development efforts.

The downtown location provides unique opportunities to emphasize the school's philosophy: "The educational process is not confined to a classroom; it is a lifetime activity, a continuing process. Everything in life is a potential learning experience."

The hands-on approach to religious, academic and social growth begins at the top at Erieview. Sister Mary Rita Crookston, principal, makes time to



Erieview Students Celebrate Anniversary

teach an English Skills class, in spite of her many duties as an administrator. Enthusiastic about the school, she calls her job "a ministry of teaching to equip kids with the skills and tools they need to change their lives in a very significant way."

Erieview has had three National Merit Scholars and boasts of three medical doctors and twelve lawyers who are graduates. Three-fourths of all juniors and seniors hold after school jobs, most in downtown businesses.

Twenty students each year are the recipients of a very special scholarship offered by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary. All twenty must meet the strict criteria set forth by a Selection Committee composed of parents, faculty and H.M. sisters. Only a part of the criteria is financial need. Of this year's scholarship winners, Assistant Principal Sister Cathleen Walsh explained that eighteen of the girls would not otherwise have been able to attend school. Happily, those students have turned out to be among the most "creative kids" at Erieview.

"We've come this far by faith" is also the theme of a book written by the class of 1987 in celebration of the anniversary. Entitled *Prayers from the City*, the book offers an inside view of teenagers' reflections on life, their future and their relationship with God.

A special celebration for students, parents, graduates and friends of Erieview Catholic High School will be held at the school on April 19th.

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Established in 1971, Erieview Catholic High School was a merger of St. Peter High School, Lourdes Academy and St. Stephen High School. Because of its location, 1736 Superior Avenue, the name was chosen to signify the support of the Diocese of Cleveland for urban development efforts.

The downtown location provides unique opportunities to emphasize the school's philosophy: "The educational process is not confined to a classroom; it is a lifetime activity, a continuing process. Everything in life is a potential learning experience."

The hands-on approach to religious, academic and social growth begins at the top at Erieview. Sister Mary Rita Crookston, principal, makes time to



Erieview Students Celebrate Anniversary

teach an English Skills class, in spite of her many duties as an administrator. Enthusiastic about the school, she calls her job "a ministry of teaching to equip kids with the skills and tools they need to change their lives in a very significant way."

Erieview has had three National Merit Scholars and boasts of three medical doctors and twelve lawyers who are graduates. Three-fourths of all juniors and seniors hold after school jobs, most in downtown businesses.

Twenty students each year are the recipients of a very special scholarship offered by the Sisters of the Humility of Mary. All twenty must meet the strict criteria set forth by a Selection Committee composed of parents, faculty and H.M. sisters. Only a part of the criteria is financial need. Of this year's scholarship winners, Assistant Principal Sister Cathleen Walsh explained that eighteen of the girls would not otherwise have been able to attend school. Happily, those students have turned out to be among the most "creative kids" at Erieview.

"We've come this far by faith" is also the theme of a book written by the class of 1987 in celebration of the anniversary. Entitled *Prayers from the City*, the book offers an inside view of teenagers' reflections on life, their future and their relationship with God.

A special celebration for students, parents, graduates and friends of Erieview Catholic High School will be held at the school on April 19th.

ASCENSION SCHOOL: FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY
1 MAY 1986

Is. 63: 7-9
COL. 3: 12-17
MATT. 7: 7-11

DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS -- FORTY YEARS IS A VERY LONG TIME. A LOT OF YOU--YOUR MOMS AND DADS WEREN'T EVEN BORN THEN, FORTY YEARS AGO. HARRY S. TRUMAN WAS PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES. WORLD WAR II WAS JUST OVER A SHORT WHILE. AN ICE CREAM CONE COST A NICKLE, AND YOU COULD SEE A MOVIE ON A SATURDAY AFTERNOON--COMPLETE WITH NEWSREELS AND A CARTOON, FOR A DIME. POPE PIUS XII WAS THE POPE, THE MASS WAS IN LATIN, AND BOYS AND GIRLS SAT ON DIFFERENT SIDES IN THE CHURCH FOR SUNDAY MASS USUALLY. YOU SAT WITH YOUR OWN CLASS, WITH THE SISTER WHO TAUGHT YOU, AND YOU BETTER NOT MAKE ANY NOISE OR TURN AROUND OR YOU WERE IN BIG TROUBLE. GIRLS WORE SKIRTS THAT CAME DOWN HALF WAY BETWEEN THEIR KNEES AND ANKLES, AND THEY WORE BOBBY SOX AND WHITE AND BLACK SHOES, AND BOYS WORE KNICKERS WHICH WERE KIND OF BAGGY PANTS THAT CAME JUST BELOW THE KNEES WITH ELASTIC, AND WORE LONG STOCKINGS THAT HAD TO BE HELD UP WITH RUBBER BANDS OR GARTERS, AND YOU USUALLY HAD SUSPENDERS INSTEAD OF A BELT. YOU HAD TO WEAR THOSE THINGS UNTIL YOU GOT INTO EIGHTH GRADE OR HIGH SCHOOL. EVERYTHING YOU WORE PRACTICALLY HAD TO BE IRONED, AND CLOTHES WERE WASHED IN WASH MACHINES WITH A BIG CHURN INSIDE, AND HAD TO GO THROUGH A BIG HARD RUBBER OR WOODEN WRINGER AND BE HUNG OUT WITH WOODEN CLOTHESPINS ON LONG LINES IN THE BACK YARD IN THE WARM WEATHER, OR IN THE BASEMENT IN THE WINTER TIME. BOYS PLAYED MARBLES AND TRADED COLORED CARDS OF BASEBALL STARS THAT YOU GOT WITH BUBBLE GUM, AND GIRLS PLAYED JACKS OR HOP-SCOTCH.

AND NO ONE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD HAD EVEN SEEN A TELEVISION SET, THOUGH PEOPLE WERE TALKING ABOUT THEM. MOSTLY YOU LISTENED TO GREAT BIG WOODEN RADIOS IN THE LIVING ROOM-- TO PROGRAMS LIKE JACK BENNY, AMOS AND ANDY, THE SHADOW KNOWS, AND TRACER OF LOST PERSONS. EACH SHOW LASTED ABOUT A HALF HOUR, AND THEY WENT ALL SUNDAY AFTERNOON.

IT WAS A LONG TIME AGO, FORTY YEARS AGO. IT IS FUN TO REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS LIKE BACK THEN, IF YOU ARE OLD ENOUGH TO REMEMBER. AND IF YOU AREN'T OLD ENOUGH, MAYBE IT IS FUN TO IMAGINE WHAT IT WAS LIKE. WE LIKE TO DO THAT SORT OF THING--REMEMBER OR IMAGINE THE PAST--MAYBE EVEN TO PRETEND THAT WE WERE THERE. REMEMBER THAT MOVIE: "BACK TO THE FUTURE"--WHERE MICHAEL FOX GOT TO GO BACK IN A TIME MACHINE TO THE DAYS HIS OWN PARENTS WERE KIDS?

WHY ARE WE SO FASCINATED BY THE PAST? WHY DO WE LOVE TO LISTEN TO OLD FOLKS TELL US ABOUT WHAT IT WAS LIKE WHEN WE WERE BABIES--OR WHAT IT USED TO BE LIKE WHEN THEY WERE KIDS? IT IS BECAUSE THE PAST HAS SO MUCH TO TEACH US--WE COME FROM THE PAST; BEFORE WE WERE BORN, THE WORLD WAS BEING PREPARED TO RECEIVE US. GOD ALWAYS HAD US IN MIND, AND TREMENDOUS AND GOOD THINGS WERE BEING PREPARED FOR US: IDEAS WERE BEING FORMED, HOMES AND FAMILIES WERE GETTING ESTABLISHED-- ALL WAS BEING MADE READY FOR US.

WE CAN SEE WHERE WE CAME FROM--AND THAT IS THE BEGINNING OF OUR BEST IDEAS ABOUT WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE ARE GOING TO BECOME. IT IS A TERRIBLE THING TO HAVE NO HISTORY AT ALL.

WITHOUT A HISTORY IT IS LIKE WE JUST HAPPENED, LIKE AN ACCIDENT. HISTORY GIVES US OUR PLAN: A LOVING DESIGN, A HOME, A CULTURE, A LANGUAGE, A PLACE WHERE WE BELONG, A PEOPLE TO WHOM WE BELONG --AS CHILDREN OF GOD, NO LONGER STRANGERS AND ORPHANS--TO ONE ANOTHER AND TO GOD.

TO SHARE A HISTORY HELPS US BELONG TO ONE ANOTHER, AS ONE FAMILY. IT HELPS US SHARE A COMMON STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM AND JUSTICE FOR ALL. WHEN WE REMEMBER HOW HARD OUR PARENTS HAD TO WORK, THE GREAT SACRIFICES OUR GRANDPARENTS OR GREAT GRANDPARENTS HAD TO MAKE, TO BUILD A HOUSE OR START A BUSINESS, OR MAKE A LIVING, THEN WE ARE GRATEFUL TO THEM AND GOD FOR PROVIDING SO WELL FOR US TODAY. AND WE HONOR THE MEMORY OF THOSE WHO SACRIFICED SO MUCH TO GIVE US FREEDOM AND ALL THE GOOD THINGS WE HAVE--WHEN WE SHARE TODAY IN CARING ABOUT OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO ARE NOT FREE, WHO DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT, WHO HAVE NO FINE SCHOOL TO GO TO, NOR AN OPPORTUNITY TO GROW UP STRONG AND HEALTHY, WITH A GOOD EDUCATION AND JOBS AND PLACES TO LIVE AND HAVE FAMILIES.

WE REMEMBER THE STRUGGLES OF THE PAST AND HONOR OUR OWN BRAVE ANCESTORS BEST WHEN WE JOIN OUR SUFFERING AND OPPRESSED BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN THEIR STRUGGLES FOR JUSTICE AND FREEDOM. WE ARE THEN TRULY SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF OUR HEROIC MOTHERS AND FATHERS AND GRANDPARENTS. WE ARE THEN TRUE AMERICANS AND TRUE CATHOLICS AND TRUE FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST. BECAUSE THEN WE REMEMBER OUR PAST

NOT WITH JUST WORDS OR DAYDREAMS--WE REMEMBER WITH TRUE DEEDS OF FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE.

"ASK AND IT SHALL BE GIVEN TO YOU," THIS IS WHAT THE GOSPEL TELLS US TODAY. WE WHO HAVE RECEIVED SO VERY MUCH ALL OUR LIVES, KNOW THAT THIS IS TRUE. GOD HAS BEEN WITH US, AS ISAIAH REMINDS US IN THE FIRST READING. AND WITH THE COLLOSSIAN PEOPLE WE WILL BE TRUE TO THE BLESSINGS OF OUR INHERITANCE, WHEN WE PUT ON THE HEART OF COMPASSION, AND LEARN THE WAYS OF FORGIVENESS AND PEACE.

THE PAST IS ALSO --VERY SADLY--A STORY OF VIOLENCE, INJUSTICE AND HATRED: BETWEEN RICH AND POOR, SLAVES AND MASTERS, BLACK AND WHITE, CATHOLICS, PROTESTANTS, AND JEWS-- SO MUCH DIVISION, SO MUCH BLOOD SHED--WHERE WILL IT ALL END? LET IT BE HERE AND NOW. LET IT BE TODAY, LET IT BEGIN WITH US., AS WE LEARN FROM OUR PAST AND RECEIVE THE BLESSINGS OF THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE US. LET US BE TRUE TO THEIR MEMORY IN GRATITUDE AND LOVE, AND HONOR THEM BEST BY WORKING ALL OUR DAYS FOR TOLERANCE, RESPECT FOR LIFE AND FOR OTHERS, AND POSITIVE PRACTICAL ACTION FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE, ALONG WITH OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO LONG TO BE FREE.

FORTY YEARS IS A LONG TIME--BUT THE ETERNAL MERCIES OF GOD ARE GREATER BEYOND ANY COMPARISON AND SO ARE OUR HEARTS TODAY, FILLED WITH GRATITUDE AND WITH THE GRACE OF GOD. MAY THAT PEACE DWELL RICHLY IN YOUR HEARTS TODAY AND ALWAYS.

Jan. 15: 12-17
Auto 15: 22-31

5-2-86

Pittsburg
Black Cath Min.

Perfection

Lady went to friend to police station to find lost
Lusband

Description

6' 3",	5' 4"
MUSCULAR Build / SORT, SUPER-CURLY hair	FAT
SMOOTH ^{PRETTY DEEP BROWN} DARK SKIN	ROUGH, BUMPY
DEEP, PIERCING BLACK EYES	BUBBLE EYES, in hair
Polite — from Betty Dee Williams	

Who wants him back! —

I In essentials ——— unity
In non-essentials ——— diversity
In all things ——— LOVE

II Acts — Laws imposed w/ —
① Strengthen FAMILY BOND
② Remove BARRIERS to true Fellowship

III Decisions are made
A. Knowledge of what is essential
B. Freedom in those areas that are NOT
C. Communication to help discuss the dif between
the two
D. Love in all things.

IV Christ

Servants — " are taken into the confidence & the matter
of shared life & love

COMMISSIONING EUCHARIST MINISTERS
PADUA HIGH SCHOOL
ASCENSION: 8 MAY 1986

ACTS 1: 1-11
EPH. 1: 17-23
LUKE 24:46-53 (C)

BROTHERS AND SISTERS--FELLOW PADUANS!--TO BE AT PADUA ON ASCENSION THURSDAY HAS A SPECIAL MEANING FOR ME! "MEN OF GALILEE," THE MEN DRESSED IN WHITE CRIED OUT TO THE APOSTLES, "WHY ARE YOU GAZING UP INTO THE SKIES?" HOMEBODIES--COUNTRY BOYS--THIS IS WHAT THIS GREETING MEANT: "MEN OF GALILLEE" WAS A KIND OF AFFECTIONATE, HUMOROUS GREETING, CALLING TO MIND THAT THESE APOSTLES REALLY WERE "COUNTRY BOYS", "HOME BOYS"--PRETTY WET BEHIND THE EARS, PRETTY UNTRIED AND UNTESTED.

STANDING HERE WITH THE PEOPLE OF PADUA BRINGS BACK LOTS OF MEMORIES FOR ME. TWENTY YEARS AGO, I WAS HERE--A VERY FRESH AND GREEN BRAND NEW FRANCISCAN PRIEST, JUST STARTING OUT, VERY UNTRIED AND UNTESTED IN THE MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH. PADUA BROKE ME IN! THIS IS WHERE I STARTED. LIKE THE COUNTRY BOYS OF GALILEE--I DID A LOT OF STARING UP INTO THE SKIES TOO--WONDERING WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT. PADUA WAS A GOOD PLACE TO START, LIKE JERUSALEM MUST HAVE BEEN. AND IT STILL IS.

TWENTY YEARS HAVE GONE BY FOR ME--BUT FOR ALL THE CHANGES, IT IS STILL BEGINNING. THAT IS THE MESSAGE OF THE FEAST WE CELEBRATE AND THE MYSTERY THAT WE SHARE THIS DAY WITH ONE ANOTHER. WITH THE APOSTLES, THOSE COUNTRY BOYS, WE ARE HERE--IN TRAVELLING TIMES.

TIMES OF TRANSITION, TIMES OF CHANGE, OF GROWING UP--

THAT IS WHAT THE EDUCATORS AND THE PSYCHOLOGISTS MIGHT CALL THESE DAYS. BUT FOR US MEN AND WOMEN OF PADUA, THESE ARE TRAVELLING TIMES.

SOMETHING IN US ALWAYS WANTS TO STOP. WE GET OUT OF BREATH. WE GET TIRED. WE WISH IT WAS ALL OVER WITH. WE WOULD LIKE TO CALL IT QUILTS. STUDYING IS HARD, MEETING NEW PEOPLE IS SOMETIMES PAINFUL, DOING SOMETHING YOU HAVE NEVER DONE BEFORE, OR TRYING OUT SOME ACTIVITY THAT YOU ARE NOT VERY GOOD AT, OR DON'T FEEL A LOT OF CONFIDENCE ABOUT--THESE THINGS ARE HARD. IT IS EASIER TO BACK OUT, GIVE UP, SIT BACK AND LET SOMEONE ELSE DO IT. OR PRETEND IT ISN'T VERY IMPORTANT--ALL THIS LEARNING, CHANGING, GROWING UP.

