

Most wonderful love is that which unites strangers

MORAL PERSPECTIVES

REY, DAVID STRONG

holds us.

The central city in which I live is fading from my awareness. My mind is no longer filled with the complex problems of Detroit. My concerns have simplified. What will I wear? Will I avoid mosquito bites?

In the woods of northern Michigan, I am not bothered by the cries of casino gambling. Here, I am more racist simply because I only encounter white people. For days I forget the war in Bosnia. I am cut off from these problems and pains of the world. I am more centered upon myself.

In the Bible, we are asked an important question. Who is my neighbor? This question is always there to challenge us. If I look to just those close by, my environment will determine my answer. For most of us, our answer to this question will be "people like me."

If it is a spiritual question, the answer must be different.

Who is my neighbor? The spiritual answer is "the stranger." A story from the Bible tells how the

Officers announced

Several area residents are being installed as officers in the barber-shop-singing Spirit of Detroit Chapter of Sweet Adelines. Ruth Pencak of West Bloomfield was elected president, Maureen Maher of Westland vice president; Laura Locano of Garden City, corresponding secretary; Mary Lou Howlett of Walled Lake, recording secretary; and Pam Lauer of Westland, treasurer.

New board members are Nora Conn of Huntington Woods; Faith Massey of Allen Park; Harriet McAvoy of Lincoln Park; Mary Thompson of Plymouth; Ellen Seghi of New Hudson; Sandy Pastor of Birmingham and Linda Clements of Plymouth.

Retiring board members are Grace Roberts of West Bloomfield, Betty O'Connor of Farmington; Margaret Lockard of Detroit; and Jan Dillon of Redford.

The 90-woman, 1993 regional champion Spirit of Detroit Chorus offers free group singing lessons to women of all ages at 7 p.m. every Tuesday when Spirit of Detroit rehearses at the VFW Hall at 1-96 and Inkster in Redford Township. Reading music is not required. For more information, call (313) 634-4468.

Spirit of Detroit is preparing for the first of its summer music series, set for 8 p.m. Thursday, June 9, in Heritage Park on Farmington Road north of 10 Mile in Farmington Hills. Dust off your lawn chair and pack the picnic basket. Admission is free.

Also on the calendar is Spirit of Detroit's return engagement at Tiger Stadium, where they will sing the national anthem and "O Canada" at the Detroit-Toronto game June 17.

Sweet Adelines — an international organization boasting 29,100 members with 607 chapters in 12 countries — is launching "Young Women in Harmony," a new program by which they'll assist future Sweet Adelines.

Last month, Sweet Adelines Gayle Smith of Bloomfield Hills and Margaret Lockard of Detroit visited the Hampton School in Detroit where they taught four-part harmony to a large class of enthusiastic students. It was such a hit they'll be returning each Thursday.

Spirit of Detroit is rehearsing diligently for November's international competition in Reno.

Directing the metro-Detroit chorus is Leona Haslett, who drives an hour and 45 minutes one way to Redford from Swanton, Ohio for weekly rehearsals. Haslett is the lead in Swing Street, voted the top international quartet in 1991.

spirit of God entered a room full of strangers. In spite of their many languages and without translators, they each understood what the other was saying. The most wonderful love is that which unites those who were strangers.

We become a better person when we have crossed beyond the familiar and welcomed the stranger. There are stories in all ages which celebrate this fact. The stranger challenges us spiritually

regarding the quality of our humanity.

There is a challenge and a mystery to life. How will we hold to our own convictions and at the same time welcome the stranger? In Chaim Potok's book, "My Name is Asher Lev," the young Jewish boy is continually warned about "The Other Side." Asher grows up in an environment which comes into striking conflict with his talent as a painter. Asher

wants to remain a faithful Jew at the same time he enters the secular world, "The Other Side."

There is irony in the fact that his orthodox theology calls God "the Master of the Universe." Yet, there is no place for a modern painter in this religion. Asher Lev must pay a terrible price for his decision to live beyond the limits of his heritage.

We must seek to live beyond the limits we place upon God.

This is the challenge of the stranger. The religion we follow will demand that we conform. Yet our spirituality will be sacrificed if we fail to love the stranger.

There are many forces which would prevent us from giving love to the stranger. There is fear, selfishness, traditions, peer pressure and the desire to fit in. Persons of different races who have married will tell of the obstacles.

As God moves this world inex-

orably toward unity in diversity, the question — "Who is my neighbor?" — shall be the spiritual challenge. If this question is in our hearts, we will be ready for God's leading presence.

The Rev. David Strong is pastor of Central United Methodist Church in Detroit. If you have a question or comment, call him at 963-2047, mailbox number 1878, on a touch-tone phone.

Continued and Asher Lev's program have

powered based on '94 Mercury Villager with PEP \$24,300. MSRP of \$21,325. '94 Mercury Tracer MSRP of \$10,725. '94 Mercury Topaz with PEP \$14,100. MSRP of \$10,000 and '94 Mercury Taurus with PEP \$15,100. MSRP of \$14,475. Excludes sales tax, license and fees. Low priced based on average capitalized cost of 92.2% of MSRP for Villager, 100% of MSRP for Tracer, 97.8% of MSRP for Topaz and 91.9% of MSRP for Taurus for 24 months. Real Carpent Leases purchased in the United States. Regulated through 3.31% APR. Some payments higher. Some loans are subject to prepayment fees. Loans are not insured, but are not subject to the usual cost of insurance. Loans are negotiable with dealer at signing. Lower responsible for excess wear and tear and mileage over 30,000 miles at \$11/mile. Credit approval required. To be determined by Ford Credit. Take new delivery from dealer stock by 6/2/94. Total of monthly payments is \$7,176 for Villager, \$6,456 for Taurus, \$6,872 for Tracer and \$5,236 for Topaz. This is an average of prices based on an independent survey of Motor Vehicle Dealers in Michigan. Excludes taxes, title and license. See your Motor Vehicle Dealer for full price and terms. Excludes wear and tear which is not included in the price. *Taxes and title extra.

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