

# Certification program flourishing in first year

By Lee Strong  
Senior staff writer

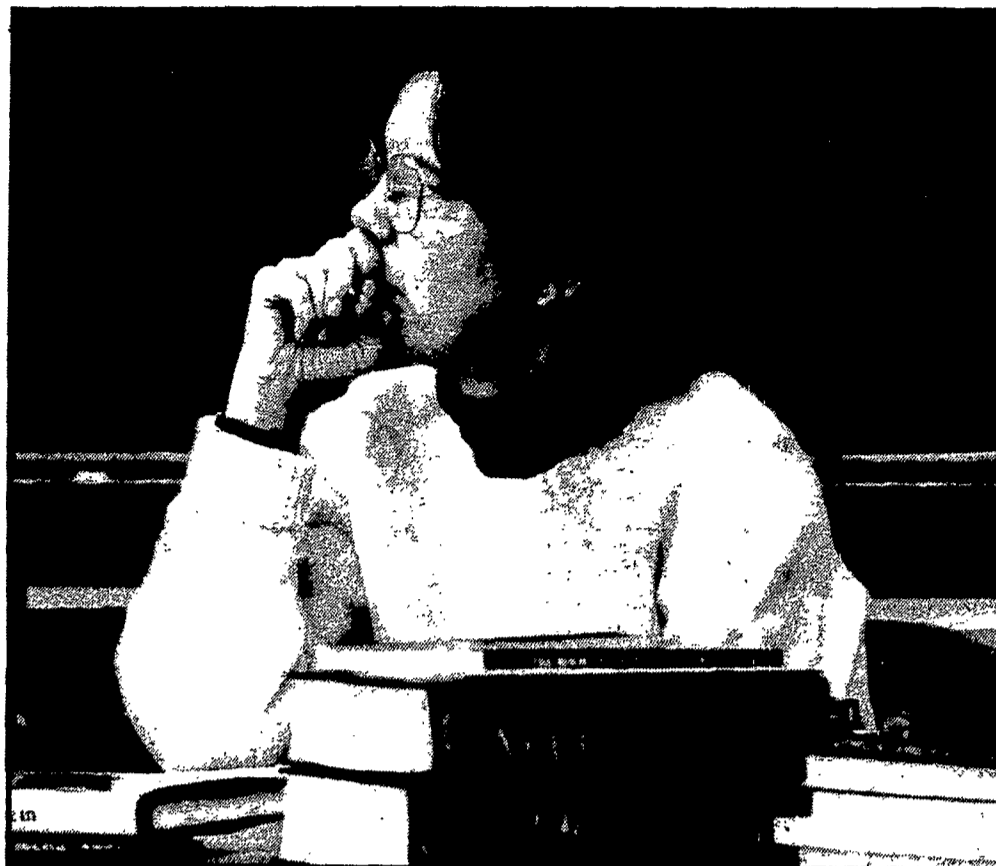
ROCHESTER — Starlet Capone knew she wanted to work for the church in some capacity.

But with no formal theological background, Capone — a parishioner at Auburn's St. Mary Church, 15 Clark St. — did not know how best to prepare for such a job.

Today, Capone is enrolled in the Rochester diocese's Certification for Designated Ministry Program. By December, she will have completed her certification as a business manager. In addition, she will be ready to make use of an accounting degree and the theological course work she has pursued through the program.

"It's a wonderful experience," Capone said. "It's a group of people who get together — and you learn from each other."

Capone is among approximately 120 people currently enrolled in the year-old program. These people are pursuing certification for a number of ministries, including pastoral minister, social ministry coordinator, liturgy coordinator, music coordinator and reli-



Karen Flanigan listens to Gary Lalonde during the Certification for Designated Ministry Program at St. Bernard's Institute April 23.

gious-education administrator.

These fields require training and education, but not necessarily graduate theological degrees.

This program allows credit for prior experience and learning. It also offers 10-credit hour courses in such subjects as Scripture, theology and spirituality, as well as in the specific ministry areas. Courses have been taught in a number of locations — including Rochester, Geneva, Auburn, Horseheads, Corning and Elmira.

The program's flexibility and the breadth of the course offerings were among the factors that attracted Ray Grosswirth to seek certification as a music coordinator.

"I like the combination of courses," noted Grosswirth, a parishioner at Rochester's St. Mary Parish, 15 St. Mary's Place. "No matter what area you are in, you are required to know some theology and liturgy courses — and that's helpful."

