



The

Criterion

Serving the Church in Central and Southern Indiana Since 1960

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A call for peace, justice and forgiveness

Editor's note: The following is taken from Pope John Paul II's message for World Day of Peace 2002, to be celebrated Jan. 1.

The World Day of Peace this year is being celebrated in the shadow of the dramatic events of last Sept. 11. On that day, a terrible crime was committed: In a few brief hours thousands of innocent people ... were slaughtered. Since then, people throughout the world have felt a profound personal vulnerability and a new fear for the future. Addressing this state of mind, the Church testifies to her hope, based on the conviction that evil does not have the final word in human affairs.

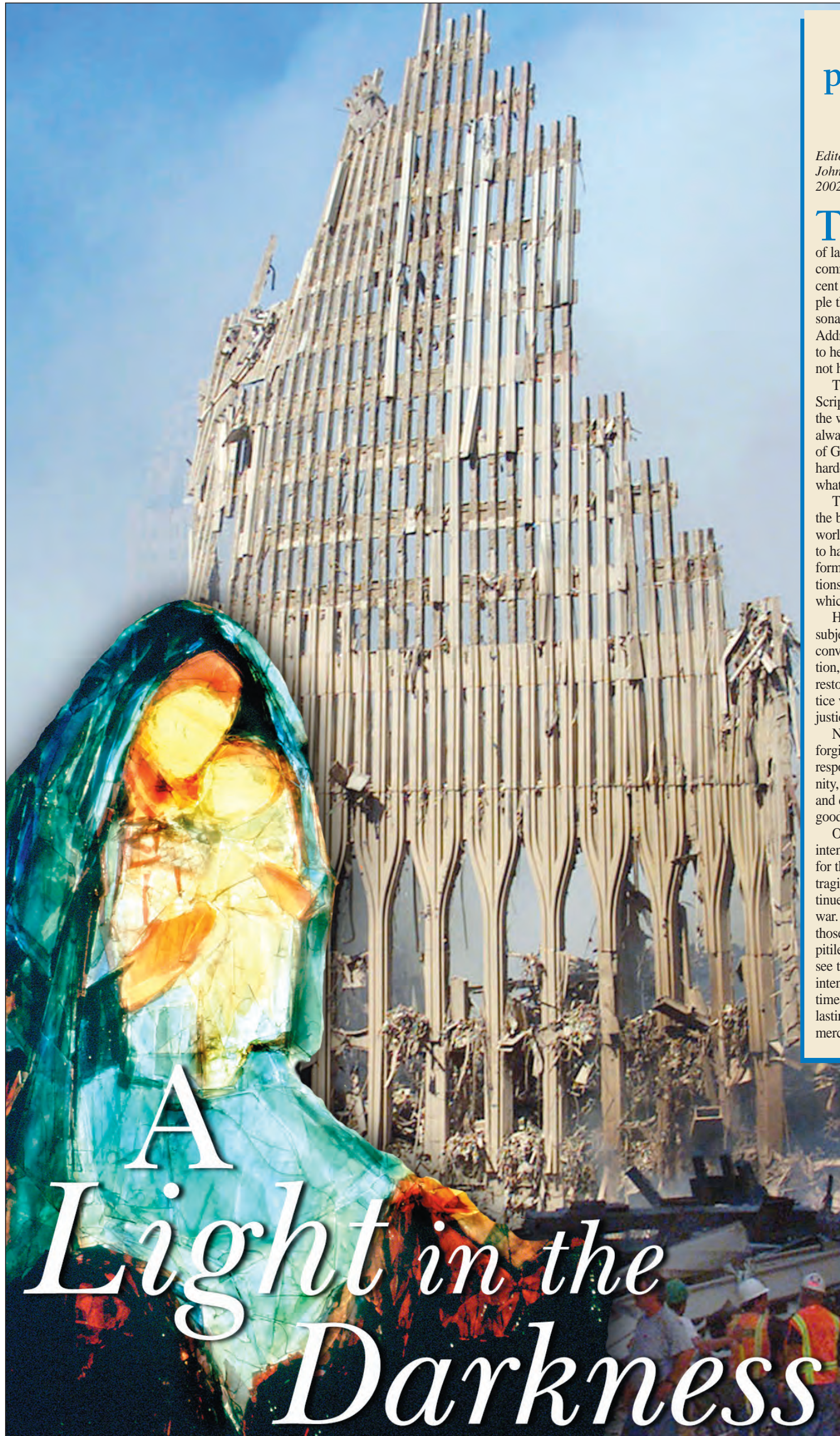
The history of salvation, narrated in sacred Scripture, sheds clear light on the entire history of the world and shows us that human events are always accompanied by the merciful providence of God, who knows how to touch even the most hardened of hearts and bring good fruits even from what seems utterly barren soil.