STAYING RIGHT WHERE WE ARE AND NOT MOVING OR CHANGING IS ALWAYS EASIER THAN GROWING. STAYING PUT IS EASIER THAN TRAVELLING. BUT THESE ARE TRAVELLING TIMES AND WE PADUANS ARE A JOURNEY PEOPLE. WE ARE NOT AN ARRIVED PEOPLE--BUT WE ARE GETTING THERE!

THE EUCHARIST THAT WE CELEBRATE AND THE MINISTRY THAT WE COMMISSION TODAY IS NOT AN ARRIVAL MEAL NOR A SEDENTARY, SIT-DOWN JOB. EUCHARIST--LIKE THE PEOPLE IT FEEDS, IS A TRAVELLING BREAD, BREAD FOR THE JOURNEY, BREAD OF THE POOR.

THE CEREMONY OF COMMISSIONING CALLS YOU TO BE "DEVOTED TO THE MYSTERY WHICH SIGNIFIES THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH." WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? AS WE SHARE IN THE ONE BREAD, SO WE ALSO SHARE THE ONE BODY WHICH IS CHRIST.

SIMPLE WORDS--TO BE SIMPLY UNDERSTOOD! BUT THIS UNITY OF THE EUCHARIST, IS NOT A SIT-DOWN, END OF THE TUNNEL, ALREADY ARRIVED AT EXPERIENCE! WE HAVE MILES TO GO, BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PADUA. WE HAVE HARDLY JUST BEGUN.

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH IS A MIGHTY WORK OF GOD, AN ARDUOUS, DIFFICULT JOURNEY TO BE ACCOMPLISHED. WITHOUT GOD'S HELP AND THE BREAD WHICH IS CHRIST, AND THE WORKING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, THIS WORK AND JOURNEY WOULD BE ALTOGETHER TOO MUCH FOR US, TOTALLY UNREALIZABLE. FOR WE ARE A SINFUL PEOPLE, A DIVISIVE PEOPLE. WE LOVE WHAT DIVIDES US, SETS US AGAINST EACH OTHER, RATHER THAN WHAT DRAWS US TOGETHER. WE ARE FUNDAMENTALLY FLAWED AND MARRED. (☩) THIS IS WHY WE HAVE SACRAMENTS: NOT BECAUSE WE ARE GREAT IN POWER, IMPRESSIVE IN ACCOMPLISHMENT-- BUT BECAUSE WE ARE NEEDY OF GOD. WE ARE --IN THIS NEED-- THE VERY POOREST OF THE POOR, BORN TO DIE, DEVOID OF ANY POWER TO EXTEND OUR MORTAL LIFE EVEN A SECOND IN TIME. WE ARE VULNERABLE AND FRAGILE TO THE CORE. IN THIS STATE OF NEED WE GATHER TO RECEIVE THE BREAD OF THE EUCHARIST, IN DEEPEST RECOGNITION OF OUR HUMAN EMPTINESS AND OUR DESPERATE LONGING FOR ONE ANOTHER AND FOR GOD.

AND HERE--IN POVERTY AND IN EMPTINESS--THE LORD JESUS COMES TO FILL US WITH THE COMMON BREAD, THAT WE MIGHT WORK TO BECOME WHAT THIS BREAD SO POWERFULLY SIGNIFIES--ONE BODY OF THE ONE LORD. SO WE SHARE AND WE

PARTAKE IN A COMMONG SUFFERING AND DYING WITH THE LORD. HERE WE LEARN IN WEAKNESS THE POWER OF COMPASSION. WE LEARN THE WAYS OF FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION, THE HUNGER FOR JUSTICE FOR EACH OF OUR BELOVED MEMBERS OF THE BODY WE SHARE, AND PEACE FOR ALL IS OUR THIRST. WITH THE LORD WE TAKE UP THE BURDEN OF ONE ANOTHER AND THE YOKE OF UNITY WITH HIM AND WE DISCOVER THE MYSTERY WHICH IS EASY AND LIGHT.

LOVE ONE ANOTHER IS THE BURDEN WE BEAR, AND THE YOKE OF OUR COMMUNION IS THE MYSTERY OF OUR DEEPEST BEING AND MEANING AS A PEOPLE. FOR WHAT WE RECEIVE WITH OUR MOUTHS TEACHES US IN THE INNERMOST SELF THAT WE ARE MEMBERS OF ONE ANOTHER--RICH AND POOR, YOUNG AND OLD, MALE AND FEMALE, BLACK AND WHITE, IN THE SIMPLICITY OF OUR MOST NEEDY BEING BEFORE GOD. WE ARE MEMBERS, ONE OF THE OTHER, AND OF THE LORD WHO SUSTAINS US WITH HIS BODY AND BLOOD. IN ONE ANOTHER AND IN HIM WE RECEIVE THE GIFT OF LIFE WHICH WILL NEVER END. WHAT WE RECEIVE IS A TRAVELLING BREAD OF FAITH, SUSTAINED IN CONSTANT HOPE OF THE LIFE TO COME, BOUND AND YOKED ALWAYS IN LOVE.

THE PHILOSOPHER FICHTE ONCE SAID, "WE ARE WHAT WE EAT," AND INDEED, SO WE ARE, SO WE ARE BECOMING. WE ARE THE LORD'S, AND HE IS THE MASTER OF OUR JOURNEY, OUR GOOD SHEPHERD. AND SO WE ARE OF ONE ANOTHER--FOR WE PARTAKE OF THE MOST FRAGILE AND VULNERABLE OF EACH OTHER AS TRULY AS WE RECEIVE THE BODY BROKEN AND THE BLOOD

SHED FOR US ALL. WE ARE WHAT WE EAT: WE ARE
ONE ANOTHER--AND WE ARE HIM: HE WHO CALLS US FOR
THE JOURNEY, HE WHO SUSTAINS US ON THE WAY, HE WHO
WELCOMES US TO OUR ETERNAL HOME.

BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF PADUA--WHY ARE WE
LOOKING UP INTO THE SKY? LET'S GET IT TOGETHER
AND BE A TRAVELLING PEOPLE. LET'S BE WHAT WE ARE--
ONE ANOTHER AND THE LORD'S....

WE ARE A WORLD OF WAR AND VIOLENCE, OF TENSION AND TERROISM,
OF FEAR AND FRUSTRATION, OF HATRED AND HUNGER, OF POLLUTED
MINDS AND PORNOGRAPHIC HEARTS, OF SHAMEFUL DEEDS AND DEFERRED
DREAMS.

DEEP DOWN, WE CRY FOR PEACE - IN OUR HEARTS, IN OUR HOMES,
IN OUR NEIGHBORHOODS AND ORGANIZATIONS AND SCHOOLS, IN OUR
CITY AND COUNTRY AND HOMES.

THIS IS WHY WE HAVE "HANDS ACROSS AMERICA!" THIS UNQUENCHABLE
THIRST FOR PEACE, THIS YEARNING FOR HUMAN SOLIDARITY, THIS
INDOMITABLE VISION OF NATIONS UNITED FOR THE GOOD, THE TRUE,
THE HOLY. "MEN OF GALILEE, WHY DO YOU STAND LOOKING UP TO THE
SKIES?" -- WE LOOK TO THE SKIES, WE LOOK TO THE HEAVENS, WE
LOOK TO THE LORD -- FOR PEACE! LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT
OF YOUR PEACE!!!

skip

THIS, FUNDAMENTALLY, IS WHY WE ASSOCIATE MRS. SALLY BRODY TO
THE FIRST ORDER OF ST. FRANCIS. TO ESTABLISH THE FRANCISCAN
DREAMS OF PEACE, WE NEED / TROUBADOURS EXAMPLES MODELS
OF PEACE, / OF CARING, / OF COMMITMENT.
LORD, MAKE ME AN INSTRUMENT OF PEACE. MRS. BRODY HAS LIVED "LOOKING
UP TO THE SKIES"! IN OUR CONCRETE, HERE AND NOW WORLD OF PADUA,
SHE HAS BEEN OUR FRANCIS OF ASSISI, BRINGING HEAVENLY PEACE TO
THE THIS WORLD DIMENSION OF EVERYDAY LIVING.

THE COMMISSION OF CHRIST (Community: Gift or Task?)

It is very likely that the Master's men continued to meet in the Upper Room where the Last Supper had been held.

In the reading this evening from the Gospel according to St. John, we see that these men were not enjoying the pleasant company of one another or (even) the assuring presence of the Lord at table. The scripture says that they had locked the doors of the place. Very simply, they were in a condition of terror and a state of self-imposed seige because they just knew that Jews and emissaries of the Sanhedrin were going to come for them -- even as they had come for and handled Jesus.

It is not pleasant scene. Nor is it at all inspriing for us to have to look back now (with all our accumulated hindsight) and preseme to criticize what was going on.

There are, in the Church today, many who would fit quite well into this Upper Room scene. For there are many people who depend on the Church and upon Jesus -- but upon whom the Church and Jesus cannot depend.

As I have said, these men were waiting: waiting for the inevitable knock at the door announcing doom and destruction. At a time like that, I would imagine that it was difficult to remember that "men of prayer must themselves knock and knock -- sometimes with bleeding knuckles in the dark of the night of despair. For these frightened men, Easter was only an event in time -- it was not yet a timeless event.

But, even as they sat there, Jesus was suddenly in their midst. Oh, the way the Lord surprises us!

THE COMING OF THE LORD IS SOMETIMES LIKE THE
RUSHING OF A MIGHTY WIND AND SOMETIMES LIKE
THE RAGING OF A GREAT FIRE. BUT, IT IS ALSO
LIKE THE SOUND OF SILENCE OR ONE HAND CLAPPING

Jesus gave them the normal everyday eastern greeting: "Peace be with you." "Shalom." It means: MAY GOD GIVE YOU EVERY GOOD THING.

And then, as later they will see, Jesus gives them that "ultimate good thing" from God: HE BREATHED ON THEM AND SAID "RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT."

There is little doubt but that the Gospel writer, St. John, was thinking back to the old, old story of creation:

THE LORD GOD FORMED MAN OUT OF THE CLAY OF THE GROUND
AND BLEW INTO HIS NOSTRILS THE BREATH OF LIFE, AND SO
MAN BECAME A LIVING BEING.

Like the creation of order and purpose in the Genesis story, Jesus gives his SHALOM. This is his infant Church. Still, it is a cowering church in the Upper Room -- doors and windows locked -- trying to save themselves from the deluge and downpour of the hatred of the world outside. But the Risen Lord sees that the Church will perish unless it opens its windows and lets out the dove to search for an olive branch.

"Church!" he says, " may God give you every good thing; may you take hold of the Holy Spirit; may he give you not peace but glory!"

It was then that Jesus gave this new Church (and also us) the commission we must never forget:

AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I SEND YOU!

He said that as God had sent him forth, so he sends the disciples and the apostles forth. And why shouldn't he? You know, and I know that a ship in a harbor is quite safe -- BUT THAT IS NOT WHAT SHOPS ARE BUILT FOR! Of course they are safe in this Upper Room -- BUT THEIR PERSONAL SAFETY AND COMFORT IS NOT WHAT HE HAD JUST SPENT THREE PRECIOUS YEARS TRAINING AND TEACHING THEM FOR!

What this all means is that Jesus Christ NEEDS the Church, this church, this community of faith, which is exactly what St. Paul meant when he called the community of faith THE BODY OF CHRIST, THE MYSTICAL BODY.

The Church has to be the mouth that speaks for Jesus; the feet to run upon his errands; the hands to do his work. Jesus is DEPENDENT on us -- his Church, his body.

You know, it is really tragic that we Catholics and Christians spend so much of our time and energy trying to "form community" and "develop a sense of community" and convince some people that they are part of a living faith community. May God save us from the frustration of these efforts! You are already a community! You have always been a part of the Mystical Body of Christ! Jesus depends on us and he will penetrate

the locked doors of the spaces in which we choose to sit isolated. He will vivify you with the breath of respiration -- and compete you to unlock the shut-up places with the strong caress of the wind of the Holy Spirit.

He will make you come to know that his Easter is not a passport to another world -- it is a quality of perception for this one.

And sick or well, blind or seeing, bound or free, we are here for a purpose and, however we are situated, we please God better with useful deeds than with many prayers or pious resignation. AS THE FATHER HAS SENT ME, SO I SEND YOU!

Perhaps it is too obvious, but we must say it also: the Church as a community of people needs Jesus. We as a community of faith are dependent on him.

If we accept our identity as Christian, and as community, and if we accept the commission of being sent out, then we must obviously have someone to send us.

As the Father . . .

Jesus is the first to send us, ^{with} ~~then~~ our own faith convictions and moral values, ^{he sends out his own servants & loved religious} then ^{the} our pastor, and the elected ^{lay} leaders of this faith community. Do not lock yourselves away from them -- for Jesus' sake and the sake of the Spirit dwelling within you.

When you are approached to be sent -- into you^r home, marital relationship, child rearing, education, employment, civic responsibilities, whatever...-- know that you need a message to take with you.

The message given is contained in the love of Christ found here in this community: It is a message of recognizing our human birth and the dignity sealed by our baptism;
it is the message that nourishment awaits at the Lord's table;
it is a message of comfort and acceptance when guilt descends and sin marches like some conquering army across the fertile heartland of our souls;
it is the message of understanding when our emotions are torn and our minds cry out for soothing consolation;

it is the message that Jesus will still accept an invitation to our marriage feasts and bless that mystery called love and fidelity;

it is the message that death has lost its victory and failed to make us sting because we have learned how to live and are not afraid to die.

We have a message to take -- because we have been the first recipients of the work of the Holy Spirit in the Church. If you need an authority to back the message, then say to those who ask for it, say what Jesus said: "The blind see, the lame walk, the hungry are fed, the naked are clothed... and the poor have the Good News preached to them."

If you need someone to turn to when you have doubts, then pray to Jesus in the midst of the assembly here so that you may expose the shores of your minds to incoming tide of the Holy Spirit.

Without Jesus and his gift of the Holy Spirit, the community of faith has no message; has no power; has no one to turn to when up against it; has nothing to enlighten her mind, strengthen her arm, and encourage her heart.

.....

Finally, I want you to notice something with me about this passage from the Gospel reading. We do not see St. Thomas here. It is recorded that he was not with those in the Upper Room when Jesus came and stood, Spirit filled, in their presence.

I don't know why Thomas chose that particular time to be absent -- or where, in point of fact, he actually was. But Thomas is like many of us here this evening. He made a mistake...

Thomas withdrew from the Christian fellowship of this young, struggling faith community. He sought loneliness rather than forgiveness for running out on Jesus on Good Friday.

I have always found that loneliness and being alone are two different things.

Being alone should be acceptable at times. The Lord, on several occasions, had to go off by himself to be alone to pray... However, loneliness most usually comes about when people are not interested in one another...

Thomas was only interested in his own personal sense of loss at the Lord's crucifixion. There can be no doubt but that Thomas loved the Lord immensely and quite deeply. But he missed the first coming of Jesus and the Holy Spirit.

When sorrow comes and sadness envelopes us, we often tend to shut ourselves up and refuse to meet people. We miss a great deal when we consciously separate ourselves from the Christian fellowship and take the path to loneliness.

This is the very time when, in spite of personal hurts, slights, sorrow, we should seek out the community of Christ's people. There it is that we will, in all likelihood, meet Jesus and the power of the Spirit face to face.



"Just as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will come to life again, but each one in proper order: Christ the first fruits and then, at his coming, all those who belong to him."

Holy Redeemer Church
The Solemnity of the Assumption
of Our Lady
August 10, 1986
10:30 a.m.

Introduction

1950

When Pope Pius XII/proclaimed the dogma of Mary's Assumption into heaven, the noted psychologist Carl Jung called it the most important event in 400 years. He gave psychological reasons:

1. powerful blow to patriarchal assumptions about God and mankind;
2. the "only ray of light in a world gone blind to its need for a myth that reconciled earth to heaven";
3. he said that we need Mary for our own psychic growth and that we should seek her.

