# North Region Slates CERT

The religious education coordinators of the North Region have set up an agenda of classes comprising the level one, basic doctrine, program of Continuing Education for Religion Teachers (CERT).

The schedule follows: "Revelation," 9:30-11:30 a.m., Saturday, Jan. 8, St. Salome's School, 4280 Culver Road; "Sacrament," noon-2 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 8, St. Salome's School; "Scripture," 7:30-9:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 20, St. Andrew's School, 901 Por-

tland Ave.; "Church," 7:30-9:30 p.m., St. Margaret Mary School, 400 Rogers Pkwy.; "Christian Moral Life and Social Justice," 7:30-9:30 p.m., St. Cecilia's School, 2732 Culver Road.

Any interested person is welcome to attend any one or more of the sessions, Charles Prindle, coordinator of religious education at St. Margaret Mary Church, said.

Registration is made by contacting Pat Lawlor, 338-1051.

## Word for Sunday

Fr. Albert

Shamon

#### **Transforming** Power

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Lk. 3:15-16, 21-22. (R1) Is. A2:1-4, 6-7. (R2)Acts 10:34-38.

Sunday, the Baptism of the Lord, begins the Church Year. The first reading echoes God's words at the baptism of Jesus. "Here is ... my chosen one with whom I am pleased."

St. Luke in Acts (R2) implies that Jesus' ministry began with his baptism by John. The gospel narrates what happened at Jesus' baptism.

Jesus began His public life 7 with baptism; and, according to Matthew, concluded it with a commission to teach all nations baptizing them.

Why all this emphasis on baptism? God's gracious accomodation to our limitations. Man is not an angel, but an animated body. The normal avenue of communication with him is through his five senses. So God became a man - to get to man, so to speak. Because He had accepted the limitations of a human body, He chose to extend Himself down the ages by another "body" — His Church, the mystical body of Christ. He gave this body seven sacraments — visible signs - through which He could continue to act in regard to

Life and water are closely allied. When the Spirit of God hovered over the waters, the creation of the cosmos began. When water drenches the earth, it begets notice carries her child n the womb, it is housed in sac of "water." So Jesus chose water to signify the giving of divine life by the Holy Spirit at baptism.

When a child is baptized, God — who is everywhere - becomes more present in the baptized child. The sun is everywhere, but it is not equally present everywhere; for instance, in New York and Florida. In the baptized child, the Holy Trinity changes the very being of the child. A small mirror reflecting the noonday sun becomes itself a miniature sun, A baptized child becomes so like God that he is a "son of God." Catherine of Siena once saw a child in sanctifying grace and said, "If I did not know there was but one God, I would have adored it as God."

Grace is simply God's love at work. God loves us and we are changed. The transforming power of love has been the theme of countless works of art. In "La Traviata," Alfredo's love transforms Violetta, the lost one, into a heroic woman of glorious beauty. chen slut. Aldonza The kite becomes Dulcinea through the love of Don Quixote in "The Impossible Dream." Eliza Doolittle, in "My Fair Lady," starts to change at the very moment Professor Higgens begins to show her tenderness and love.



# The Fire in the Thornbush Dialogue

for the past, to ask the

question. "Why can't things

This is true for us as a

Church as well as in our

Our present history is a

story of change. Longstand-

ing traditions, institutions,

and customs are no longer

the foundation by which

we live. Few of us marry,

work at one job and live in

one home all of our lives.

Changes fill our lives. For

some, that is a challenge and a blessing; for others it

us a source of frustration

When we look at the recent history of our

the many changes which

language, position of the

have taken place -

and discontent.

individual lives.

be the way they were?

# Letting Go Of the Past

By Nancy Giordano

No. 2: "It is not desirable - or possible for us to try to turn back the clock to a time when today's questions did not exist."

If there is one thing of which we human beings are well aware, it is that time irrevocably marches on. We can never move back in time, only forward. Even while the present moment is being celebrated, it is also becoming history. We may joyfully recall a moment in the past, or nostalgically remember something which we once experienced, but we can never really go back in time. Ultimately, we must face reality and the present. 🔿

Thus, it is futile to long

So, too, it is with the issue of ministry in the Church. The laity have been called forth to take their proper place with the clergy in loving service to one another. Men and women have experienced the loy of calling forth the Lord's<sup>®</sup> presence among u as lectors, eucharistic ministers; members of parish committees. Women. in particular, have experienced this and have felt called to further service, even to ordination.

Our response cannot be "Let us return to the pask," response must be prayer listening, sharing Church, we are amazed atom

altar, even the naming of some of the sacraments. For some, this is a blessing: for some, a source of<sup>4</sup> discontent. Yet we know as a Church that we can never go back in time.

for we know this is futile Nor can our response be one which denies the need for further change, for this is just as futile. Our engaging in dialogue on our various positions and opinions. We must be open to the movement of the Holy Spirit among us. We

cannot determine where that Spirit will lead us but we can determine that we will respond thoughtfully, prayerfully, and lovingly.

In all areas of life family, business, politics women are serving in new capacities of leadership and responsibility. We are proud of the great strides we have made in being recognized as persons with individual talents and gifts and putting those attributes to work in a variety of roles.

Thus, it must be with our Church. Women must be seen as persons with talent, and their talents put to use. Our gifts must not go unrecognized or unused. In the end, it is the whole Church, the whole world, which will benefit!

Nancy Giordano is a student -at St. Bernard's / Institute.

# Adoration

The first afternoon of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for the new year at Blessed Sacrament Church will start at noon, Thursday, Jan. 6. The devotions, in the words of Wilma Higgs, promoter of the rites, will be dedicated to preparing for the upcoming Holy Year on the occasion of the 1,950th ... anniversary of the Redemption. A rosary will be recited at 12:15 p.m. and benediction' will be celebrated at 5 p.m. preceding the regular 5:20 p.m Mass.

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#### each of us.

In baptism, Christ can continue to give every man that which He came to give when He walked the earth. "I came that they might have life." Jesus was not speaking to corpses; His listeners already had life. What, then, was Jesus talking about? Jesus had two kinds of life: human and divine. He was talking about divine life - God-life, or what theologians call sanctifying grace.

#### First Friday

Father Patrick Magnier, CSSR, of Our Lady of Victory Church will celebrate Mass and be the guest speaker at the First Friday Luncheon Club, 11:45 a.m., Friday, Jan. 7, in the Knights of Columbus clubrooms, 670 Thurston Road. A \$2 luncheon of soup, salad and pie will be served following the Mass. The club is dedicated to promoting devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. Its events are open to -- any interested-person .- ---- - -

All these plays resonate God's work in man long ago as told by Ezechiel.

All simply illustrate grace.

Grace is God coming to us in love at baptism (the Divine Indwelling, or uncreated grace), and the effect, the transformation caused in our very being, as a result of that coming (sanctifying or created grace).

As the fairy godmother transformed Cinderella so she could wed a prince, so we are changed at baptism by grace so that we can live as a child of God and one day be with Him forever. Life now is simply a striving. to become what baptism has \_already\_made us be!\_\_\_\_\_

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