This is the hope which sustains the Church at the beginning of 2002: that, by the grace of God, a world in which the power of evil seems once again to have taken the upper hand will in fact be transformed into a world in which the noblest aspirations of the human heart will triumph, a world in which true peace will prevail.

How do we restore the moral and social order subjected to such horrific violence? My reasoned conviction, confirmed in turn by biblical revelation, is that the shattered order cannot be fully restored except by a response that combines justice with forgiveness. The pillars of true peace are justice and that form of love which is forgiveness.

No peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness: This is what I wish to say to those responsible for the future of the human community, entreating them to be guided in their weighty and difficult decisions by the light of man's true good, always with a view to the common good.

On this World Day of Peace, may a more intense prayer rise from the hearts of all believers for the victims of terrorism, for their families so tragically stricken, for all the peoples who continue to be hurt and convulsed by terrorism and war. May the light of our prayer extend even to those who gravely offend God and man by these pitiless acts, that they may look into their hearts, see the evil of what they do, abandon all violent intentions and seek forgiveness. In these troubled times, may the whole human family find true and lasting peace, born of the marriage of justice and mercy!



A Light in the Darkness

New era in American history begins with Sept. 11 attacks

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Sept. 11, 2001. A new era in American history began when terrorist attacks with hijacked planes killed more than 3,000 people in New York, Washington, D.C., and rural Pennsylvania.

The Sept. 11 events had profound religious and moral dimensions, as millions of Americans thronged to worship services and asked new questions about the existence and meaning of evil.

Heroism, too. When some 300 New York police, fire and emergency medical personnel died trying to save others, millions were reminded of what it really means to be a hero. Among the dead was Franciscan Father Mychal F. Judge, a fire department chaplain

who died as he administered last rites to another victim.

In scores of New York and New Jersey parishes, funeral after funeral was celebrated with no body present, as the collapse of the World Trade Center towers left no identifiable remains for most of those killed.

The attacks also brought an unprecedented outpouring of charity as millions of Americans dipped deeply into their pockets to aid victims' families. Catholic Charities USA collected \$16 million to help families through local Catholic Charities in the dioceses where victims had lived or worked. Combined contributions through various charities rose well over \$1 billion.

Shortly after the jetliner attacks, the apparently opportunistic anthrax attacks carried out through the postal system brought widespread fears of bioterrorism. When someone sent anthrax threats to many of the nation's abortion clinics, church and pro-life leaders sharply condemned those actions. In December, police captured the chief suspect in those threats, Clayton Lee Waagner, an escaped prisoner, thief and self-styled anti-abortion "warrior."

The U.S.-led war on terrorism following the attacks also provoked moral reflection as theologians and ethicists discussed the ethical framework for such a war—not against a nation or region, but against discrete individ-

uals or groups around the world identifiable only by their cause and their secretive associations with others in the cause.

The crackdown on terrorism on the home front raised another widely debated dilemma—what the U.S. bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the National Council of Synagogues called the "Faustian bargain" of losing civil liberties to fight terror. In a joint reflection, the two organizations said, "A general expansion of law enforcement powers beyond those necessary to fight terrorism cannot be justified if such an expansion comes at the

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Sacred Heart Parish in Jeffersonville dedicates new church

By Mary Ann Wyand

JEFFERSONVILLE—Just in time for Christmas, Sacred Heart of Jesus parishioners celebrated the dedication of their new church with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and 18 diocesan and order priests during a Dec. 16 eucharistic liturgy that marked the realization of a 48-year dream.