I. These are good psychological reasons, humanitarian reasons, and fundamental to all of them are some of the pastoral reasons why the Church proclaimed the Assumption of Mary. But in the dogma of Mary's Assumption, the Church wants to communicate profound spiritual realities about Mary and about us all:

1. "in Christ all will come to life again...": Mary is the first human person to enjoy the fullness of redemption.
2. Mary is also the first human person to enjoy the full restoration of the human body and spirit: her flesh is radiant with the glory of her Son.
3. Mary is the first to experience the fullness of redemption.

::: "God who is mighty has done great thing for me"

"Blessed are you among women"

"A great sign appeared in the sky,
a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet,
and on her head a crown of twelve stars"

"Our tainted nature's solitary boast"

II. What does this mean to us? What does the Church want to tell us about ourselves:

1. We, too, shall be redeemed: be with God, touch God, see God, face to face!
2. Our own bodies are worthy of redemption.
3. "in Christ, we shall all come to life again"
4. Mary, our Intercessor": she is our "listener" before her Son - she is the first to know our needs, hear our cries: she speaks to Jesus for us. ::

"No man can even come close to the love and compassion a woman is capable of giving," said Mother Teresa. How true is this of Mary!

5. Health of the Sick, Comfort of the troubled, Refuge of Sinners, Cause of our Joy!
6. Mary assumed into heaven - we honor her in today's Procession!

III. Eucharist

SAINT PATRICK CHURCH, BRIDGE
17 AUGUST 1986
PARISH VISITATION: 11:30 A.M.

20TH SUNDAY OF YEAR (C)
JER. 38: 4-6; 8-10
HEB. 12: 1-4
LUKE 12: 49-53

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS: SO VERY OFTEN WE EXPERIENCE VISITS WITH MIXED FEELINGS. WHEN GRANDMA COMES TO OUR HOUSE WE ARE EXCITED BECAUSE SHE ALWAYS BRINGS US PRESENTS--BUT MOTHER AND DAD ALWAYS ARE A LITTLE NERVOUS. THE HOUSE MUST BE PERFECT, CLEAN, EVERY TOY PICKED UP, THE WINDOWS WASHED, CARPET SWEEPED, TOYS AND CLOTHES IN THE CLOSET, HIDDEN AWAY FROM HER QUICK AND CRITICAL GLANCE. VISITS ARE NICE, LOTS OF LOVING AND HUGGING, BUT NO ONE IS VERY RELAXED.

BISHOPS ARE LIKE GRANDMAS --EXCEPT NOT AS MUCH FUN--THEY USUALLY DO NOT BRING PRESENTS. BUT EVERYBODY IS A LITTLE NERVOUS, AND WILL BREATHE A GREAT SIGH OF RELIEF WHEN HE IS GONE, AND EVERYTHING CAN GET BACK TO NORMAL.

TODAY'S LITURGY SUGGESTS ANOTHER KIND OF VISITATION, WHICH IS MORE AWESOME (AND MAYBE LESS WELCOME) THAN GRANDMA'S OR THE BISHOP'S. FIRE: GOD'S VISIT IS DESCRIBED AS A RAGING FIRE. NOW THIS GETS EVERYONE'S ATTENTION. IT IS HARD TO SLEEP THROUGH A HOUSE OR A CITY ON FIRE! EVEN HARDER THAN SLEEPING THROUGH THE VISIT OF A GRANDMA OR A BISHOP!

GOD VISITS HIS PEOPLE IN THE DISCONCERTING WORDS OF A PROPHET LIKE JEREMIAH. WITHOUT MUCH TACT JEREMIAH TOLD HIS PEOPLE HOW FAR AWAY THEY HAD WANDERED

FROM GOD'S WAY. LIKE WE MIGHT WANT TO DO WITH A PESTY AND CANTANKEROUS HOUSE GUEST, THE PEOPLE THREW THE PROPHET INTO A MUD PIT.

BUT GOD IS NO MEAN-SPIRITED AND EMBITTERED HOUSE GUEST, COMPLAINING ABOUT EVERYTHING. THE PROPHET DOES NOT SPEAK FROM A NASTY TEMPER--BUT OUT OF THE ANGUISH OF A HEART SET AFIRE WITH LOVE FOR A CARELESS AND UNCONCERNED PEOPLE. HE SHARES THE FAITHFUL SUFFERINGS OF THE GENERATIONS OF GOD'S ELECT THAT THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS, OUR SECOND READING TODAY, HONORS. THIS IS THE ANGUISH OF THE ATHLETE UPON THE RACE COURSE, THE PILGRIM ON THE JOURNEY, THE STRIVER FOR THE THINGS OF GOD. THE FIRE OF FAITH IS NOT A MEAN SPIRITED LOOKING BACKWARD, A SOUR AND BITTER SPIRIT, FEARFUL OF CHANGE, ANGRY AND HURT ABOUT REAL AND IMAGINED LOSSES. THE FIRE OF FAITH DOES NOT DESTROY LIFE, BUT PURSUES IT WITH GREAT ARDOR AND ENTHUSIASM. GO, SELL WHAT YOU HAVE, GIVE IT TO THE POOR, AND COME FOLLOW ME! TAKE UP YOUR CROSS DAILY AND BE MY DISCIPLE! DO NOT LOSE HEART NOR ABANDON THE STRUGGLE! THESE ARE THE WORDS OF FAITH, THE WORDS THAT CALL FORTH FAITH. FAITH IS ALIVE, FAITH BURNS FROM WITHIN, FAITH DESTROYS ONLY THAT WHICH SEPARATES US FROM GOD AND FROM EACH OTHER.

SO WE READ THE ANGUISHED WORDS OF FAITH OF JESUS IN TODAY'S GOSPEL: "I HAVE COME TO LIGHT A FIRE ON THIS EARTH!" THE PRINCE OF PEACE COMES TO SET A

~~PRINCE OF PEACE~~

DIVISION, TO SET ON FIRE THE COLD, THE LIFELESS, THE DEAD, TO SET ON FIRE THE LIFELESS AND THE DEAD AND LIGHT THE WORLD WITH THE INCANDESCENT FIRE OF DIVINE LOVE. HUMAN RELATIONS ARE CONSUMED IN THIS FIRE, AND DIVISIONS OF THREE AGAINST TWO AND TWO AGAINST THREE, FATHER AGAINST SON AND SON AGAINST FATHER, MOTHER AGAINST DAUGHTER AND DAUGHTER AGAINST MOTHER SET AFIRE ALL DISTINCTIONS OF AGE, YOUNG AND OLD, OF RACE AND CONDITION, RICH AND POOR, SLAVE AND FREE, HAVES AND HAVE NOTS, EDUCATED AND ILLITERATE, SKILLED AND UNSKILLED--UNTIL ALL THE DIVISIONS OF RELATIVE WORTH AND DIGNITY, RANK, COMPETITION --ALL DISTINCTIONS ARE CONSUMED IN THE DIVINE FIRE UNTIL ALL ARE ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.

THE VISIT OF GOD PUTS US ALL IN OUR PLACE-- EVEN MORE THAN GRANDMA'S VISIT REMINDS US THAT WE ARE ALL LITTLE KIDS. IN THE LIGHT OF CHRIST, ARE NOT ALL OUR LITTLE LIGHTS HUMBLLED; IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST, ARE NOT ALL OUR POOR EFFORTS ENNOBLED AND GIVEN TRUE LIFE AND MEANING? IN THE LOVE OF GOD, WHO IS A FATHER OR A SON, WHO IS A MOTHER OR A DAUGHTER--OR FOR THAT MATTER, A GRANDMA OR A BISHOP? IS THERE NOT ONE GOD WHO IS GREATER THAN ALL, AND IS INFINITELY OVER ALL, AND ARE NOT WE ALL HIS CREATURES? IS THERE NOT ONE GOD AND FATHER AND WE ALL ARE CHILDREN, THE WORKS OF HIS HANDS, THE LAMP OF HIS LIGHT, THE TIMBER AND KINDLE OF HIS FLAME?

IT IS WITH EAGERNESS THAT WE GATHER HERE TOGETHER, BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF ST. PATRICK CHURCH-- MADE INTO ONE PEOPLE OF GOD, CALLED TO SURRENDER ALL OUR DIVISIONS TO THE FIRE OF GOD'S LOVE, WHO DESIRES US, WHO CALLS US, WHO ENABLES US TO BE ONE PEOPLE OF ONE FAITH, ONE HOPE, ONE IN LOVE, BREAKING THE ONE BREAD, SHARING IN THE ONE CUP, INCLUDING ALL, EXCLUDING NONE.

MAY THIS TIME OF VISITATION OPEN OUR MINDS AND HEARTS TO ONE ANOTHER IN THE LOVE OF CHRIST WHO DWELLS IN OUR MIDST. MAY WE RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO CHRIST IN MORE FAITHFUL PRAYER, IN GREATER LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER, IN A DEEPER COMMITMENT TO WORKS OF RECONCILIATION AND JUSTICE AND PEACE. MAY WE NOT CLING TO WHAT DIVIDES US, WHAT PLACES US IN OPPOSITION TO ONE ANOTHER, BUT RATHER MAY WE WORK FOR THAT WHICH MAKES US ONE IN FAITH, PERFECT IN LOVE, ALIVE IN THE HOPE FOR THE COMING OF THE ONE WHO VISITS US IN THE FIRE OF HIS UNFAILING LOVE.

Holy Name Society

Phil. 2: 1-5

Holy Hour: St. John Cathedral John 15:1-11

14 September 1986, 2:30 p.m.

My brothers and sisters: it is hard to know what the truth is. We live in a day when we have to fight for the truth, a fight that sometimes seems for our very sanity. Sometimes we are tempted to say with the psalmist "once I said in my alarm: 'all men are liars!'" [Ps. 116:11] It is hard to know when someone is telling us the truth!

Yes--it is hard--in a day when losing your shirt is called "negative cash flow," when a political assassination is called a "retirement with extreme prejudice," when terrorists are called "freedom fighters," when the MX Missile is called a "peace-maker," when concentration camps in South Africa are called "national homelands," and when time specifically devoted to consuming too much alcohol is called a "happy hour!" Indeed how easy it is to twist words to mean anything--and when words no longer describe reality with any accuracy, they begin to impose a false meaning upon the world. All is then a lie, and with the psalmist we can indeed well say: "all men are liars!" We begin to lose touch with reality, and then, even with our own selves!

Indeed, this is no trivial matter: we define ourselves by words, we tell what kind of people we are, what we hope for, what we dream about. We tell the world--and each other--who we are.

The Holy Name Society continues an ancient devotion in the Church which touches upon the very essence of Christian life: devotion to the name of Jesus! We define ourselves here--not by the daily lies which inflate our desires, expand our selfishness, enlarge our anxieties and fears. "Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good and delight yourself in abundance," the prophet Isaiah tells his people and us too [Is. 55:2] "Do not work for the food which perishes," Jesus says, "but for the food which endures to eternal life!" [John 6:27]

The devotion to the Holy Name teaches us to define ourselves not by the lies that surround us daily, not by what we daydream about, hope to have and accumulate or long to accomplish. Our desires--and the words that feed them--and often mislead them--do not describe and define us as God made us or called us to be. No: I am not defined by what I have or hope to have, nor how I feel or desire or aspire to--no--the Holy Name given to me teaches me this: "All things

belong to you, and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God." [I Cor. 3:22-23].

"For not one of us lives for himself, and not one of us dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." [Rom. 14:7-8]

We live in a world of great disconnections: many of our ancestors cut their political, religious, economic and even cultural ties with Europe and came to seek their fortunes in a new land, with new opportunities--whose only limit was the insatiable appetite that says more and more, better and better. Many others of us descend from ancestors who were enslaved and brought to these shores in chains, or who were dispossessed of native hunting grounds and ancestral homes to serve the limitless greed of the colonizing immigrants. But for all of us--whether descendents of oppressors or victims or maybe a little of both--we all run the danger of defining ourselves in disconnection: belonging to no one except our own individual wants and endless desires--we give ourselves to the pursuit of limitless possessions and self-advancement.

"But you did not learn Christ this way," the author of the letter to the Ephesians says about those who live in greed [Eph. 4:20ff.]

To belong to Christ is wholly contrary to a life based upon conspicuous consumption, greed, ambition, fear and anxiety. "Those who belong to Christ have crucified all their desires," Saint Paul tells the Galatians [Gal. 5:24].

So: if you belong to the Holy Name--you are of that spiritual company that defines itself not by what you accumulate, nor by what you desire, hope for, or fear to lose. Rather this: to whom do you belong?

We belong to Christ--Saint John tells us that we remain on in Him as branches on the Vine--and if we remain in Him, we must strive to be one in mind with Him, as Saint Paul teaches. "Have this mind in you which was also in Christ Jesus." [Phil. 2:5]

Jesus did not cling to Himself, His own desires--but became empty, so that He might be filled up with all the purposes of God. And this was God's will: that He gather us all up into one, that nothing separate any of us from each other or Him, that we become in Him one people, one body, one Spirit.

It is in the humility of the Spirit that we receive such a word of liberation--from all fear and anxiety--that with Christ we might share in that work and desire--for the gathering up into one

the alienated children of God. "May they all be one, even as you, Father are in Me, and I in You, that they also may be one in Us," Jesus prays the night that He suffered for us. [John 17:21]

This surely is the prayer of those who belong to the Holy Name of Jesus--it is for this reason that we came into being--to do the work of God--and that is, the salvation of the world, and the bringing of all human beings into the unity of God's kingdom. The work of human liberation, the work of reconciliation of peoples and nations, the work of human rights, of economic and political justice--all these are works of the Spirit and proper to those who belong to the Holy Name of Jesus--who came to save all and bring all into the one family of God. Let us pray that we may always be worthy of this name as we always seek that Unity, that Oneness which is God.

URBAN REGION CATHOLIC CHARISMATIC CONFERENCE

ST. STEPHEN CHURCH

18 SEPTEMBER 1986, 7:30 P.M.

I COR. 15: 1-11

LUKE 7: 36-50

THEME: GOD'S FAVOR: LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS: IT IS A SPECIAL DELIGHT FOR ME TO BE WITH YOU THIS EVENING. IT IS EASY TO BELIEVE IN GOD IN YOUR PRESENCE. IT IS EASY TO PRAY, TO LIFT UP OUR HANDS, TO MAKE A JOYFUL NOISE UNTO THE LORD. HALLELUJAH!

'HOLD FAST TO THE WORD WHICH I PREACHED TO YOU,' SAINT PAUL SAYS TO HIS BELOVED CORINTHIANS. REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU--HE SAYS--FOR THIS MEMORY IS WHAT SAVES YOU. WHAT IS IT THAT THE CORINTHIANS--AND WE-- MUST REMEMBER SO URGENTLY?

CHRIST DIED FOR OUR SINS--IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES. HE WAS BURIED, AND--IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES--HE WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY. JESUS DIED--EMBRACING THE PAIN OF THE WORLD IN ALL ITS ERROR AND FUTILITY, IN ALL ITS BROKEN DREAMS AND PROMISES, ITS LIES AND UGLINESS, IN ALL ITS VIOLENCE AND HATRED, SELF-CENTERED DESIRES AND ASPIRATIONS, IN ALL ITS ENSLAVEMENTS, FEARS AND ANXIETIES, RIVALRIES AND IDOLATRIES--FOR THIS WORLD IN FUTILE AGONY, JESUS DIED-- AS THE WORD OF SCRIPTURE TESTIFIES, AND IN THE PROMISE OF THAT SAME WORD, IN THREE DAYS HE IS RAISED FROM THE DEAD TO BE SEEN BY CEPHAS AND THE TWELVE, THEN FIVE HUNDRED BRETHERN, JAMES AND ALL THE APOSTLES, AND LAST

OF ALL, TO THE VERY LEAST OF THE APOSTLE, AN
ERSTWHILE PERSECUTOR OF THE CHURCH, AS IF TO ONE BORN
OUT OF TIME.