In addition to studying music at the Eastman School of Music, Grosswirth had been enrolled in the diocesan priesthood discernment program. Consequently, he received enough credits for previous knowledge and experience to enter the program with half of the requirements fulfilled.

Program candidates are all evaluated by its director, Deacon Stephen Graff, to determine prior learning and to develop individual programs of study to meet the requirements for the certification areas.

Deacon Graff, who took over the program after its development, had been told to expect approximately 30 students to enroll. He anticipated 60 in the first year.

He reported that, in fact, 120 people enrolled in the program, which took him by surprise considering the limited advertising done before courses began in the fall of 1992.

"We haven't done any publicity since last fall because of the Synod, and we're still getting people," Deacon Graff said. "There's been a fair amount of staff recommendations and word-of-mouth from students in the program."

In addition, Deacon Graff is coordinating his efforts with St. Bernard's Institute, 1100 S. Goodman St. The graduate school has referred students to the certification program, and the deacon has in turn referred students to SBI. And all permanent deacon candidates studying at SBI are enrolled in the certification program.

Deacon Graff said he is waiting for the final recommendations from the Synod this fall to determine if new certification areas should be added to the program.

"What I want to do is to wait until the Synod is finished, and analyze what it has asked us to do as a diocese," he concluded.



Gary Lalonde, instructor for the certification program at St. Bernard's Institute, discusses the sacraments with his class.



## Carmelite Friars

*"I have been most zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts."*  
1 Kings, 19:14

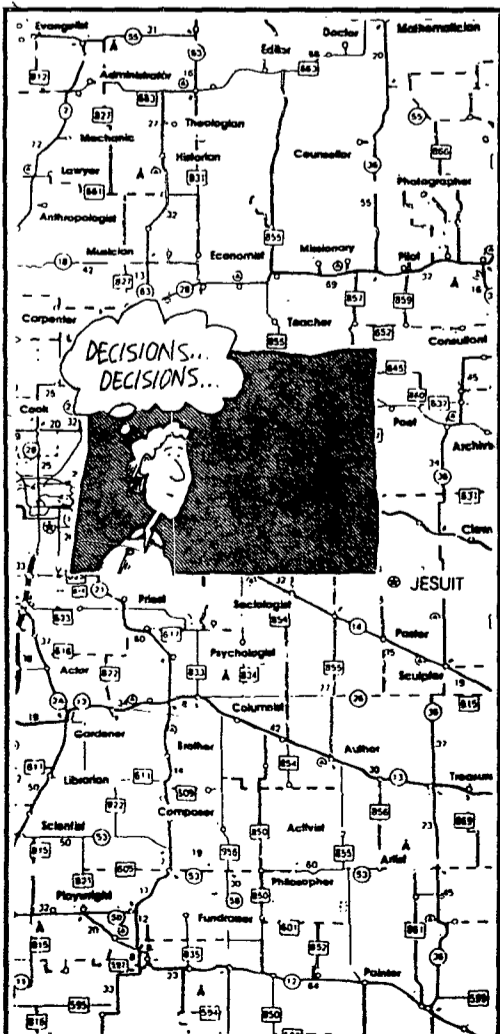
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## A Chance to Consider Routes... A Weekend Away...

A weekend for young men is being held in Syracuse, NY at Christ the King Retreat House from August 13 to 15. Any young man interested in considering his own future directions, and at the same time, learning something about Jesuit life, is invited to attend. The weekend will be directed by Jesuit priests and young men studying to be Jesuit priests and brothers. It will include time for prayer and reflection, discussion and fun. Meals and living arrangements will be at the retreat house. Athletic facilities will be available nearby for your use, and there is a swimming pool at the retreat house itself. As part of the weekend you will be invited to attend the Vow Day ceremony and festivities of the young men pronouncing their First Vows as Jesuits.

There is no cost for the weekend other than your own transportation expenses.

The weekend will begin with dinner on Friday evening and will end with lunch on Sunday afternoon. During the weekend we will spend time looking at what makes a person a healthy adult and what part our faith plays in our development as a person. We will look at what Jesuits are all about and how the Jesuit vision is expressed today.

If you would like more information on the weekend just ask any Jesuit you know or write or call:

Fr. Joseph Costantino, SJ  
501 East Fordham Road  
Bronx, NY 10458  
(212) 584-0300

Fr. Donald Maldari, SJ  
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