When Sacred Heart Parish was established in 1953 at 1840 E. Eighth St. in Jeffersonville, parishioners began worshipping in a temporary space that was intended to serve as a gymnasium for the school in 10 years.

Nearly five decades later, 65 charter members are still among the 664 parish families that are finally celebrating the completion of the permanent church.

"All are truly welcome here," Father Raymond Schafer, pastor, told the standing-room-only gathering at the start of the Mass that also celebrated the diversity of the multicultural New Albany Deanery parish. "May we all be gathered in faith and in prayer."

Father Schafer, the pastor since 1988, said the church features "a simpleness and natural beauty" that encompasses the inclusiveness of community and consciousness of accessibility for persons with disabilities.

Parishioner Sue Ann Knight of Jeffersonville said the new worship space allows her complete access to the facilities in her wheelchair.

"I am just overjoyed," she said. "Not only will it be beautiful, but I will be able to go everywhere on my own. One of the great things is to have a bathroom on the first floor. That is a blessing after so many years. My prayer is that we move into our new church with the same love and caring we have had for 50 years in our parish family."

Parishioner Jim King, a member since 1955, said the new worship space is "a step into the future" and "a dream come true."

His son, Benedictine Father Jeremy King, concelebrated the liturgy and was introduced as a "son of the parish."

Benedictine Father Donald Walpole, who created most of the artwork for the temporary church in the 1950s, also



Above: Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein and 18 diocesan and order priests concelebrated the eucharistic liturgy for the Dec. 16 dedication of the new Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Jeffersonville. Father Raymond Schafer, pastor, is at the far left.

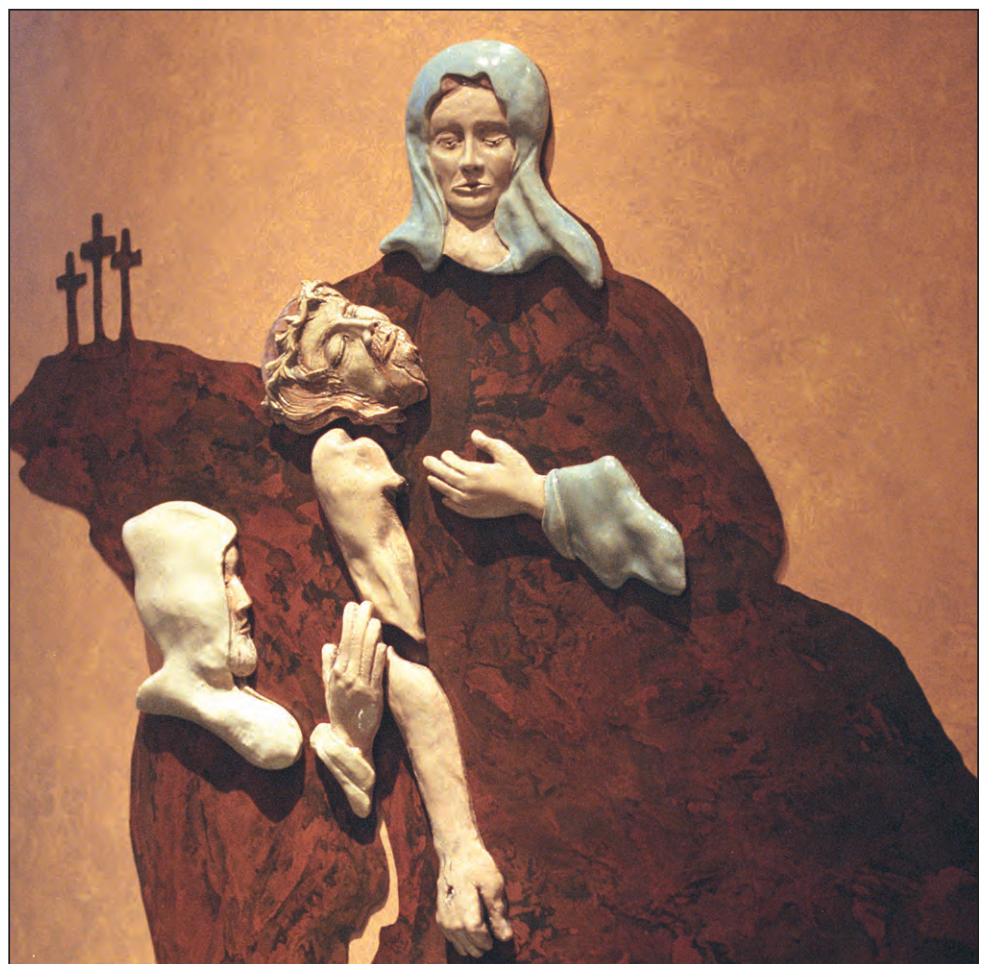
concelebrated the Mass. His brother, the late Father Robert Walpole, was the founding pastor.