ST. PAUL SAYS: THIS WE PREACHED, AND THIS
YOU BELIEVED. WE HAND ON TO YOU WHAT WE HAVE SEEN AND
HEARD, WHICH WAS IN TURN SEEN AND HEARD BY OTHER SINFUL
MEN AND WOMEN BEFORE US, WHO RECEIVED THE SAME SALVATION
AND LIBERATION FROM THEIR SINFUL WAYS. WE RECEIVE WHAT
HAS LIBERATED OTHERS BEFORE US, AND WHICH HAS POWER TO
LIBERATE US IN TURN IF WE RECEIVE THIS WORD WITH EQUAL
HUMILITY AND SIMPLICITY OF HEART, WITHOUT PRETENSE OR
SELF-JUSTIFICATION.

THIS IS NO ORDINARY WORD THAT WE LISTEN TO.
"IF YOU ABIDE IN MY WORD," JESUS SAYS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL
[CF. JOHN 9:11], "THEN YOU ARE TRULY DISCIPLES OF MINE,
AND YOU SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE
YOU FREE." WHAT IS THIS TRUTH? "IF WE WALK IN THE LIGHT
AS HE HIMSELF IS IN THE LIGHT, WE HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH
ONE ANOTHER, AND THE BLOOD OF JESUS CLEANSSES US FROM
ALL SIN. IF WE SAY WE HAVE NO SIN, WE ARE DECEIVING
OURSELVES, AND THE TRUTH IS NOT IN US." [I JOHN 1: 7-8]

THIS TRUTH OF CHRIST, THIS LIGHT OF HIS WORD,
ILLUMINES IN US TRUE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR HUMAN WEAKNESS
AND OUR ENSLAVEMENT TO SIN, AND OUR NEED FOR REDEMPTION.
IF WE TRULY SEE CHRIST, THEN WE CANNOT AVOID SEEING OUR
TRUE SELVES: SINFUL, ENSLAVED, NEEDING REDEMPTION AND
SALVATION AND LIBERATION.

THE ARROGANCE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY DENIES SIN, DENIES NEED. "I HAVE NO NEED OF YOU," WE TELL ONE ANOTHER, BECAUSE DEEP INSIDE WE DESIRE TO BE UTTERLY SELF-SUFFICIENT, AND HAVE HALF CONVINCED OURSELVES THAT WE DO NOT NEED EVEN GOD. "I AM RICH AND HAVE BECOME WEALTHY, AND HAVE NEED OF NOTHING," THE CONDEMNED LUKEWARM SINNER SAYS, NOT KNOWING THAT HE IS "WRETCHED AND MISERABLE AND POOR AND BLIND AND NAKED." [CF. REV. 3: 17] INDEED HOW TRULY JESUS PROPHECIZED IN JOHN'S GOSPEL TO THE PHARISEES:

'YOU ARE NOT CALLING US BLIND, ARE YOU?' JESUS SAID TO THEM: 'IF YOU WERE BLIND, YOU WOULD HAVE NO SIN; BUT SINCE YOU SAY, "WE SEE," YOUR SIN REMAINS.' [JOHN 9: 40-41]

IT IS SO EASY TO BECOME SPIRITUALLY BLIND, TO DECEIVE OURSELVES THAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED SALVATION, THAT WE HAVE ARRIVED AT SPIRITUAL HEIGHTS ABOVE THE COMMON HERD. IT IS SO EASY TO PRAY WITH THE PHARISEE: "GOD, I THANK THEE THAT I AM NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE: SWINDLERS, UNJUST, ADULTERERS, OR EVEN LIKE THIS TAX-GATHERER." [LUKE 18:11].

IT IS EASY TO BECOME BLIND TO OUR SINFULNESS, AND TO DENY OUR NEED FOR MERCY AND DIVINE SALVATION. IN DENIAL WE THEN ARE UTTERLY DEAF TO THE WORD OF GOD REVEALED IN OUR MIDST.

THE SINFUL WOMAN BRINGS THE LIBERATING TRUTH IN HER WELCOMING RITUAL OF HOSPITALITY TO THE LORD IN TODAY'S

GOSPEL--AND SHE IS MET BY THE DISBELIEVING GAZE OF AN OFFENDED AND CLOSED-MINDED WORLD: "IF THIS MAN WERE A PROPHET, HE WOULD KNOW WHO AND WHAT SORT OF WOMAN THIS IS THAT TOUCHES HIM--THAT SHE IS A SINNER."

OUR BLINDNESS DENIES OUR NEED FOR HELP AND MERCY FROM GOD AND FROM HIS SERVANTS, THE MESSENGERS HE DAILY SENDS OUR WAY, FULL OF HIS GRACE AND TRUTH. WE WOULD RATHER DO IT OUR OWN WAY, FIND OUR OWN WAY, HELP OURSELVES, FIGURE IT OUT BY OURSELVES. OUR DEAFNESS DROWNS OUT THE WORD PREACHED TO US, WITH DEFENSIVE JUDGEMENT OF OTHERS: IF THIS WERE THE TRUTH, IT WOULD INDICT THE SINS OF OTHERS MORE THAN MINE: LOOK AT WHAT THEY DO OR DO NOT DO, LOOK AT WHAT THEY GET AWAY WITH UNPUNISHED--BEFORE YOU DARE TO SPEAK TO ME.

IT IS THE WORLD THAT IS AT SIN, THE WORLD DELUDED, THE WORLD THAT IS LOST. ALWAYS SOMEONE ELSE IS WRONG, NEVER ME. OR PERHAPS I AM A LITTLE WRONG, SLIGHTLY DECEIVED --BUT SURELY OTHERS ARE FAR MORE LOST THAN I AM....

AND SO, BLIND AND DEAF, WE CONTINUE TO DECEIVE OURSELVES AND TO DENY ACCESS TO THE WORD IMPLANTED "WHICH IS ABLE TO SAVE OUR SOULS." [JAMES 1:21] NO--THE WORD WE RECEIVE TODAY, IS FOR US, EACH OF US, INVITING US TO REPENT OF OUR OWN SINFUL WAYS AND RETURN TO THE LORD.

WITH HUMILITY OF MIND, ST. JAMES TELLS US [1:21] RECEIVE THE WORD IMPLANTED. OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE WORLD

AROUND YOU, WHICH OUR SAVIOR BORE WITH SUCH PAIN AND SUCH FORGIVING LOVE. RECEIVE THE LITTLE ONE, THE POOR, THE PERSECUTED, THE SUFFERING ONE AS YOU WOULD RECEIVE CHRIST HIMSELF. CONSIDER NO ONE TO BE INFERIOR TO YOURSELF, FOR YOU LOOK UPON THE BROTHER OR THE SISTER "FOR WHOM CHRIST DIED." [CF. ROM. 14:15; I COR. 8:11]

WE ARE ONE IN THE BURDEN OF CHRIST, THE CROSS OF CHRIST, THE WEIGHT OF HIS SUFFERINGS, THE PAIN OF ALL THE WORLD. WE ARE ONE IN THE CRY OF THE POOR, IN THE ANGUISH OF THE OPPRESSED, THE UNJUSTLY IMPRISONED, THE DISENFRANCHISED, THE HUNGRY AND THE HOMELESS, THE WEAK AND THE VULNERABLE. THESE ARE THE WOUNDS OF CHRIST. THIS IS HIS BLOOD OUTPOURED. HERE IS HIS PAIN--AND OURS!

THE PAIN OF INJUSTICE AND THE CAUSE OF THE OPPRESSED IS THE CROSS OF CHRIST, AND WORK FOR JUSTICE IN THIS WORLD IS INDEED--AS OUR BISHOPS AND POPES HAVE TOLD US--"CONSTITUTIVE OF THE GOSPEL", AND INDEED IS THE WORK OF PREACHING THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST FROM THE DEAD. CHRIST IS RISEN, AND HE LIVES IN THE LIBERATION OF HIS PEOPLE FROM THE SIN OF INJUSTICE IN THE WORLD. CONFRONTING SIN IN OURSELVES, CONFESSING AND PROFESSING OUR COMMITMENT TO THE LIBERATION OF CHRIST AND OUR WORK WITH HIM IN BEHALF OF JUSTICE IS OUR SHARE IN THE MINISTRY OF HIS ALL-POWERFUL AND REDEEMING WORD.

PRAISE THE LORD!

YOUTH CONFERENCE

ISAIAH 43:1-7

SANDUSKY, OHIO

SATURDAY, 20 SEPTEMBER 1986; HOMILY: MORNING PRAYER: 10 A.M.

MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS: WHEN WE WERE LITTLE KIDS WE LEARNED TO SAY: "STICKS AND STONES MAY BREAK MY BONES, BUT WORDS WILL NEVER HARM ME." OUR MOMS AND DADS--OR MAYBE AN OLDER SISTER OR A TEACHER TAUGHT US TO SAY THESE WORDS WHEN OUR FEELINGS WERE HURT BECAUSE SOME KIDS TEASED US OR CALLED US A BAD NAME.

ALMOST EVERYONE OF US CAN REMEMBER SOMETHING WE HATED TO BE TEASED ABOUT WHEN WE WERE LITTLE--OR WE REMEMBER A NICKNAME WE HAD THAT WE REALLY HATED. THERE NEVER SEEMED TO BE A DEFENCE AGAINST THAT SORT OF THING THAT DID ANY GOOD. SO, WE LEARNED TO DENY THE PAIN BY SAYING "STICKS AND STONES MAY BREAK MY BONES, BUT NAMES WILL NEVER HURT ME." THIS WAS NOT TRUE, OF COURSE, BUT JUST SAYING IT HELPED US PRETEND THAT IT DID NOT HURT SO VERY MUCH.

WORDS HURT. NAMES CAN HURT--WHEN THEY ARE USED TO MAKE US FEEL/DIFFERENT, ODD, ALONE, OUT ON A LIMB, LEFT HANGING, REJECTED, STRANGE, QUEER. ALL THESE FEELINGS ARE EXPERIENCES OF DISCONNECTION--AND THE NAMES THAT DISCONNECT US, MAKE US STRANGE TO OTHERS, ALIENATED, ALL THESE TOUCH US AT THE MOST PROFOUND LEVEL OF OUR BEING, AND HURT US FAR MORE THAN ANY STICKS OR STONES EVER COULD INDEED. STICKS AND STONES BREAK/ ONLY MY BONES, BUT WORDS CAN ONLY KILL ME. KILL ME, MY SPIRIT, MY SOUL.

YES -- WE NEED TO HEAR OUR NAME SPOKEN WITH LOVE, WITH RESPECT AND PRIDE. MY NAME IS THAT BY WHICH I AM KNOWN BY OTHERS, THAT BY WHICH I AM CALLED, THE MEANS BY WHICH I RELATE TO OTHERS AND TO THE WORLD. THE NAME/IS THE MOST PRECIOUS AND SACRED PART OF ME. SHAKESPEARE KNEW THAT VERY WELL WHEN HE HAD HIS CHARACTER IAGO SPEAK TO OTHELLO: "WHO STEALS MY PURSE STEALS TRASH; 'TIS SOMETHING, NOTHING; 'T WAS MINE, 'T IS HIS, AND HAS BEEN SLAVE TO THOUSANDS; BUT HE THAT FILCHES FROM ME MY GOOD NAME / ROBS ME OF THAT WHICH NOT ENRICHES HIM; AND MAKES ME / POOR INDEED!"
 [OTHELLO III, III, 155]

OUR NAME TELLS US WHO WE ARE BECAUSE FIRST IT TELLS US WHO WE BELONG TO. OUR PARENTS GAVE US OUR NAME WHEN WE WERE BORN--A NAME THAT HAD SPECIAL MEANING TO THEM, AND OFTEN WE HAVE A MOST SPECIAL RELATION TO OUR FAMILY HISTORY--WHEN WE ARE NAMED AFTER SOMEONE OUR PARENTS WISH TO HONOR OR REMEMBER IN A SPECIAL WAY. OUR NAME IS SIGNIFICANT TO US, AND TO OUR FAMILY HISTORY. WITH OUR NAME WE CONTINUE A HISTORY, / AND WE BEGIN A HISTORY OF OUR OWN.

"FEAR NOT, FOR I HAVE REDEEMED YOU, I HAVE CALLED YOU BY NAME: YOU ARE MINE."--SO OUR READING FROM ISAIAH SPEAKS TO US TODAY. GOD/CALLS US, GOD/NAMES US, GOD/CLAIMS US AS HIS OWN. WE ARE THE ONLY CREATURE GOD CALLS FORTH BY NAME, AS A SIGN OF HIS PARENTHOOD, CALLING

US TO SHARE HIS HISTORY, AND TO BECOME PART OF
HIS OWN.

"FEAR NOT, FOR I AM WITH YOU . . . I WILL
BRING YOU BACK . . . I WILL GATHER YOU UP FROM THE
ENDS OF THE EARTH; EVERYONE WHO IS NAMED AS MINE,
WHOM I CREATED FOR MY GLORY, WHOM I FORMED AND MADE,"
OUR SCRIPTURE SPEAKS TODAY. JEREMIAH REPORTS : "BEFORE
I FORMED YOU IN THE WOMB, BEHOLD I KNEW YOU!" [JER. 1:5],
AND THE PSALMIST TESTIFIES THE SAME: "YOUR EYES HAVE SEEN
MY UNFORMED SELF. ALL THE DAYS ORDAINED FOR ME WERE
WRITTEN IN YOUR BOOK BEFORE ONE OF THEM EXISTED."
[Ps. 139: 16]

YES, GOD NAMES US BECAUSE HE CLAIMS US AS
HIS OWN, AND HE NAMES US BECAUSE HE KNOWS US MORE THAN
WE EVER COULD POSSIBLY KNOW OURSELVES--INDIVIDUALLY OR
AS A PEOPLE. GOD KNOWS US IN THE "DARK SECRET RECESSES
OF OUR MOTHERS' WOMB" [CF. Ps. 139:15]--FROM THE TIME
BEFORE WE EVER CAME TO BE. WHO CAN KNOW US AS GOD KNOWS
US? "SUCH KNOWLEDGE IS TOO WONDERFUL FOR ME; IT IS TOO
HIGH, I CANNOT ATTAIN TO IT!" [Ps. 139:6]

WE GROW UP SO VERY CONCERNED ABOUT OUR SELF-
IMAGE. WE WORRY ABOUT WHAT OTHER PEOPLE THINK OF US.
WE ALWAYS WANT TO CREATE A GOOD IMPRESSION, AND WE AGONIZE
OVER THE IMPACT WE ARE HAVING AMONG OUR FELLOW HUMAN BEINGS.
WE SUFFER--IT IS CHIC TO SAY--FROM "LOW SELF-ESTEEM" AND
THE MORE PREOCCUPIED WE ARE WITH OURSELVES, THE UNHAPPIER

WE ARE WITH THIS CONSTANT OBJECT OF OUR ATTENTION,
 WE LONG TO BE GREATER THAN WE ARE, TO BE BETTER, TO
 ACHIEVE EVER MORE AND MORE, AND TO POSSESS MORE THAN
 WE HAVE. WE FEAR THAT WE ARE EVEN LESS THAN WE ARE,
 AND THAT THE LITTLE WE HAVE WILL BE LOST, AND THE LITTLE
 WE HAVE ACCOMPLISHED WILL PROVE MEANINGLESS, FORGETTABLE,
 INCONSEQUENTIAL. SO IS THE NIGHTMARE OF OUR EXISTENCE:
 SO WE PAINFULLY ARE DRIVEN TO DAY-DREAM, AND SO WE
 FEAR IN GREAT ANXIETY, HOPING TO BE MORE, FEARING THAT
 WE ARE LESS, AND IN ALL, QUITE PERPLEXED, WONDERING
 WHERE AND WHO WE ARE.....

"DO NOT FEAR . . . I HAVE CALLED YOU BY
NAME ! YOU ARE MINE!"--OUR SCRIPTURE SPEAKS TODAY!
GOD ALONE HAS THE RIGHT TO CALL US NAMES: FOR HE ALONE
 HAS MADE US, AND TO HIM ALONE WE BELONG.

