

Lent offers all a drink of living water

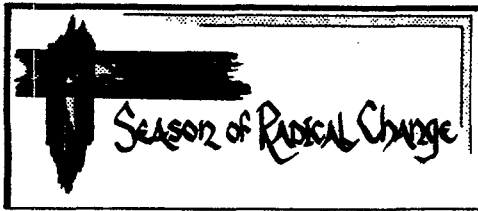
By Sr. Mary Louise Heffernan, SSJ
Guest contributor

If you were the woman of Samaria, what would you have done if you saw a man by the well? Would you have run away and come back later or come to the well thinking he wouldn't speak to you?

"Give me a drink," began the story filled with mystery and signs of life. The woman, the jar, the revelation of the water that gives life, all speak to our story and our journey through these Lenten days.

She is a passionate woman, a needy person, sad, unconventional, a drifter, empty. The woman is unaware of what she's being asked — how dare he, a Jew, ask me for water. But she let herself be intrigued by the request and challenges the man who doesn't have a bucket to lower into the deep well.

The man challenges her with mysterious words about some kind of living water. She listens and something moves her to want this living water? She becomes a searcher. Hope sparks her being and she wants to know more. She has filled her water jar (her-



self) many times with water that she thought would give her wholeness. Water of praise and self esteem, water of success to keep alive a sense of importance, water of pleasure to delight her senses. And these waters have never filled her or have never been life giving. Rather she continued to starve, to run after life in so many ways; and from so many people.

But on this day, at the well she probably visited every day, she is surprised and dazzled by this living water offer. This is a new day for her. The man we know as Jesus is burning with desire to give his Father's love. Let herself cautiously receive the gift of transformation. The living water offered to her is the ever-flowing, ever-fresh, living presence of God in our life.

The desire to receive the water is the

call to move out of our self-absorption, to no longer hide but to be open to the transformation God desires to effect in us during these days of Lent.

We, too, can go to the well this week and let our hearts be opened to the challenge. Where is Jesus calling us to open ourselves, to the grace to be wholehearted?

As the woman was compelled to go out and bring back the townsfolk so our openness to the living water transforms us. As we journey toward Easter let us be attentive to the thirst in ourselves and in our brothers and sisters. How can we relieve the thirst as we open ourselves to letting our loving God relieve our thirst by the transforming living water?

In *Stories of Faith*, John Shea says, "Thirst makes friends of us all." The living water of compassion, reverence, reconciling love, generosity and selflessness wells deep within and longs to be given to others as we have received it through Jesus' love.

Happy journey!

Sister Heffernan is coordinator of the diocesan Office of Liturgy.

Sr. Alverus Riehl, 103, taught at Holy Family

Sister Mary Alverus Riehl, SSND, who taught at Holy Family School in Rochester for 66 years, died on Thursday, March 4, 1993, at Lourdes Health Care Center in Wilton, Conn. She was 103 years old, making her the oldest School Sister of Notre Dame in the order's North American provinces.

A Memorial Mass in honor of Sister Alverus will take place at Holy Family Church, 415 Ames St., on Friday, March 12, at 7 p.m. All are welcome.

A native of Baltimore, Md., Sister Alverus was professed as a School Sister of Notre Dame in 1911. She spent her entire teaching career with first-graders at St. Michael's, Baltimore, Md.; St. Peter's, Philadelphia, Pa.; and at Holy Family School, Rochester from 1911-1967.

From 1968-81 she performed community service at Holy Family. In 1981 she retired to the Lourdes Health Care Center, where she continued her ministry of prayer for the sisters of the province.

A Mass of the Resurrection for Sister Alverus was held on March 8, at the SSND motherhouse in Wilton. Interment was at St. Mary Cemetery in Bethel, Conn.

Donations in memory of Sister Mary Alverus Riehl, SSND, may be sent to the School Sisters of Notre Dame Development Fund, 345 Belden Hill Road, Wilton, Conn., 06897, or to the Sister Mary Alverus Scholarship Fund, Holy Family School, 899 Jay St., Rochester, N.Y., 14611.

Sisters Brogdon and Del Santo are accepted into order's novitiate

ROCHESTER — Sisters Janice Elizabeth Brogdon and Donna Del Santo, SSJ, were officially accepted into the Sisters of St. Joseph novitiate during a recent ceremony held at the Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse, 4095 East Ave.

Sister Brogdon, 43, is a native of Greensboro, N.C. A 1980 convert to Catholicism, she was married for eight

years. She moved to Rochester in 1986. While working at Rochester Products, Sister Brogdon became acquainted with the Sisters of St. Joseph through Father Thomas Mull, pastor at Sacred Heart Cathedral.

Sister Del Santo, 39, is a native of Poughkeepsie. A registered nurse, she has lived in Rochester since 1981. She

served as co-director for 10 years at the Corpus Christi Center, 142 Webster Ave., an outreach of Corpus Christi Church. The center provides health care for non-insured people. Sister Del Santo also served a nine-year stint as nurse and counselor for pregnant and parenting high-school students at Nazareth Academy, 1001 Lake Ave.



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