All but one of the former pastors still living, as well as priests from other New Albany Deanery parishes, also concelebrated the liturgy.

Archbishop Buechlein told the parishioners and guests that Advent is a wonderful time to celebrate the dedication of their new church and their commitment to carry on the healing mission and ministry of Jesus.

"On this third Sunday of Advent, we proclaim our joy even if there is some darkness," he said. "Like John the Baptist, we continue in faith and we can rejoice in the hope that we are so blessed. This church, which we consecrate to God this afternoon, will stand for generations to

See CHURCH, page 6



The Stations of the Cross in the new Sacred Heart of Jesus Church are interactive prayer experiences. Station XIII depicts Mary holding the body of Jesus after her son's body was taken down from the cross. The stations representing Jesus falling on the way to Calvary include handprints and footmarks in the floor.

The Criterion

12/21/01

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The Criterion's last issue until Jan. 11

This week's edition of *The Criterion*, which includes the annual Christmas Supplement, is the last edition of 2001. *The Criterion* will be published again on Jan. 11, and will resume its regular weekly schedule.

The Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center will be closed from Dec. 22 through Jan. 1. †

About the cover of *The Criterion*

The front page of this issue of *The Criterion* is a composite of a CNS photo from Reuters of the World Trade Center and a CNS photo from Crosiers of the birth of Christ, which is depicted in contemporary artwork from the Basilica of Pius X in Lourdes, France. †

Indianapolis-based Catholic business group honors Sept. 11 hero

By Jennifer Del Vecchio

The last words of Thomas Burnett Jr. were to his wife as he flew on board a hijacked plane heading for destruction.

"We're going to do something ... Deena if they are going to run this plane into the ground, we're going to do something. Just pray, Deena, pray," he said, in one of four cell phone calls to his wife in San Ramoa, Calif.

The words are etched in the memory of Americans as Burnett, 38, and others decided to fight back against hijackers on United Airlines Flight 93 on Sept. 11. The plane crashed in a rural Pennsylvania field, thwarting the plans of hijackers to use the plane as a missile as they did at the World Trade Center towers in New York and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C.

"You hear he wanted to do something," said Thomas Burnett Sr. on Dec. 5 during the Civitas Dei Christmas dinner in Indianapolis, where his son's memory was honored. "I'd like you to know something about his character."

Civitas Dei is an Indianapolis-based association of Catholic businessmen and women.

The elder Burnett told the story of a little boy who grew into a man "who exuded goodness.



Thomas Burnett Jr.

"He was a very good man," his father said. "He was the best of the best, absolutely the best of the best."

From his earliest years, Burnett Jr. was an outdoorsman, accompa-

nying his father and close family friend, Msgr. Joseph Slepicka, on hunting and fishing trips. One of his earliest photos shows Burnett as a 4-year-old holding a 4.6-pound large-mouth bass that he caught on a 50-cent rod and reel with a copper hook.

"In honor of his memory, I ask you to be good to your families," Burnett Sr. said. "Work hard and be good American citizens."

Burnett Jr. was born on May 29, 1963, at St. Mary's Hospital in Bloomington, Minn. He was a premature baby and his feet were no bigger than a thumb.

A priest at the hospital gave the newborn a Mother Seton medal. It was the beginning of a life filled with faith.