HE CALLS US TO BE A PEOPLE, ONE PEOPLE, ONE
 FAMILY--CHILDREN OF HIS ONE FATHERHOOD, SONS AND DAUGHTERS
 OF A COMMON MOTHER: THE PEOPLE HE HAS CALLED HIS OWN.
 WE ARE FATHERED AND MOTHERED INTO THE WORLD, BLESSED WITH
 RICHES AND GIFTS OTHERS HAVE TOILED FOR WITH THEIR SWEAT,
 PURCHASED AND SANCTIFIED WITH THEIR BLOOD. WE ARE THE
 RECEIVERS, THE GIFTED. SO WE ARE CALLED "GIFT"--AND
 THUS NAMED, WE ARE CALLED TO REMEMBER, AND TO GIVE THANKS.

GOD CALLS US UNIQUELY AND SPECIALLY AS WELL.
 NO TWO OF US IS ALIKE, BUT EACH OF US IS A GIFT OF ALL,
 AND GOD'S GIFT TO ALL. "I WILL GIVE YOU A NEW NAME WHICH

NO ONE KNOWS EXCEPT THE ONE WHO RECEIVES IT." [CF. REV. 2:17]. ONLY THE ONE WHO MADE ME AND WHO REDEEMED ME AND WHO SUSTAINS ME IN BEING BY HIS MERCIFUL, FORGIVING, RECONCILING LOVE, CAN NAME ME--AND GIVE ME A NAME. "MY SHEEP KNOW MY VOICE, AND I CALL MY OWN BY NAME," THE GOOD SHEPHERD SAYS [JOHN 10: 13FF]. SUCH IS THE UNIQUE AND SPECIAL LOVE WHICH CALLS ME OUT OF ALL MY DARKNESS, MY FEARS AND ANXIETIES, THE LIES OF FALSE EXPECTATIONS, AND THE DECEIT OF FALSE JUDGMENTS. BY GOD'S GRACE I AM WHAT I AM. MAY I EVER GROW TO UNDERSTAND GOD'S WILL FOR ME, AND MAY HE GRANT ME THE POWER TO CARRY IT OUT.

WE GROW UP IN A WORLD OFTEN RULED BY FEAR AND ANXIOUS LONGINGS. WE ARE TEMPTED TO JOIN THE BATTLE FOR OUR IDENTITY AND WORTH WITH THE WEAPONS OF OUR OWN FEARS AND THE VIOLENCE OF OUR OWN ANGRY VOICES AND CONTENTIOUS STRIVINGS. BUT "FEAR IS USELESS," JESUS SAYS, "WHAT IS NEEDED NOW IS FAITH.!" [MARK 5: 36]

"WE COME THIS FAR BY FAITH
LEANIN' ON THE LORD!"

SO GOES THE WORDS OF THE OLD NEGRO SPIRITUAL. WE MUST NOT FORGET THAT OUR WALK IN FAITH IS NOT A LONELY WALK. WE TROD THE PATH OF OUR FATHERS AND MOTHERS IN THE FAITH WHO HAVE LIVED IN ITS LIGHT, WHO HAVE SUFFERED IN BEARING IT, AND WHO HAVE LAID DOWN THEIR LIVES IN FAITHFUL AND OFTEN HEROIC WITNESS TO ITS PROMISES: WE SHALL ALL BE FREE, WE SHALL ALL BE ONE, WE SHALL OVERCOME!

IT IS ALL TOO EASY FOR US TO IGNORE THIS WITNESS AND TO LISTEN TO THE FALSE VOICES OF FEAR AND SELF-PITY--THAT TELL US THAT WE CAN'T ACCOMPLISH MUCH WITH OUR LIVES ANYWAY, SO WHY TRY--WE MIGHT AS WELL LOOK AFTER OUR OWN NEEDS AND DESIRES AND TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES, SINCE WE DON'T HAVE THAT MUCH TO OFFER ANYWAY, AND BESIDES MOST LIKELY WHATEVER WE HAVE WOULD BE REJECTED ANYWAY. THESE COWARDLY AND SELF-SERVING INNER VOICES ARE EASY TO LISTEN TO. IT IS MUCH HARDER TO LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF FAITH WHICH CHALLENGES AND DEMANDS OF US: YOU! YES, YOU--NOT THE ONE NEXT TO YOU, BEHIND YOU, IN FRONT OF YOU. YOU, YES YOU! I MEAN YOU! GOD IS CALLING YOU BY NAME! YOU HAVE A VOCATION! A CALLING! YOU HAVE GOD'S SPECIAL GIFTS TO OFFER! GOD CALLS ON YOU! GOD WANTS YOU, YOUR PEOPLE, OUR PEOPLE NEED YOU! YES, YOU! RELIGIOUS LIFE, THE PRIESTHOOD, COMMITTED APOSTOLIC LIFE OF MANY KINDS OF SERVICE--ALL, ALL, NEED YOU AND CALL FOR YOU AND CALL UPON YOU! COME, FOLLOW ME!

MAY WE LISTEN TO THE VOICE OF GOD, CALLING US BY NAME. MAY WE FOLLOW THE EXAMPLES OF OUR MOTHERS AND FATHERS IN FAITH WHO FOLLOWED THE LORD BEFORE US, MAY WE IN OUR TURN PROVE WORTHY OF WHAT THEY LIVED FOR, MAY WE SHARE WITH EACH OTHER AND HAND ON TO THOSE WHO FOLLOW AFTER US, WHAT THEY DIED FOR. WE COME THIS FAR BY FAITH, / LEANIN' ON THE LORD!

ISAIAH

CHAPTER 43

Promises of Redemption and Restoration

¹ But now, thus says the LORD,
who created you, O Jacob, and
formed you, O Israel:

Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name: you are
mine.

² When you pass through the water, I
will be with you;
in the rivers you shall not drown.
When you walk through fire, you shall
not be burned;
the flames shall not consume you.

³ For I am the LORD, your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,

Ethiopia and Seba * in return for
you.

⁴ Because you are precious in my eyes
and glorious, and because I love you.

I give men in return for you
and peoples in exchange for your
life. *

⁵ Fear not, for I am with you;
from the east I will bring back your
descendants,
from the west I will gather you.

⁶ I will say to the north: Give them up!
and to the south: Hold not back!
Bring back my sons from afar,
and my daughters from the ends of
the earth: /

⁷ Everyone who is named as mine,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.

NEW ORLEANS HOMILY
28 SEPTEMBER 1986

26TH SUNDAY OF YEAR (C)
AMOS 6:1, 4-7
I TIM. 6: 11-16
LUKE 16: 19-31

BROTHERS AND SISTERS--THE GOSPEL TODAY SHOWS JESUS AT HIS LIVELIEST AND HIS WITTIEST. HE TELLS A DROLL STORY, A MERRY TALE--A FUNNY STORY, A KIND OF SHAGGY-DOG STORY THAT IS IN DEADLY EARNEST.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT JESUS IS TALKING TO PHARISEES WHO HAVE BEEN TAGGING ALONG, LISTENING TO WHAT HE IS SAYING, AND MOCKING HIM FOR ALL HIS SAYINGS ABOUT MONEY AND PROPERTY: "YOU ARE THOSE WHO KEEP ON JUSTIFYING YOURSELVES BEFORE OTHER PEOPLE," JESUS SAYS, SOMEWHAT ANGRILY--"BUT GOD READS YOUR HEARTS, AND THE THINGS THAT YOU ADMIRE MOST OF ALL, THESE VERY THINGS GOD HOLDS IN COMPLETE DISREGARD!" [LUKE 16:15] THEN JESUS--IN A MORE HUMOROUS VEIN--GOES ON TO TELL THE STORY WE JUST READ IN TODAY'S GOSPEL.

THIS STORY OF THE RICH MAN AND THE POOR MAN-- IS ANOTHER PARABLE, VERY MUCH LIKE THE PRODIGAL SON STORY THAT SAINT LUKE TOLD JUST ONE CHAPTER BEFORE. LIKE THE PARABLE OF THE PRODIGAL SON, THIS STORY OF THE RICH MAN AND THE POOR MAN ALSO IS A STORY ABOUT A FATHER AND TWO SONS, ONE RIGHTEOUS, AND ONE WHO SQUANDERS AND WASTES THE GOOD THINGS OF THIS EARTH. IN THE STORY OF THE PRODIGAL SON, THE WASTRAL COMES TO HIS SENSES AND RETURNS TO THE HOUSE OF HIS FATHER, WHILE THE SO-CALLED RIGHTEOUS SON TURNS BITTERLY AGAINST HIM.

HERE THE STORY IS VERY DIFFERENT, THOUGH THE POINT IS PRETTY MUCH THE SAME: WHO IS THE TRUE CHILD OF GOD. THE STORY OF THE RICH MAN (WHO VERY SURPRISINGLY IS NEVER GIVEN A NAME) AND LAZARUS IS A "LET'S PRETEND" STORY, A KIND OF GAME JESUS IS PLAYING WITH HIS LISTENERS--AND HIS MOCKERS.

JESUS STRINGS US ALONG: LET'S PRETEND!

RICH PEOPLE HAVE IT NICE, DON'T THEY, JESUS IS SAYING: THEY DRESS IN FANCY ^{Clothes} ~~DRESSES~~, AND EAT GREAT MEALS EVERY DAY. WE ALL WANT TO BE RICH AND HAVE A GREAT LIFE, GOOD CLOTHES, GOOD FOOD, NICE HOUSE, THE GREATEST. CLOSE YOUR EYES AND LET'S PRETEND!

NOW LET'S IMAGINE THAT WE ARE DEAD, AND WE HAVE LOST ALL THE THINGS WE LIKED SO VERY MUCH, EVERYTHING THAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT TO US. NO MORE NICE THINGS. NO MORE GOOD FOOD. ALL IS GONE, EVERYTHING WE SET OUR HEART ON AND LOVED MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE. ALL GONE. WE ARE NOW VERY ALONE, AND IN TORMENT.

NOW, JESUS SAYS--LET'S IMAGINE SOMEONE ELSE DIES. JESUS CALLS HIM LAZARUS--AFTER THE HEBREW WORD "EL'AZUR"--OR "GOD-HELPS." JESUS DOES NOT GIVE THE RICH MAN A NAME, BECAUSE HE IS US, YOU AND ME. HE MIGHT HAVE CALLED HIM OLD "MONEY-BAGS" BECAUSE THAT IS WHAT HIS LIFE IS. JESUS THINKS OF THIS "LAZARUS", THIS "GOD-HELPS" PERSON AND REMEMBERS HIS PRODIGAL SON, WHO LONGED TO FILL HIS BELLY WITH THE HUSKS THE PIGS WERE EATING. HE THINKS

ALSO OF THE CANAANITE WOMAN HE MET WHO TAUGHT HIM,
"YES, LORD, EVEN THE DOGS HAVE A RIGHT TO EAT THE
CRUMBS THAT FALL FROM THE MASTER'S TABLE."

NOW OLD "MONEY-BAGS" NEVER DID ANYTHING
WRONG, REALLY. HE NEVER HARMED THE POOR MAN OUTSIDE
HIS DOOR, COVERED WITH SORES. HE MIGHT HAVE EVEN
HELPED HIM OUT, IN FACT, HE PROBABLY DID--THAT IS WHY
HE AND THE DOGS WERE SITTING OUTSIDE THE DOOR--BECAUSE
THAT IS WHERE THE FREE HANDOUTS WERE GIVEN TO THE POOR.
NOW, THE RELIGIOUS PRACTICE OF THE TIME WAS THAT PEOPLE
COVERED WITH SORES WERE PROBABLY LEPERS. THEY WERE NOT
ALLOWED TO ASSOCIATE WITH WELL PEOPLE, AND THEY WERE
CONSIDERED RITUALLY UNCLEAN, SO ANYONE WHO TOUCHED THEM
WAS NOT ALLOWED TO TOUCH OTHER PEOPLE, OR TO ENTER THE
TEMPLE, AND OF COURSE THE PERSON WITH SORES WAS NOT
ALLOWED TO WORSHIP IN THE TEMPLE, OR HAVE ANY CONTACT
AT ALL WITH OTHER PEOPLE. THE LAW SAID: BE GOOD TO THIS
MAN, DON'T HARM HIM, GIVE HIM YOUR LEFT-OVERS, BUT DO
NOT TOUCH HIM! HE IS UNCLEAN. THIS MAN, WHOM JESUS
IRONICALLY NAMES "GOD-HELPS."

NOW IN OUR STORY, WHAT HAPPENS? AGAIN, IMAGINE
THAT YOU ARE DEAD, HAVING LOST EVERYTHING, AND DESPERATELY
ALONE. YOU ARE TERRIBLY LONELY AND LOST, AND HERE YOU
SEE THIS BEGGAR WITH THE SORES--SITTING IN THE WARM
EMBRACE OF THE FATHER OF YOUR PEOPLE. YOU SEE HIM SUDDENLY
AS THE TRUE CHILD OF ABRAHAM, TRUE CHILD OF YOUR OWN FLESH

AND BLOOD. YOU SUDDENLY SEE HIM FOR WHO HE REALLY IS, AND THOUGH YOU NEVER THOUGHT OR DREAMED OF DOING THIS BEFORE, NOW YOU ASK THAT HE MIGHT TOUCH YOU WITH HIS FINGER, GIVING YOU A COOLING, SOOTHING DRINK, AS A MOTHER WOULD SOOTHE A FEVERISH CHILD.

OLD "MONEY-BAGS" THEN BEGS FATHER ABRAHAM TO SEND THIS OUTCAST TO BE A TEACHER OF ALL OUR BRETHREN. TEACH THEM, BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE: "I AM YOUR BROTHER, THE CHILD OF YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER." BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. TEACH MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS WHO ARE SO VERY BLINDED AND DEAFENED BY THE INSANE PURSUIT OF WEALTH.

JESUS IS SAYING: THE POINT OF THIS DAY-DREAM, "LET'S PRETEND" STORY--IS, WAKE UP RIGHT NOW, WAKE UP AND LEARN THE LESSON BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE. THE POINT IS MISSED IF WE THINK THE ONLY LESSON IS THAT WE SHOULD LIVE SIMPLY AND NOT ACQUIRE MORE THAN WE NEED. THE POINT IS MISSED IF WE THINK THAT ALL WE HAVE TO DO IS SHARE AND BE GENEROUS WITH WHAT WE GOT. OR THAT WE SHOULD BE DO-GOODERS, HELPING THE "LESS FORTUNATE" WHILE AT THE SAME TIME THANKING GOD THAT WE OURSELVES ARE "NOT LIKE THEM." NO, JESUS IS TELLING THE MOCKING PHARISEES, AND US--NO: WE HAVE TO ACQUIRE A WHOLE NEW, SPIRITUAL WAY OF THINKING.

OLD "MONEY-BAGS" IS CONDEMNED, NOT BECAUSE HE WASN'T GENEROUS TO LAZARUS. NOR BECAUSE HE ATE TOO MUCH. THE RICH MAN IS CONDEMNED--LIKE ALL THOSE THE GOSPEL

INDICTS--BECAUSE HE IS BLIND AND DEAF, BECAUSE HE IS WHOLLY IGNORANT, BECAUSE HE DID NOT RECOGNIZE HIS BROTHER, HE DID NOT KNOW WHO LAZARUS REALLY WAS. OLD "MONEY-BAGS"--LIKE THE CITY OF JERUSALEM WHICH JESUS WEPT OVER--NEVER KNEW THE TIME OF HIS VISITATION.

IT IS NOT SIMPLY THAT WE HAVE TO MAKE THE LIFE OF LAZARUS A LITTLE BETTER BY SHARING WITH HIM, BUT LAZARUS MUST BE WELCOMED INTO OUR MIDST AS A BROTHER AND A SISTER AND A TEACHER. NOW IS THE TIME TO LONG TO BE TOUCHED BY LAZARUS. NOW IS THE TIME TO HUNGER FOR HIS TEACHING.

THIS IS THE POINT JESUS IS MAKING: RECOGNIZE LAZARUS IN YOUR MIDST, AND LISTEN TO HIS TEACHING. POPE PAUL VI SAID VERY MUCH THE SAME THING IN HIS ENCYCLICAL ON THE EVANGELIZATION OF PEOPLES: THE CHURCH, ALL OF US, NEED THE POOR EVEN MORE THAN THEY NEED US. WE NEED TO BE EVANGELIZED BY THEM, WE NEED TO HEAR THE VOICE OF OUR GOD SPEAKING TO US, CALLING US TO REPENT AND TURN TO HIM, CALLING US TO BE AT PEACE, ONE WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH THE LORD IN THE WORKING FOR JUSTICE WHICH IS THE VERY CAUSE OF THE KINGDOM.

