

# Curran Set Here

Father Charles Curran, nationally known moral theologian, will speak on "Changes in the Church, A Sign of the Presence of the Spirit" at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 30 in the Otto Shults Center at Nazareth College.

The presentation is co-sponsored by The Association of Religious Educators, Campus Ministry, Diocesan Sisters Council, Pastoral Assistants Association, Rochester Regional Task Force of Women in the Church, School Sisters of Notre Dame, The Sisters of Mercy and the Sisters of St. Joseph.

## Coping Alone Seminar Topic

The Nazareth Alumni Association is sponsoring a seminar called "On Your Own Again: The Challenges and Rewards" at 8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 28, at the Otto A. Shults Center of Nazareth College.

The seminar will deal with the emotional and financial aspects of coping alone, whether as a widow, divorcee or single parent.

Speakers will include Nancy Garlick of the Women's Career Center; Mona May, representative of "Neutral Ground," a support group for the divorced; and Mary Ann Minnehan, vice president for financial planning, Fred S. James & Co.

A \$2 fee will be charged at the door. Interested persons may obtain further information from the Nazareth College Alumni Office, 586-2525, Ext. 393.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

## Fools For Christ

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 5:1-12. (R1) Zep. 2:3; 3:12-13. (R2) 1 Cor. 1:26-31.

All of next Sunday's readings stress one thing: God's standards are not the same as the world's. God says that fools are wise and the wise are fools! Zephaniah says that God's people are the humble and lowly, not the proud, powerful and rich (R1). Paul says, "Those called are not wise as men account wisdom" (R2). Jesus says, "Blest are the poor in spirit, the sorrowing, the lowly, (R3).

Of course there are two kinds of fools in Scripture: the wise fool and the fool for Christ.

Wisdom literature in the Old Testament has a lot to say about wise fools. Our Lord classed the avaricious accumulator of Luke 12:20 a wise fool — wise in the ways of the world, but a fool in the ways of God.

One day a rabbi was sitting at his window when he saw a beggar across the street scratching his back against a fence. Learning from the poor fellow that he had not been able to afford a bath in many weeks, he gave him some money and also a change of underclothes. When news spread to the other beggars, two of them rushed to the fence and began scratching themselves

against it with all their might. The rabbi saw them, but instead of giving them any alms, he started caning them.

"You impostors! You can't fool me!" he cried.

The bewildered beggars asked, "Why did you believe the other fellow and not us?"

The rabbi answered, "Because he was alone and so had to use the fence to relieve his itching. But you are two, and if you were not impostors, each of you would scratch the other's back."

The basic truth in this story is that wisdom triumphs over foolishness. The two beggars who sought to cash in on some easy money were smart and clever, yet fools! For there is no such thing in life as an easy road to success.

Besides the wise fool, there is the fool for Christ.

Perhaps one of the most moving scenes in all literature is the one in Victor Hugo's "Les Miserables," where Jean Valjean confronts the kindly Bishop from whom he stole silver candlesticks. Jean was an escaped convict on the run. The Bishop had befriended him. Crassly, Jean repaid the Bishop's kindness by walking off with his silver candlesticks.

The next day the housekeeper detected the theft, and in so many words said to the Bishop, "I told

you so!" Just then there was a knock on the door. There stood Jean Valjean in the custody of two gendarmes, with the silver candlesticks.

"Ah! There you are!" said the Bishop. "I told you you could have the candlesticks. Why are you returning them?"

"Then, what he says is true," say the police. They leave. The Bishop and the thief stand face to face. The Bishop speaks slowly, "Jean Valjean, you belong no longer to evil, but to good. I have purchased your soul with these silver candlesticks."

The Bishop risked being a fool for the sake of saving Jean Valjean. And Jean had the power to make the Bishop appear to be an old fool. By worldly standards the Bishop should have "wisely" pressed charges against Jean Valjean. But by God's standards, the Bishop showed true wisdom by recognizing that a human life was worth more than a pair of candlesticks. He risked being thought a fool in order to reach out to a lost soul.

There are two kinds of lovers in the world: those who love so far as good sense permits; and those who love beyond the point of good sense — who are "fools!" God, it would seem, is on the side of the fools of love!

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