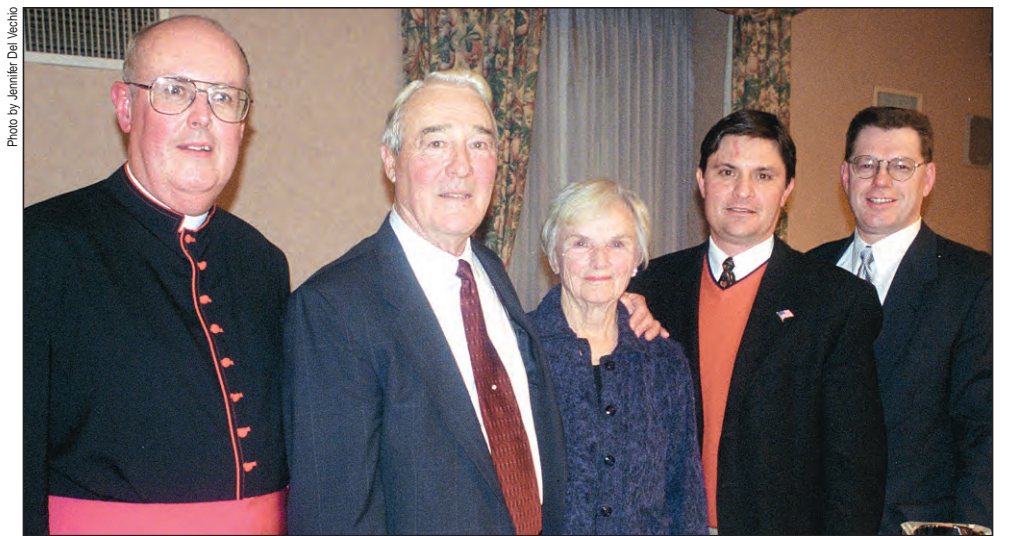
Burnett, who attended Mass daily, was known to call his parents and ask them to pray, along with enlisting the prayers of the Poor Clare sisters.

"I remember one time we were in Texas," said Beverley, his mother. "We got up at the crack of dawn to find a church and go to Mass because Tommy said it was important that we pray."

She spoke of a child who grew into a man that listened and gave good advice. He was a devoted family man to his wife and three daughters, and a man who loved to read, pouring through biographies on Thomas Jefferson, Lewis and Clark, and Winston Churchill, his favorite historical figure.

The Burnetts traveled to Indianapolis from Minnesota to accept the inaugural Thomas E. Burnett Jr. Heroic Leadership Award. The award, to be given annually to a Catholic businessman or woman, recognizes an individual who best exemplifies the virtues of the Catholic faith, along with courageous action and leadership in the marketplace.

Members of Civitas Dei said that Burnett's role model is a strong reminder that action is needed when living one's faith.



Civitas Dei, a Catholic business guild in Indianapolis, posthumously honored Thomas E. Burnett Jr. with the Heroic Leadership Award for his actions aboard United Airlines Flight 93 that thwarted the hijacker's plans on the attacks against America. His parents accepted the award in his honor. From left are Monsignor Joseph F. Schaedel, chaplain for the guild; Thomas Burnett Sr., Beverly Burnett, Shawn Conway, founding chairman, and David Gorsage, founding vice-chair.

They said his actions could only help members to carry out their vocations in business as Christians.

The Burnetts said they want people to remember their son as a man of faith, wisdom, wit, compassion and courage.

Others spoke about how Burnett's memory touched their lives.

A letter from Mother Angelica from the Eternal World Television Network in Alabama was read and a fax was sent from President George W. Bush to the Burnetts especially for the occasion.

The president wrote that Americans drew strength from the courageous actions of Burnett, and he asked the family to join him in prayers for God to watch over the nation.

The Burnetts said traveling to meet strangers and accepting awards for their son has placed them in a new role.

"Now we are reaching out to lots of people and certainly we will share our faith," Beverly said.

"As I think and pray about this, I keep seeing it's not about me," Beverly said. "I think I heard myself say, 'What about me? I'm going to miss my son.'"

"This is about what happened to Tommy, it's not about me," she said. "It's about God. I believe that and what our mission is to be I don't know yet, but I'm sure we have one."