WE MUST OPEN OUR MINDS, OPEN OUR HEARTS, OUR WHOLE SELVES AND ALL OUR GIFTS AND RESOURCES TO ALL OF GOD'S CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY THE MOST NEGLECTED, MOST FORGOTTEN, MOST OVERLOOKED, THOSE WHOM THE WORLD CALLS "POOR." FOR THESE ARE THE MOST SPECIAL CHILDREN OF GOD AND OUR

MOST VITAL TREASURE.

HERE IS THE VERY VITALITY OF GOD, HERE IS THE "ABUNDANT LIFE" THAT JESUS CAME TO GIVE. IT IS NOT THAT OLD "MONEY-BAGS" NEEDS TO GET MORE GENEROUS TO LAZARUS. IT IS THAT THE RICH MAN--AND ALL OF US--ARE SO DESPERATELY POOR AND NEEDY OURSELVES, AND WE HAVE SO VERY MUCH TO RECEIVE FROM THE POOR CHILD OF GOD AT OUR GATE. "BEHOLD," JESUS SAYS, "I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK" [CF. REV. 3: 20] HERE IS CHRIST, HERE IS GOD'S TRUE FELLOWSHIP IN THE COMMON CAUSE OF JUSTICE, HERE THE LORD STANDS AND KNOCKS, LONGING TO BE ADMITTED TO BRING TO OUR TABLE THE TRUEST AND EVERLASTING GIFTS OF LOVE, COMPASSION, WISDOM AND GRACE.

LET'S PRETEND, JESUS TELLS US, LET'S PLAY A LITTLE GAME. SAY THAT YOU HAVE DIED AND LOST ALL THAT YOU HOLD MOST DEAR, ALL THAT YOU STRIVE FOR WITH SUCH ENERGY AND CREATIVITY, ALL THAT YOU LONG TO HAVE AND KEEP. NOW WHAT DO YOU SEE? WHO DO YOU SEE? WHAT AND WHO IS REALLY IMPORTANT NOW? WAKE UP FROM THIS DREAM AND LOOK AROUND YOU. OPEN YOUR WINDOWS AND DOORS, FLING WIDE YOUR GATES--WELCOME YOUR KING INTO YOUR MIDST, WITH ALL HIS BROTHERS AND SISTERS, BEARING THE TRUE GIFTS THAT ENDURE TO EVERLASTING LIFE.

MONEY IS OFTEN THE EASIEST THING TO GIVE, ESPECIALLY WHEN WE HAVE MORE THAN WE REALLY NEED. OF COURSE WE SHOULD SHARE WHAT WE HAVE WITH THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH. BUT IT IS FAR MORE DIFFICULT TO GIVE

OUR ENERGY, OUR TALENTS, OUR GIFTS, OUR TIME, OUR HEARTS. THAT TAKES MORE PRACTICE. BUT IN THIS KIND OF GIVING, WE RECEIVE FAR MORE THAN WE EVER COULD LOSE, FOR EVERY GIFT OF THIS KIND IS A BOND OF LOVE, A BOND OF COMMITMENT, A DEEPENING OF OUR BELONGING TO THE BODY OF CHRIST. WE SHARE IN THE LIFE OF THE ONE WHO POURED OUR HIS BLOOD FOR US--AND THOSE WHOM WE BLESS WITH OUR GIFTS OF OURSELVES, BLESS US FAR MORE WITH THEIR LIVES JOINED AS IN ONE FLESH WITH OURS.

DON'T BE DELUDED BY THE ATTRACTIONS OF A VERY TEMPORARY AND ILLUSIVE SECURITY OF MATERIAL WEALTH, ITS PURSUIT AND POSSESSION--BUT OPEN YOUR EYES TO THE TRUE TREASURE, THE REAL PRESENCE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD IN OUR MIDST. AMOS AND THE INSPIRED AUTHOR OF THE PASTORAL LETTER TO TIMOTHY SPEAK IN THE SAME VOICE WITH SAINT LUKE. GIVE WHAT IS YOURS TO GIVE, AND RECEIVE WHAT IS GOD'S GREATEST TREASURE: HIS KINGDOM IN YOUR MIDST IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF ALL HIS CHILDREN.

THE CURSE OF OUR TIME--PERHAPS OF ANY TIME, ANY AGE, IS LONELINESS AND ALONENESS, RADICAL SELF-SUFFICIENCY. WEALTH AND ITS PURSUIT SO EASILY FEEDS US WITH THE DELUSION THAT WE CAN MAKE DO FOR OURSELVES WITHOUT ANY HELP FROM OTHERS, EVEN FROM GOD. MONEY TALKS, PEOPLE SAY--BUT ITS SPEECH IS NOT THE WORD OF GOD, BUT THE EMPTY PROMISES OF THE FATHER OF LIES, WHO CANNOT DELIVER, AND WHO CAN ONLY BLIND, AND DEAFEN AND DELUDE, AND LEAVE

US IN THE END, NOT SELF-SUFFICIENT, BUT MOST
LONELY, MOST ISOLATED AND ALONE,

WE APPROACH TODAY, THE TABLE OF THE LORD,
THE TABLE OF GOD'S POOR, WHO HUNGER AND WHO THIRST.
WE BRING WHAT IS OURS TO GIVE, AND RECEIVE WHAT IS
THE FULLNESS OF GOD IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF HIS KINGDOM,
MAKING COVENANT AND COMMITTING OURSELVES ANEW TO
SEEK THE JUSTICE OF THAT KINGDOM, TO SEEK LAZARUS
AND TO FIND HIM, OUR GREATEST TREASURE, AND GOD'S.

GIRL SCOUT MASS
SAINT JOHN CATHEDRAL
19 OCTOBER 1986, 2 P.M.

I SAM. 3: 1-10
PHIL. 3: 12-16
LUKE 19: 1-10

THEME: "DARE TO BE DIFFERENT . . ."

MY DEAR YOUNG WOMEN: GIRL SCOUTS, CAMPFIRE GIRLS,
JUNIOR CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS--AND ALSO HONORED ADULT
LEADERS, DEAR FAMILY AND FRIENDS --

IT IS NEVER MUCH FUN TO BE LEFT OUT OF THINGS.
IF SOMEONE IN OUR CLASS HAS A PARTY, WE WANT TO BE
INCLUDED--IT IS HARD NOT TO BE INVITED. WE HATE TO BE
LEFT BEHIND WHEN EVERYONE ELSE IS GOING. WE WANT TO
BE PART, WE WANT TO BELONG, WE WANT TO GO AND BE ON
THE GO.

WE GOT TO PAY A PRICE THOUGH, WHENEVER WE STEP OUT
OF OURSELVES TO GET INVOLVED. IF SOMEONE INVITES US TO
HER HOUSE--WE HAVE TO LEAVE THE COMFORT AND SECURITY
OF OUR OWN HOME--AND TAKE THE CHANCE THAT WE WILL GET
HOMESICK. OR MAYBE WE WON'T FEEL VERY MUCH AT HOME.
THIS IS THE COST OF GOING AWAY FROM HOME.

OR MAYBE A TEACHER OR A SCOUT LEADER IS LOOKING FOR
A VOLUNTEER TO LEAD A CLASS PROJECT, OR TO REPRESENT
OUR GROUP AT A MEETING, OR BE IN CHARGE OF A COMMITTEE
PLANING A PARTY OR ORGANIZING AN OUTING. WE LIKE TO BE
SINGLED OUT AND RECOGNIZED, WE HOPE SOMEONE WILL NOTICE
US, AND PICK US TO BE THE ONE. BUT WE ARE TOO SHY,
TO UNSURE OF OURSELVES TO VOLUNTEER, TO TAKE THE RISK OF
FEELING FOOLISH, OR GETTING REJECTED OR LAUGHED AT. SO
WE KEEP STILL, WE WITHDRAW INTO THE COMFORT AND SECURITY
OF OUR OWN SHELL, AND FEEL MISERABLE WHEN SOMEONE ELSE

GETS PICKED, DARN IT. OR WE LIE TO OURSELVES: "I NEVER WANTED IT ANYWAY"--OR WE PUT DOWN THE PERSON WHO WAS PICKED: "SHE ALWAYS WAS JUST A BIG SHOW-OFF."

YES--THIS IS THE WAY IT OFTEN IS WITH US WHEN WE ARE GROWING UP. WE ARE FULL OF DREAMS AND HOPES--WE SO MUCH WANT TO BE POPULAR, RESPECTED, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ACTION. WE WANT TO BE IMPORTANT, TO BE LEADERS, TO FIND OUR TALENTS AND SKILLS, TO USE THEM AND BE RECOGNIZED AND APPRECIATED FOR WHO WE ARE AND FOR WHAT WE CAN CONTRIBUTE.

BUT IT IS HARD TO TAKE THE RISKS, TO "DARE TO DREAM"--AS YOUR THEME TODAY SAYS IT. BUT MORE THAN THAT, IT IS HARDER STILL TO DARE TO TAKE THE STEPS, TO STEP OUT ON A LIMB, TO DO THE THINGS THAT ARE NECESSARY TO MAKE OUR DREAM A REAL, LIVING EXPERIENCE. WE HAVE MANY EXCUSES: "I AM NOT GOOD ENOUGH," "I AM SURE TO FAIL," "I AM NOT READY FOR THIS YET." SO WE DON'T TAKE THE CHANCE.

WHAT IF ZACCHAEUS WOULD HAVE HAD AN ATTACK OF THE JITTERS, OR BEEN MISTER SHY: "THAT TREE IS TOO TALL... I'LL FALL OFF... I AM ONLY MAKING AN IDIOT OUT OF MYSELF!" ZACCHAEUS DID NOT ENGAGE IN NEGATIVE THINKING: "I AM TOO SHORT... I WON'T SEE ANYWAY, AND BESIDES PEOPLE WILL LAUGH AT ME. THEY DON'T LIKE ME VERY MUCH." NO--ZACCHAEUS' SHORTCOMINGS BECAME NOT DEFEATS FOR HIM, BUT CHALLENGES: HE DID SOMETHING ABOUT THEM: HE CLIMBED A TREE AND DID NOT CARE WHAT PEOPLE THOUGHT OR SAID: HE WANTED TO SEE JESUS AND NOTHING WAS GOING TO STOP HIM UNTIL HE HEARD THE WORDS:

"COME DOWN, ZACCHAEUS--HURRY, BECAUSE I MEAN TO STAY AT YOUR HOUSE TODAY!"

NOTHING WOULD STOP SAINT PAUL EITHER. "I AM RUNNING THE RACE" SAINT PAUL SAYS, "BECAUSE I HAVE BEEN GRASPED BY CHRIST." ST. PAUL IN PRISON HAD EVERY REASON TO BE DISCOURAGED. HIS WORK SEEMED IN SHAMBLES. PEOPLE WERE CRITICIZING HIM--NOT ONLY HIS SWORN ENEMIES, BUT EVEN THOSE WHO WERE SUPPOSED TO BE HIS FRIENDS--OUT OF ENVY OR JUST MISUNDERSTANDING, THEY WERE TEARING DOWN WHAT HE HAD WORKED SO HARD TO BUILD UP. BUT FOR ST. PAUL, LIKE ZACCHAEUS, ONLY ONE THING MATTERED: TO BE WITH CHRIST, TO HAVE HIM AS HIS BEST FRIEND--TO BE POSSESSED BY HIM, IN FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE. NOTHING ELSE MATTERED.

ZACCHAEUS IN HIS TREE, PAUL IN PRISON ALONE AND FRIENDLESS, AND THE LITTLE BOY SAMUEL FAR AWAY FROM HIS MOM AND DAD, ALL ALONE ON THE TEMPLE FLOOR, BESIDE THE FLICKERING LAMP CASTING LONG SHADOWS INTO THE GLOOMY DARK--ALL KNEW HOW TO DARE TO DREAM: THE LORD ALONE WAS THEIR TRUE TREASURE--NOTHING ELSE MATTERED. THE LORD WAS THEIR TRUE TREASURE--AND THEREFORE EVERYTHING ELSE MATTERED--BECAUSE THE LORD WAS NOT DONE WITH THEM YET! "HURRY DOWN, ZACCHAEUS, FOR I MEAN TO DINE AT YOUR HOUSE!" "GET UP, PAUL--EVEN IN PRISON THERE IS MUCH TO DO: RUN THE GOOD RACE, FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT, NEVER GIVE UP EVEN WHEN YOU ARE DOWN, BECAUSE: "TO LIVE IS CHRIST AND TO DIE IS GAIN" [PHIL. 1: 21] "SAMUEL, SAMUEL, GET UP, YOUR

MASTER IS CALLING YOU." "SPEAK, LORD, YOUR SERVANT IS LISTENING!"

YOU ARE BLESSED, DEAR YOUNG WOMEN, BY THE DREAM THAT YOU HAVE, THE DREAM THAT YOU DARE TO FOLLOW CHRIST, TO PUT HIM AT THE VERY CENTER OF YOUR LIVES, PUTTING EVERYTHING ELSE ASIDE, BEING WILLING TO DO ANYTHING, GO ANYWHERE, BECOME ANYTHING, BEING PREPARED FOR ALL THAT THE GOOD LORD SHALL ASK. "DARE TO DREAM" AS YOUR MOTHERS AND FATHERS BEFORE YOU. DARE TO DREAM LIKE ALL THOSE GOOD ADULT LEADERS WE HONOR TODAY, THOSE FINE MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE SO GENEROUSLY GIVEN THEIR TIME, THEIR TALENTS AND LOVE FOR YOU. THEY ALL HAVE DARED TO DREAM--AND YOU ARE THEIR DREAM, THE DREAM THAT THEY DARE, THEIR BEST DREAM.

