



### Reunion Planned

The Class of 1935 of St. Michael's School has scheduled a 50th reunion dinner on Sunday, May 5, 1985, at The Edgewater. The reunion committee has been unable to locate the following classmates -- Alice Feola, Evelyn Feuhrer, Marion Heiber, Elizabeth Mayer, Mary Visico, Frank Azzolina, Michael Bobby, Charles Hornbeck, Clement Kazawitz and Walter Neuer. If anyone has knowledge of these people or needs further information about the dinner, contact William Hauck, 425-4491, or Arlene Giebel La Bounty, 381-9370.

Fr. Albert Shamon



Word for Sunday

### Importance Of Baptism

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mk. 1/7-11. (R1) Is. 42/1-4, 6-7. (R2) Acts 10/34-38.

Sunday's feast, the Baptism of our Lord, brings the Christmas cycle to its conclusion. His birth was meant to lead to our rebirth in baptism.

Baptism is the fundamental sacrament of the Church, just as birth is the basic prerequisite for human life. Thus baptism was positioned at the beginning and the end of our Lord's public life. And when that life was drawing to its climax, baptism, together with the Holy Eucharist, was symbolized by the water and blood that flowed from the pierced side of Jesus. Even fallen-away Catholics seem to sense the importance of baptism. They want their newborn child to be baptized!

Their Catholic instinct is right. Man is by nature human and weak. In the Eden story, man was given divine life; he was on talking terms with God; and he was given great inner strength, an inner balance shown by their innocence when naked. But sin stripped man of the divine life and created an inner imbalance, so that his weakness toward self-dependence got so strong he had to clothe himself lest his passions get out of hand. The great tragedy of man's fall was that it affected not only himself, but the entire human race. Every son and daughter of Adam enter this world without the divine life and with a strong tendency to self-will as opposed to God's will.

It is to offset this double consequence of the first sin that baptism is administered to the child. First, baptism gives the Holy Spirit. As fire transforms every object it

touches, so the Holy Spirit transforms the very being of the child. He changes the water of humanity into the wine of divinity. We call this change of being sanctifying grace: grace, because freely given, undeserved, unmerited; and sanctifying, because the Holy Spirit makes the baptized "sharers of the divine nature, and God is holy."

Secondly, to neutralize the other consequence of original sin, namely, the strong urge to satisfy one's own wants and desires, even when contrary to God's, baptism inserts one into a faith community, the Church. As parents do all they can to preserve the physical life of their child, so the Church, concerned that the divine life given at baptism grow, develop and reach perfection, insists on Sunday Mass, on Catholic school education, on auricular confession, on CCD programs; she warns, counsels, and directs by her magisterium.

A final point: as the baptism of Jesus inaugurated his public life, so baptism is also a call to mission. "I, the Lord, have called you." And why? to liberate -- "to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from confinement..." This call to liberate is given for the entire world -- "to be a light for the nations."

At baptism, a lighted candle is given to the parents of the baptized. Christ said, "You are the light of the world." Baptism makes one a light by giving the Holy Spirit, who imparts divine life, and by inserting one in a faith community, which helps one to keep the light lit. And the light is given for others. So the Church urges, prods, inspires her children to radiate Christ -- by a smile, a helping hand, a listening ear, by sharing. "He went about doing good works and healing all who were in the grip of the devil." Baptism calls us to do the same.

### FLOSM Sets Grieving Workshops

Auburn -- Word was received last week that the Finger Lakes Office of Social Ministry is running a series of workshops for persons experiencing loss.

The program opened yesterday with a workshop on death. Future subjects include job loss, Jan. 15; and divorce and separation, Jan. 22.

The sessions are held 7:30 p.m., in St. Mary's Church hall, and are free.

The event is being sponsored by FLOSM and the human development committee of the church.

### Scripture Series Planned

Sister Mary Lynch, director of religious education at St. Francis Parish, Phelps, will present a five-part series on "The Prophets" beginning Monday, Jan. 14 at St. Michael School, 320 South Main St., Newark.

Topics will include "Prophecy and Prophecy, Prophets and the Word of God," "Prophecy in the Northern Kingdom," "Isaiah and Jeremiah," "Ezekiel and Second Isaiah," and "Jesus as Prophet and Fulfillment of Prophecies."