They also are struck by the wisdom in some of their son's last words that were spoken at one of his last professional meetings with employees.

"What we accomplish in life," Thomas Burnett Jr. told his employees, "our pursuits, our passions, echo in posterity, through our children, our neighbors and ultimately in our own souls." †

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WTTV/WB4
Tuesday, December 25
6:30 a.m. only

The Sunday, December 23, Mass for the Fourth Sunday of Advent may be viewed at its regular time—6:30 a.m. on WTTV-4



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Editorial

Longing for peace

No matter what else is going on in the world—or in our daily lives—Advent and Christmas awaken in our hearts the desire for peace.

The imagery of Advent is about longing and hope-filled expectation. Christmas brings the fulfillment of all our hopes, but it also inevitably reminds us that the innocent will suffer and the good die young before our Christmas cheer can mature into Easter joy.

We long for everlasting peace during Advent and Christmas, but the peace we actually experience, here and now, is both fragmentary and fleeting.

Thank God for Advent and Christmas. In the midst of war in far-away places and terror-inspired fears here at home, we remember God's promise to send light into our darkness and hope into our despair. We remember—and we celebrate—the prophecies of the Old Testament and their wonderful fulfillment in the New Testament.

The peace of Advent and Christmas is not an elusive dream of Camelot or Utopia. It is an experience of confident trust between a people of faith and their provident God. The realities of Advent and Christmas peace are perfectly symbolized by the Holy Family—Mary, Joseph and Jesus—who are surrounded by evil and uncertainty but who also are sustained by God throughout all their adversity.

The peace that we long for during

Advent, and experience at Christmas, does not do away with the world's sorrow. Bethlehem still knows profound sadness 2,000 years after the Savior's birth, and Jerusalem, the city of peace, remains a place of terror and oppression in spite of its status as "holy ground" for Jews, Christians and Moslems.

Advent and Christmas herald "peace on earth." But we must recognize this peace for what it truly is: a profound spiritual experience at the core of our being that brings comfort in distress and calm in the midst of chaos. It is the peace of Christ as he stands before his accusers during Holy Week—unable to do away with death, but willing to sacrifice everything in order to redeem it.

The peace of Advent and Christmas is a premonition of the kingdom that is both here and still to come—a world far better than this, where "peace, joy and love" will no longer be simply "season's greetings" but permanent expressions of the way things are in the new and everlasting Jerusalem, our heavenly home.

Maranatha. Come, Lord Jesus. Grant us your peace. Now and forever. Amen.

— Daniel Conway

(Daniel Conway is a member of the editorial committee of the board of directors of Criterion Press Inc.) †

Seeking the Face of the Lord

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.



Jesus is both Light and Word

Ababy boy lying in a manger is called the Light of the world and the Word made flesh. How strange and how abstract—to call a person a light and a word!

Yet, if we stop to think of circumstances some 2,000 years ago, it doesn't seem so strange. Then as now, a light in the darkness meant an awful lot. We panic when electricity "goes out." That was the normal condition then. Fire went out quicker and more often.

Before newspapers and books, centuries before audio and video cassettes, before computers and the Internet, the truth about things, the news, and just general information was learned through the face-to-face, spoken word.

Messengers and storytellers and rabbis (teachers) were a lifeline. The boy named Jesus would come from God as a light in the darkness and a teacher and storyteller and messenger. He became light. He became God's Word of love.

Ever since Adam and Eve said, "No, we will not obey (because we want to be like God)," humanity has been plagued by another kind of darkness and ignorance. Sin and tragic human error mark our lives. Think of the darkness and ignorance that spawn jealousy and murder, stealing and war. Cain, a brother in the blinding darkness of jealousy, hates his own brother and commits the first murder. In these last months of 2001, the free world has been at war with terrorism. It is not at all unlikely that, in our cities and towns this Christmas, brothers will kill brothers for drugs and the money to purchase them.

It wasn't long before descendants of our first parents became unfaithful spouses because of self-centeredness. Today, victims of broken love discover the worst kind of darkness. Man and woman, intended to be complementary partners for life, become estranged, separated and lonely. Distrust adds the bitter spice to the fright of darkness.