YOU ARE OUR BEST DREAM, THE DREAM WE DARE: THAT YOU WILL BE FILLED WITH ALL THE LOVE OF CHRIST--THAT YOU WILL LAY ASIDE ALL THE SELFISH DREAMS THAT WOULD SEPARATE YOU FROM THE VERY BEST SELVES THAT GOD HAS IN MIND FOR YOU, THE BEST YOU THAT YOU COULD BECOME, THE BEST YOU THAT YOU COULD DARE TO DREAM. MAY YOU DARE TO DREAM WITH CHRIST, AND WALK WITH HIM, ALONG WITH ZACCHAEUS, PAUL AND LITTLE SAMUEL--DARING IN FAITH, ALIVE IN HOPE AND ALWAYS ON FIRE WITH LOVE. IN A WORLD MADE BY GOD AND FILLED WITH DREAMS AS THE GREAT BLACK POET LANGSTON HUGHES SANG ABOUT MANY YEARS AGO:

I DREAM A WORLD

by Langston Hughes

I dream a world where man
No other (man) will scorn
Where love will bless the earth
And peace its paths adorn.
I dream a world where all
Will know sweet freedom's way,
Where greed no longer saps the soul
Nor avarice blights our day.
A world I dream where black and white
Whatever race you be,
Will share the bounties of the earth
And every man is free.
Where wretchedness will hang its head
And joy, . . . like a pearl
Attend the needs of all mankind
Of such . . . I dream
OUR WORLD

From Arna Bontemps, "American Negro Poetry", American Century Series.
Hill and Wang Company, N.Y., N.Y., 1963, p. 72

RENEW (III)
SAINT LEO'S CHURCH
7 OCTOBER 1986

Is. 42: 5-9
Eph. 3: 14-21
LUKE 8: 4-10,11-15

MY DEAR BROTHERS AND SISTERS--I WANT TO THANK ALL OF YOU FOR YOUR MOST GENEROUS PARTICIPATION IN THE RENEWAL PROGRAM OF OUR DIOCESE. IT IS EVIDENT THAT GOD IS BLESSING US VERY MUCH INDEED: YOUR PRESENCE, YOUR ENTHUSIASM, YOUR CONCERN AND COMMITMENT--ALL GIVE TESTIMONY TO GOD'S GRACIOUS PROVIDENCE. I THANK THE LORD FOR YOU ALL. AS SAINT PAUL SPOKE TO THE CHRISTIANS AT PHILIPPI--SO I ALSO WISH TO SAY TO YOU TODAY:

I GIVE THANKS TO MY GOD EVERY TIME I THINK OF YOU-- WHICH IS CONSTANTLY, IN EVERY PRAYER I UTTER-- REJOICING AS I PLEAD ON YOUR BEHALF, AT THE WAY YOU HAVE ALL CONTINUALLY HELPED PROMOTE THE GOSPEL FROM THE VERY FIRST DAY. I AM SURE OF THIS MUCH: THAT HE WHO HAS BEGUN THE GOOD WORK IN YOU WILL CARRY IT THROUGH TO COMPLETION, RIGHT UP TO THE DAY OF CHRIST JESUS. [PHIL. 1: 3-6]

I NEED NOT TELL YOU WHAT A BLESSING YOU ARE, WHAT A GIFT OF GOD TO THE CHURCH AT CLEVELAND, ^{AND} ~~TO~~ TO ALL OF GOD'S PEOPLE. YOU WOULD NOT BE HERE IF YOU WERE NOT PROFOUNDLY AWARE OF AND GRATEFUL TO GOD FOR THE RICH GIFTS HE HAS GIVEN TO YOU: YOUR LIVES, YOUR LOVED ONES, YOUR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS, THE PEACE AND COMFORT AND WELL-BEING OF YOUR HOMES, OFTEN YOUR HEALTH AND PROSPERITY--

YOU ARE HUMBL^{By}ED AND GRATEFUL FOR GOD'S LOVE TO YOU, YOUR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY AND PARISH--AND SO YOU GATHER HERE TODAY TO SAY WITH THE PSALMIST: "HOW SHALL I MAKE A RETURN TO THE LORD FOR ALL THE GOOD HE HAS DONE FOR ME?" [Ps. 116:12]

WHAT CAN I DO? WHAT CAN I DO? EAGERLY YOU GATHER, ENTHUSIASTICALLY YOU COME TOGETHER. YES: WE ARE READY, WE WANT TO SAY WITH THE YOUTHFUL ISAIAH: "HERE I AM, LORD, SEND ME!!" [Is. 6:8] FAITH WITHOUT WORKS IS DEAD--WE ALL AGREE. WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE WOULD WE BE, IF AFTER RECEIVING PLENTY FROM THE HAND OF GOD, WE WERE TO FORGET TO SHARE, TO GIVE WHAT WE HAVE TO OTHERS. HAVING SEEN THE LIGHT, WE WISH TO SHED OUR BUSHEL BASKETS AND BEAM FORTH OUR LIGHTS UPON THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD.

JESUS WAS SURROUNDED BY EAGER PEOPLE, ENTHUSIASTIC PEOPLE WHO HAD WAITED SO TERRIBLY LONG FOR THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. ST. LUKE'S GOSPEL--FROM WHICH WE READ THIS EVENING--IS PARTICULARLY PEOPLED BY CROU^wDS OF THE FAITHFUL LONGING FOR THE KINGDOM: SIMEON AND ANNA IN THE TEMPLE, JOHN THE BAPTIST SENDING MESSENGERS, "ARE YOU THE ONE WHO IS TO COME, OR SHOULD WE LOOK FOR ANOTHER?" [LUKE 7: 18], THE CROU^wDS GATHERING TO SEE MIRACLES, THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB, THE DISCIPLES GATHERING IN JERUSALEM WAITING FOR THE COMING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: "HOW LONG, OH LORD, HOW LONG?? IS THIS THE TIME NOW WHEN YOU WILL RESTORE THE KINGDOM TO ISRAEL?" [CF. ACTS 1:6]

GOOD QUESTIONS, REAL HUMAN QUESTIONS, HARD QUESTIONS,

OUR QUESTIONS: WE WHO HAVE HEARD THE WORD OF GOD'S CALL, WE WHO HAVE MADE THE DECISION TO LIVE FOR THE LORD AND TO SERVE HIM AND HIS PEOPLE: WHEN, LORD? IS NOW THE TIME?

THE PARABLE JESUS SPEAKS TO THE CROUD IS ADDRESSED TO US TODAY: THE FARMER WENT OUT TO SOW HIS SEED. THE OLD TESTAMENT PREFERED TO DESCRIBE GOD AS THE HARVESTER-- AND EVEN ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST PROPHECIZED: "HIS WINNOWER FORK IS IN HIS HAND!! HE IS CLEANING OUT HIS THRESHING FLOOR AND GATHERING THE WHEAT INTO HIS BARN!!" [LUKE 3:17] --BUT HERE JESUS SPEAKS ABOUT THE KINGDOM AS A PLANTING OF SEED, A SOWING OF SEED. "UNLESS THE GRAIN OF WHEAT FALLS INTO THE GROUND AND DIES," HE SAYS IN ST. JOHN'S GOSPEL, "IT REMAINS BY ITSELF ALONE, BUT IF IT DIES, IT BEARS MUCH FRUIT." [JOHN 12:24]. AND, SPEAKING OF PLANTING, ST. JAMES COUNSELS AND COMFORTS HIS BELEAGUERED AND DISCOURAGED COMMUNITY: "CONSIDER HOW THE FARMER WAITS FOR THE PRECIOUS PRODUCE OF THE SOIL, BEING PATIENT ABOUT IT UNTIL IT GETS THE EARLY AND LATE RAINS. YOU TOO BE PATIENT; STRENGTHEN YOUR HEARTS, FOR THE COMING OF THE LORD IS AT HAND." [JAMES 5: 7-8]

FARMERS--AND FISHERMEN. FARMERS WHO SOW SEED AND WAIT FOR RAIN. FISHERMEN WHO TOIL THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH AND CATCH NOTHING. SHEPHERDS WHO LEAVE NINETY-NINE SHEEP IN THE DESERT / AND HOUSEWIVES WHO SWEEP DILIGENTLY FOR ONE LOST COIN, TREASURE HUNTERS SEEKING HIDDEN TREASURE IN A FIELD, MERCHANTS GAMBLING EVERYTHING ON THE CHANCE

DISCOVERY OF ONE REALLY VALUABLE PEARL--ALL THESE FOLKS FILL THE GOSPEL OF SAINT LUKE AND THE STORIES JESUS TELLS--STRANGE FOLK, SO REMOVED FROM OUR AMERICAN ENTHUSIASM AND EFFICIENT AND PRACTICAL GOOD SENSE, KNOWLEDGE AND POWER, THAT IS WHAT WE LOOK FOR--NOT VULNERABILITY, DEPENDENCE, AND WEAKNESS. No. ONCE WE SEE, ONCE WE KNOW WHAT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO, ONCE WE GLIMPSE THE VISION, OUR WHEELS START TO TURN AND THE CREATIVE JUICES FLOW--WE WANT TO GET RIGHT ON TO IT. OUR POLITICAL SENSES ARE SHARPENED: WHERE IS THE POWER, WHERE IS THE ENABLEMENT TO GET THE JOB DONE? AND WE GET ON WITH IT. WE HAVE LITTLE TIME TO WASTE WITH FARMERS, FISHERMEN, LOST COINS AND SHEEP, HIDDEN TREASURES AND PEARLS OF GREAT PRICE.

"LET EVERYONE WITH EARS LISTEN TO WHAT HE HEARS," JESUS TELLS US IN TODAY'S GOSPEL. WITH THE DISCIPLES LET US SEEK THE MEANING OF HIS PROPHETIC WORDS.

THE SEED, JESUS TELLS US, IS THE WORD OF GOD. EASY ENOUGH TO HEAR, EASY TO RECEIVE. BUT OUR WORK IS NOT SEED GATHERING, BUT BEARING FRUIT. THE SEED ALONE IS NOT THE FRUIT, AND NEITHER IS SIMPLY HEARING AND GATHERING UP THE WORD OF GOD WITH OUR GOOD INTENTIONS. THE SEED MUST GERMINATE AND GROW FROM WITHIN, AND WE MUST TAKE THE WORD OF GOD IN A PAINFUL PROCESS OF DYING AND COMING TO NEW LIFE, NEW WAYS, /AND, IN A NEW TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES AND THE WORLD WE LIVE IN.

"HE MUST INCREASE, I MUST DECREASE" SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST CRIES [JOHN 3: 30], AS HIS LIFE DRAWS TO A CLOSE.

LIKE JOHN, WE TOO DO NOT WANT TO DISAPPEAR FROM THE PICTURE. WE WANT TO HAVE AN IMPORTANT, INDISPENSIBLE ROLE IN GOD'S PLAN. WE WANT TO WORK GOD'S PLAN/INTO OUR BUSY MEANINGFUL LIVES--AND SO THE WORD IS EASILY TRAMPLED UNDERFOOT IN OUR HURRIED COMINGS AND GOINGS. WE DESERVE TO BE HAPPY AND FULFILLED--AND WE ARE RELUCTANT TO JEOPARDIZE OUR HARD-WON PLANS/FOR THE RISKINESS OF THE KINGDOM. WE ARE CAUTIONS, WE COMPROMISE, WE ARE AFRAID TO BE WHOLLY AVAILABLE.

OR WE TRY TOO HARD: WE ARE RULED BY SUCCESS AND THE NORMS OF SUCCESS THAT THE WORLD SETS BEFORE US. WE JUDGE THE WORK GOD CALLS US TO DO BY THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS WE CAN MEASURE AND ASSESS AND EVALUATE, AND TAKE OUR CUE FROM THE EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION THAT WE EXPECT AND EVEN DEMAND. WE ARE RULED BY FEAR OF FAILURE, WE MAKE EXCUSES WHY WE CANNOT BE WHOLLY DISPOSABLE--LOSING ALL THINGS, WE FEAR WE SHALL BE LOST OURSELVES, ROOTLESS, LOST, AFRAID TO BE WHOLLY DISPOSABLE.

OR: WE CARE TOO MUCH--AND ARE CONSUMED BY WORRIES AND CARES. IT ALL DEPENDS UPON US, AND WE ARE AFRAID TO ASK FOR HELP. WE CAN HANDLE OUR OWN THORNS, WE CAN SOLVE OUR OWN DIFFICULTIES--AND WE ARE CHOKED AND DESTROYED IN THE PROCESS, OUR FRUIT STILL-BORN, INFERTILE, STERILE AND DEAD. WE CARE TOO MUCH TO COST OURSELVES--IRONIC THOUGH THAT MAY SEEM. WE CANNOT SPEND THAT COIN, INVEST THAT TALENT, MAKE THAT COMMITMENT, FEARING THAT WE SHALL

INDEED BE SPENT AND NEVER BOUGHT AT ANY PRICE.

THE THREE OBSTACLES TO REALIZING THE POWER OF GOD IN OUR LIVES BY WHICH WE WOULD "BRING FORTH FRUIT IN CHARITY FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD, "[CF. DECREE ON PRIESTLY TRAINING (OPTATAM TOTIUS), VATICAN II, PARA. 16] ARE THREE FEARS: FEAR TO BE AVAILABLE, FEAR TO BE DISPOSABLE, FEAR TO BE EXPENDABLE. OR: FEAR OF RISK, FEAR OF FAILURE, AND FEAR OF COMMITMENT. THESE ARE THE FOOTPATHS, THE ROCKY GROUND, AND THE BRIARS OF OUR AGE WHICH INHIBIT THE GROWTH ~~7~~ OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE GERMINATION OF THE WORD.

BUT THE WORD DOES AFTER ALL FALL ON GOOD GROUND. THE WORD--HUMBLE, SIMPLE, DIRECT, REAL--FALLS ON GOOD GROUND, FINDS ROOTS IN AVAILABLE HEARTS, SPEAKS IN GENEROUS AND DISPOSABLE LIVES, COMES TO MATURE FRUIT IN LIVES SPENT, LIVES GROWN EXPENDABLE IN THE WORK OF GOD'S KINGDOM. THE LITTLE SEED, BORN IN DEATH, BORN IN SUFFERING AND SORROW AND PAIN, GROWS READY FOR THE REAPING IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

"POWER IS MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS" [2 COR. 12:9] CHRIST TELLS ST. PAUL IN AN HOUR OF SEVERE TRIAL. "MY GRACE IS ENOUGH FOR YOU." AVAILABILITY, DISPOSABILITY, EXPENDABILITY--ALL ARE WORDS OF LOVE, BUT WORDS OF GREAT SACRIFICE, WORDS OF PAIN AND LOSS. "YOU ARE NOT YOUR OWN," [1 COR. 6: 19] SAINT PAUL TELLS US. "YOU BELONG TO CHRIST, AND CHRIST BELONGS TO GOD." [1 COR 3:23]

WE WHO WOULD BE RAISED WITH CHRIST, EMPOWERED BY HIS HOLY SPIRIT, MUST FIRST BE WILLING TO SUFFER WITH HIM,

YES, EVEN DIE WITH HIM. THIS IS NOT AN OPTION FOR THE CHRISTIAN--IT IS INDEED THE ~~SEED~~^{ESSENCE} OF THE CHRISTIAN VOCATION, AND AN ABSOLUTE DEMAND FOR RECEIVING THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT, "TO BRING FORTH FRUIT IN CHARITY FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD." WE ARE CALLED TO BEAR FRUIT, WE ARE CALLED TO GIVE LIFE. BUT FRUIT CANNOT BE BORNE, UNLESS THE SEED DIE, AND LIFE CANNOT BE GIVEN UNLESS THE GIVER OF LIFE LAY DOWN HIS OWN LIFE WHOLLY AND WITHOUT RESERVE. SO SPEAKS THE GOSPEL, AND SO WE HEAR THIS WORD.

TODAY IS THE FEAST OF THE HOLY ROSARY. WE CELEBRATE MARY, MOTHER OF GOD AND MOTHER OF THE CHURCH. WE ARE REMINDED THAT THE MYSTERIES OF CHRIST, THE MYSTERIES OF OUR SALVATION, ARE HER MYSTERIES TOO--AND OURS! "MYSTERY" MIGHT BE ANOTHER WAY OF DESCRIBING THE PLANTING AND THE GROWING OF SEED: FOR MARY --THE CHURCH FATHERS ALL TELL US--CONCEIVED JESUS IN HER HEART BEFORE EVER IN THE FLESH--AND IN HER HUMILITY, HER SELFLESSNESS, HER CONSTANT SERVICE, HER DEEP AND LOVING INTERCESSION AND PRAYER WITH US AND FOR US, THE WORD TOOK ROOT AND TAKES ROOT STILL. MARY THE FIRST OF THE REDEEMED--BUT MARY THE FIRST OF THOSE WHO HEAR THE WORD, RECEIVE IT, AND SERVE.

WE CARE -- WE SHARE
EUCCHARISTIC DEVOTIONS
16 NOVEMBER 1986, 4 P.M.

OUR LADY OF PEACE CHURCH
JOHN 6: 1-13

WHERE CAN WE BUY?? THIS QUESTION OF JESUS ECHOES ALL OVER OUR WORLD TODAY, FOR THE CHRISTMAS SHOPPING SEASON IS UPON US ALL: STORES TWINKLE WITH TINSEL, THE AIR IS FILLED WITH HOLIDAY SOUNDS OF JOLLY OLD SAINT NICHOLAS AND HIS CHEERFUL BUSY ELVES-- SIDEWALKS ARE FILLED WITH BUSTLING CROUDS, STREETS WITH HONKING CARS, AND EVERYWHERE FACES, FACES, CRABBY SCOWLING FACES: "WHERE CAN WE BUY?"

HOLIDAY BUYING AND SELLING, SPENDING MONEY WE HAVE AND GAMBLING MONEY WE DON'T HAVE ON THE PROMISE OF PLASTIC AND NEXT YEAR'S SALARY--WE PAY HOMAGE TO THE PRINCE OF PEACE, PAY A DEBT OF GUILT AND MORTGAGE THE NATIONAL ECONOMY FOR YET ANOTHER YEAR. "WHERE CAN WE BUY?" JESUS ASKS, KNOWING FULL WELL WHAT HE WILL DO-- BUT ASKING OUR QUESTION ALL THE SAME, "WHERE CAN WE BUY?" TO TEST PHILIP, AND US.