All sessions are 3:15-5 p.m. Participants will receive 10 credit hours in scripture. Fee is \$10 and registration should be made through Charlotte Richardson, 328-3210.

### 55 Alive

A "55 Alive -- Mature Driving" course, sponsored by the local chapter of the American Association of Retired Persons, will be held 9:30 a.m.-2 p.m., Feb. 7 and 8 at the Pinegrove Senior Citizen Community Center, 154 Pinegrove Ave. The fee is \$10 per student. The benefits of taking the course include increasing driving skills, reduction in the liability portion of one's driving insurance, and reduction of points against the driver's license. Further information is available from Armand La May, course instructor, 467-1343.

## Religion Vis a Vis Politics Chosen Top Story of 1984

Washington (NC) -- America's election-year controversy over religion, politics and abortion was the top religious news story of 1984, said Catholic editors answering the annual poll by National Catholic News Service.

The editors ranked Pope John Paul II the year's top personality in religious news, as they have every year since his election in 1978. In second place was Geraldine Ferraro, a Catholic and the first woman vice presidential nominee of a major party.

The first draft of the U.S. bishops' economic pastoral and the debate surrounding that document ranked second among 1984 religious news stories, and the famine threatening the lives of millions in Ethiopia was third.

Forty-nine editors of U.S. Catholic newspapers answered the NC News poll, an annual survey begun in 1972. Editors were asked to rank the top 10 news stories of the year out of a list of 28. They were asked to rank five top newsmakers from a list of 17.

The religion, politics and abortion fight, which dominated U.S. religious news for about four months during the presidential campaign, was the clear victor in this year's poll. It took 33 out of 49 first-place votes, was marked second by another 15 editors, and third by one. On the 10-point weighted scale of rankings it had 473 points out of a possible 490.

The draft pastoral on the U.S. economy was just as clearly in second place, with 381 points and 12 first-place votes. It follows in the footsteps of the bishops' 1983 war and peace pastoral, which editors voted the story of the year in both 1982 and 1983.

The famine in Ethiopia and the response of people through aid agencies such as Catholic Relief Services was the only other news story near the top. The editors' votes, including three for first place, added up to 331 points.

News events ranked fourth through 10th, and the point totals they received, were:

4. Vatican's doctrinal congregation backs idea of liberation theology, but not when based on Marxism (164).

5. Vatican orders removal of the "imprimatur" from two U.S. books (137).

6. United States and Vatican establish diplomatic relations, U.S. groups seek court ruling declaring action unconstitutional (133).

7-8 (tie). Polish priest, Father Jerzy Popieluszko, is murdered; Pope in Canada urges social justice and faith (105 each).

9. Cardinal Joseph Bernardin keeps "consistent ethic of life" argument in public eye (104).

10. Growing U.S. priest shortage draws attention to lay ministries, church personnel questions (95).

Of 18 other stories on the ballot, the only one that just missed the top 10, with 92 points, was the recent decision by the pope to permit limited use of the Tridentine Mass under certain conditions.

Among newsmakers of the year, ranked on a scale of five points, Pope John Paul got 20 first-place votes and 148 points of a possible 245.

Second was Ms. Ferraro, whose Catholicism and position on abortion were central factors in the religion and

politics issue. She received 11 first-place votes and 121 points.

Archbishop John O'Connor of New York, also a prominent figure in the religion and politics debate, was ranked third with six first-place votes and 104 points.

Fourth was President Reagan, who also made re-

ligious issues an explicit part of his campaign for reelection, with 67 points including two votes for first place.

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**QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**  
**ABOUT CEMETERY PROPERTY**

**Question #3:**  
**I am Jewish and my husband is Catholic. Will we have any difficulty finding a place where we can be buried together?**

**Answer:**  
If you choose in-ground burial, you should not have any difficulty. If you prefer above-ground entombment, however, you will find that White Haven is the only community mausoleum which accepts all faiths.

This series of questions and answers is presented in the public interest by White Haven Memorial Park, not-for-profit, non-sectarian. If you have additional questions you would like answered, please let us know.

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