PHILIP, WHO LONGS TO SEE THE FATHER, PHILIP WHO FIRST RAN TO TELL THE CYNICAL NATHANAEL: "WE HAVE FOUND THE ONE MOSES SPOKE ABOUT . . . COME AND SEE!" --PHILIP RECEIVES THE WORD OF JESUS AND PASSES THE TEST:

"ALL THE MONEY IN THE WORLD WILL NEVER BUY ENOUGH BREAD!" ALL THE MONEY IN THE WORLD CAN NEVER FILL THE HUNGERS OF THE HEART! LORD, SHOW US THE FATHER, AND IT WILL BE ENOUGH FOR US. "HAVE I BEEN SO LONG A TIME WITH YOU, PHILIP," JESUS WILL ANSWER, "AND STILL YOU

DO NOT KNOW ME?"

ANDREW SPEAKS--WHO FIRST HEARD THE BAPTIST'S CRY: "I DID NOT RECOGNIZE HIM! LOOK, THERE IS THE LAMB OF GOD!", ANDREW WHO FIRST ANSWERED THE LORD'S QUESTION "WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?" --"TEACHER, WHERE DO YOU LIVE?"

THERE IS A LITTLE BOY HERE WHO HAS FIVE BARLEY LOAVES AND TWO FISH. HERE I AM, LORD! HERE WE ARE! WHAT IS THIS, AND WHO ARE WE--AMONG SO MANY? WE ARE SO SMALL, AND THE TASK IS SO GREAT! BUT ANDREW --WHO FIRST BROUGHT SIMON PETER TO JESUS--NOW BRINGS THE BOY, AND BRINGS US. COME AND SEE.

JESUS SPEAKS: GET THEM TO SIT DOWN! SO WE COME TO THE TABLE OF THE LORD, SO WE APPROACH OUR GOD, EXPECTING TO BE FED AT HIS TABLE. SO WE BRING OUR DOUBTS AND FEARS, SO WE CARRY IN OUR SICK, OUR INJURED, OUR WEARY, OUR POOR, SO WE SIT DOWN IN THE FELLOWSHIP OF HUNGER AND THIRST, OF HUMAN MISERY AND HUMAN NEED, AND GOD'S OWN LOVE. WE ARE FAMILY, ONE BODY, SO WE SIT DOWN AS A FAMILY, ONE BODY OF THE LORD. ✕

JESUS TAKES OUR LOAVES, OUR POOR LITTLE OFFERINGS, WHATEVER WE HAVE. HE TAKES WHAT WE HAVE, ALONG WITH OUR SINS, OUR FEARS, OUR WANTS. HE TAKES THEM ALL, ALL FIVE LOAVES, BOTH FISH--AND HE GIVES THANKS.

THANKS FOR LIFE, THANKS FOR US, THANKS FOR OUR LOAVES AND FISH, FEW, LITTLE, BUT ALL WE ARE, NOW ONE WITH HIM.

THEN JESUS GIVES--GIVES US, ALL WE HAVE,
ALL WE ARE, AND HOPE TO BE--HE GIVES US THE GIFT OF WHO
WE ARE, EMPOWERED TRUE CHILDREN, SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF
THE MOST HIGH GOD--FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH--AND OF HIS
FULNESS WE RECEIVE, GRACE UPON GRACE. JESUS GIVES, AS
MUCH AS WE DESIRE, NO HOLDING BACK.

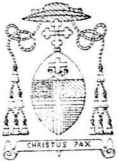
AND HERE IS THE MIRACLE OF THE LOAVES AND OF
US ALL: "GATHER THE FRAGMENTS," JESUS SAYS, "LEST THEY
BE LOST!" THE LITTLE BOY CRIES TO LOSE HIS LITTLE LUNCH,
AND WE TOO CLING TO OUR FRAGMENTS, HOARDING THEM, NOT
GIVING THEM UP VERY GLADLY, NO, NO, CLUTCHING, HOLDING
THEM STILL: NO THERE WILL NOT BE ENOUGH. THERE WAS
ENOUGH FOR TODAY, BUT WHAT ABOUT TOMORROW? WILL THERE
BE BREAD FOR TOMORROW?

JESUS SPEAKS TO THE CROUDS FIGHTING TO MAKE
HIM THE BREAD KING, WHO CHASE HIM THROUGH THE DESERT TO
HIS HIDING PLACE: "DO NOT WORK FOR THE FOOD WHICH PERISHES,
BUT FOR THAT WHICH ENDURES TO ETERNAL LIFE!"

"WHAT MUST WE DO TO PERFORM THE WORKS OF GOD?"
BELIEVE, JESUS SAYS, THE ONE SENT TO YOU BY GOD!
WHAT WILL YOU DO FOR US? THE CROUD ASKS, CLUTCHING THEIR
FRAGMENTS. AN OLD QUESTION, ALONG WITH "WHERE CAN WE BUY."
YOU CAN NEVER BUY ENOUGH TO FILL YOUR BELLY. AND GOD CAN
NEVER DO ENOUGH TO EARN YOUR TRUST. ANCIENT QUESTIONS,
ANCIENT FEARS. STILL OURS TODAY.

GATHER UP THE FRAGMENTS, LEST THEY BE LOST.

LORD--GATHER US UP, ALL OF US, THE BROKEN BREAD, THE
BROKEN HEARTS, THE BROKEN DREAMS--GATHER THEM ALL, BROKEN
PROMISES TOO--ALL INTO YOUR BASKETS--LEST THEY, LEST
WE TOO BE LOST. MAY WE GIVE FREELY OF WHAT YOU SO FREELY
GIVE TO US, EACH DAY, OUR DAILY BREAD, OUR LIVES, YES
YOU, YOU YOURSELF.



OFFICE OF THE EPISCOPAL VICAR

URBAN REGION

The bread which you do not use
is the bread of the hungry.
The garment hanging in your wardrobe
is the garment of him who is naked.
The shoes that you do not wear
are the shoes of one who is barefoot.
The money you keep locked away
is the money of the poor.
The acts of charity you do not perform
are so many injustices you commit.

... St. Basil the Great

BORROMEIO COLLEGE
SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
7 DECEMBER 1986

(A) ISAIAH 11: 1-10
ROM. 15: 4-9
MATT. 3: 1-12

BROTHERS AND SISTERS: IT IS A GREAT JOY TO BE WITH YOU TODAY, TO WELCOME YOU, OUR VISITING SEMINARIANS--IN THE NAME OF BISHOP PILLA AND ALL THE CHURCH IN CLEVELAND. WE ARE DELIGHTED TO HAVE YOU WITH US, TO SHARE IN THE GOOD TIMES AND FELLOWSHIP OF THE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT, BUT WE SHARE A GREAT DEAL MORE THAN GOOD TIMES--AND IT IS WHAT WE SHARE, WHAT WE HAVE IN COMMON, THAT GIVES MEANING, INDEED MAKES POSSIBLE--THE GOOD TIMES. IT IS THAT DEEPER SHARING THAT WE CELEBRATE RIGHT NOW, TODAY.

WE ARE A PEOPLE OF FAITH ON A JOURNEY OF HOPE, BOUND TOGETHER IN A COMMUNITY OF LOVE, ~~FOUNDED ON~~ ^{Rooted in} THE LOVE OF GOD WHICH IS CHRIST JESUS. IN THIS SEASON WE CELEBRATE OUR JOURNEY, OUR SPECIAL HOPE IN HIS COMING INTO OUR WORLD. WE ARE A PEOPLE OF EXPECTATION, JOYFUL EXPECTATION, A PEOPLE OF HOPE.

WE USE THE WORD "HOPE" ALL TOO LIGHTLY AT TIMES. WE HOPE WE WILL WIN THE BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT. I HOPE I WILL GRADUATE SOMEDAY. I HOPE I WILL PASS MY CHEMISTRY TEST. I HOPE I WILL BE A PRIEST. SOMETIMES "HOPE" MEANS NOTHING MORE THAN "WISHFUL THINKING." I'D LIKE IT TO HAPPEN. I AM GOING TO TRY TO MAKE IT HAPPEN IF I CAN.

"IF YOU WANT SOMETHING BAD ENOUGH, REALLY BAD, THEN WORK REAL HARD AND YOU WILL PROBABLY GET IT." "KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE BALL." IN OTHER WORDS, DON'T GET DISTRACTED BY ANYTHING ELSE, AND BE SINGLE-MINDED IN YOUR INTENTIONS

AND NEVER STOP WISHING FOR WHAT YOU REALLY WANT; ~~AND~~
DON'T WAVER OR DOUBT, AND MAKE EVERYTHING COUNT FOR
GETTING YOUR DESIRES. THESE ARE ALL THE DIFFERENT
MESSAGES AND PIECES OF ADVICE WE HAVE PICKED UP OVER
THE YEARS.

WORK HARD, FIGHT FOR WHAT YOU WANT, YOU
CAN HAVE IT. THIS IS THE MESSAGE OUR SOCIETY PREACHES,
AND OFTEN OUR OWN UPBRINGING REINFORCES. AGAINST THIS
BACKGROUND, THIS MORAL LANDSCAPE SO TO SPEAK, WE THEN
TRY TO WORK IN OUR CHRISTIAN VALUES OF FAITH, HOPE AND
LOVE. WE WORK GOD IN, WE FIT GOD IN, WE INTEGRATE HIM
AND OUR LIFE WITH HIM / INTO THIS MORAL LANDSCAPE OF OUR
WORLD WHICH WE GROW UP WITH, / AND WHICH PROMISES US THAT
WE CAN HAVE EVERYTHING WE REALLY WANT.

IT IS THIS LANDSCAPE, THIS WORLD--INTO WHICH
ISAIAH SENDS HIS PROPHETIC WORD: "A SHOOT SHALL SPROUT
FROM THE STUMP OF JESSE... THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD SHALL
REST UPON HIM... WISDOM . . . UNDERSTANDING . . . COUNSEL...
STRENGTH . . . KNOWLEDGE . . . AND HIS DELIGHT SHALL BE
IN THE FEAR OF THE LORD."

WE WISH WE COULD GROW UP THAT WAY. I COULD
GET EVERYTHING OUT OF LIFE THAT I REALLY WANT--IF ONLY
I WAS WISE, UNDERSTANDING, STRONG, KNOWLEDGEABLE, COURAGEOUS...
I KNOW THEN FOR SURE THAT I COULD MAKE IT.

BUT WHAT HAPPENS TO THE WORLD INTO WHICH
ISAIAH'S HERO COMES? THE WORLD THAT RESULTS IS SO UNLIKE
OUR OWN: WHERE LION AND CALF LIE DOWN TOGETHER, WHERE A

CHILD SHALL LEAD, AND PUT HIS HAND INTO THE COBRA'S DEN. WE GROW UP IN A WORLD WHERE YOU WOULD GET YOUR HAND BIT, AND YOUR CALF EATEN. THE EARLY BIRD GETS THE WORM. TOO BAD FOR THE WORM. THE SPIRIT OF UNBRIDLED COMPETITION / IS A VIOLENT WORLD / WHERE EVERYONE WORKS HARD TO GET THE BEST THEY CAN FOR THEMSELVES, THE MOST THEY CAN GET FOR THEMSELVES. POWER IS FOR OVERCOMING OBSTACLES, CONTROLLING PEOPLE AND CIRCUMSTANCES, DIRECTING ALL TO OBTAIN OUR OWN GOALS. DOMINATION IS OUR PURPOSE, AND VIOLENCE IS OUR MEANS--THE NATURAL RULES OF OUR MORAL LANDSCAPE.

BUT ISAIAH'S PROPHETIC WORD CHALLENGES HIS WORLD AND OURS: "HE SHALL JUDGE THE POOR WITH JUSTICE AND DECIDE ARIGHT FOR THE LAND'S AFFLICTED. . . . THERE SHALL BE NO HARM OR RUIN ON ALL MY HOLY MOUNTAIN; FOR THE EARTH SHALL BE FILLED WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LORD, AS WATER COVERS THE SEA."

KNOWLEDGE IS NOT POWER TO GET OUR OWN WAY-- BUT KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND HIS WAYS--THIS IS THE POWER WHICH FUNDAMENTALLY OPPOSES OUR NATURAL SELF-CENTEREDNESS AND VIOLENT WAYS. THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT ARE NOT SKILLS AND TALENTS / FOR ACHIEVING MY OWN PRIVATE ENDS AND PURPOSES. THEY ARE NOT GIVEN SO THAT I MIGHT GROW UP AND GET THE BEST THINGS OUT OF LIFE. STRENGTH AND POWER, WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE ARE POWERS AND GIFTS OF GOD TO ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM, A WORLD OF JUSTICE AND PEACE.

VIOLENCE AND THE DRIVE FOR SELF-ADVANCEMENT ARE

UTTERLY OPPOSED TO THE WISDOM OF GOD, HIS JUSTICE AND POWER. IT TAKES GREAT COURAGE AND PATIENT COMMITMENT TO ESTABLISH A WORLD OF JUSTICE AND PEACE--SO ST. PAUL REMINDS THE ROMANS AND US. ~~AND~~ WE CANNOT DO THIS ALONE. WE REQUIRE THE SPECIAL GIFTS OF GOD'S SPIRIT--AND THE PRAYER AND SUPPORT AND GUIDANCE OF GOD'S PEOPLE. WE NEED GOD'S POWER TO DO GOD'S WORK, THE WORK OF JUSTICE AND PEACE.

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST SPEAKS TO HIS VIOLENT WORLD: WE NEED A SAVIOR--ONE WHO IS GREATER THAN ANY OF US AND ALL OF US--FOR ALL OUR LONGEINGS, THE WATER OF OUR TEARS OF FRUSTRATION, THE BAPTISM OF OUR DISAPPOINTED AND ANGRY TEARS, THE WASHING OF BLOOD SHED, SWEAT SPENT, THE JOURNEY STUMBLER, THE WAY LOST. POWER PEOPLE--MEN, ~~+~~ ^{women} OF THE SWORD AND MEN, ^{women} OF THE BOOK--COME TO THE BAPTIST STILL LOOKING FOR MORE POWER. "BROOD OF VIPERS, WHO WARNED YOU TO FLEE FROM THE WRATH THAT IS TO COME?"

YES, WE ARE ANGRY WHEN EVEN OUR BEST EFFORTS ARE THWARTED, OUR DREAMS DEFERRED, OUR WISHES IGNORED, OUR HOPES DASHED. THE WRATH TO COME IS ALREADY IN OUR WORLD AND IN OUR HEARTS.

"HE WILL BAPTIZE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE!" AND THE WORLD OF VIOLENCE AND ANGER AND HATE, OF SELF-WILL AND SMALL PETTY DREAMS, WILL FALL APART OF ITS OWN WEIGHT, AND BE BURNED IN THE FIRE OF HIS ETERNAL LOVE. AND SO WE ALSO WILL BE SET AFIRE AND SET ALIVE WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

WATER, SPIRIT, FIRE, BLOOD--THESE ARE THE ANCIENT

ELEMENTS OF LIFE ITSELF--AND THE UNITY OF ALL IS THE CREATIVE WORD OF GOD, THE WORD BECAME FLESH, THE WORD WE LONG TO HEAR. THE WORD IMPLANTED IN OUR HEARTS.

SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST SPEAKS IN HUMILITY AND IN HOPE: CHRIST IS COMING. LET US LOOK FOR HIM AMONG THE WORKS OF JUSTICE AND PEACE. LET US ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER, USING THE GIFTS WE HAVE TO BUILD UP ONE ANOTHER INTO A COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND LOVE. LET US PREPARE OUR HEARTS WITH THE EAGER LONGING OF SONS AND DAUGHTERS, BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF THE ONE WHO DIED FOR US, THE ONE RISEN, THE ONE WE HOPE FOR: WHO LONGS FOR US WITH INFINITE LOVE.

The One who is Holy Food -

One Plate, One Cup,

*One single and singular
Eucharistic Sign and cause of unity,
of justice and peace, of truth, of love.*