Only God could bring light and knowledge to our human family hopelessly lost in darkness and ignorance. His own Son became one of us as the saving light and trustworthy word of truth. Jesus reveals God, who is faithful love itself.

Christmas is a feast of love. In the manger in a dark stable with dumb animals, Christ began to shine as the Light of the world and

the Word of truth. It began with a little boy born of a loving mother and watched over by a courageous father.

This Christmas is shadowed by the billowing smoke and dust of New York and Washington and Pennsylvania, and then the fiery images of bombs in Afghanistan. How fragile life is!

Some people say uncontrollable fate led our ancestors to invent sorcerers and deities. Those of us who believe in one God have another perspective, and it begins with Christmas. We celebrate the mystery that offers the only path of human security. God is in charge of all destiny; we don't have to be. His is the master plan to make everything finally work out.

The string attached to the great Christmas gift of "God coming to live among us as light and word of love" is that we believe in and accept his love and that we accept in faith that this life (as we know it) is not the whole story.

It all goes together and starts with Christmas. Jesus did something to human destiny. When we celebrate his birth, we celebrate the remarkable fact that God came to be one of us to save us and to show us how to live and to love and, yes, to die in this passing world. The greatest Christmas gift is God himself!

The gift is free, and it is for all of us, holy and unholy alike. A prayerful celebration of Christmas is our thank you.

Those of us who know the meaning of the stable and the simple birth of the Savior have a special obligation to our troubled world. The torch has been handed on to us. We are called to be "Disciples in Mission," evangelizers. We are called to bring the Light of Christ and the Word to our world. Christ once said that the world would know we were his if we have love, one for another. "Love your neighbor as yourself," He urged. "Turn the other cheek." "Forgive your enemy 70 times seven." "Feed the hungry, clothe the naked."

Our colored lights and Nativity sets remind us of the promise of Christmas and our part in it. They also remind us to thank God for his Christmas gift!

I add a heartfelt "thank you" to all of you who help carry the Christmas light of hope in central and southern Indiana. God bless each and every one of you! My Midnight Mass is for all of you. †



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Archbishop Buechlein's intention for vocations for December

Catholic Grade Schools: that they may teach our children the Catholic faith and assist them in hearing and answering God's call to service in the Church, especially as priests or religious.

Buscando la Cara del Señor

Arzobispo Daniel M. Buechlein, O.S.B.



Jesús es tanto la Luz como la Palabra

Un bebé acostado en un pesebre es llamado la Luz del mundo y la Palabra hecha hombre. ¡Que extraño y que abstracto, llamar a una persona la luz y palabra!

Bien, si nos detenemos a pensar en las circunstancias de hace 2,000 años no parece tan extraño. En aquella época como hoy en día, una luz en la oscuridad significaba muchísimo. Nosotros nos asustamos cuando se "va la luz". En aquel entonces ese era el estado normal. El fuego se extinguía más rápida y frecuentemente.

Antes de los periódicos y libros, siglos antes de las cintas de audio y de video, antes de las computadoras y el Internet, la verdad sobre las cosas, las noticias, y la información general era repartida cara a cara, hablando.

Los mensajeros, cuenta cuentos y rabinos (maestros) eran el auxilio. Un niño llamado Jesús vendría de Dios como una luz en la oscuridad y el maestro, el contador de cuentos y le mensajero. Él se convirtió en la luz. El se convirtió en la Palabra de Amor de Dios.

Desde que Adán y Eva dijeron: "no, nosotros no obedeceremos (porque queremos ser como Dios)," la humanidad ha sido plagada con otro tipo de oscuridad e ignorancia. El pecado y el trágico error humano marcó nuestras vidas. Piensen en la oscuridad e ignorancia que produce celos y asesinato, robos y guerra. Caín un hermano cegado por la oscuridad de los celos, odia a su propio hermano y comete el primer asesinato. En estos últimos meses del 2001, el mundo libre ha estado en guerra con el terrorismo. No parece poco probable que en nuestras ciudades y pueblos, hermanos maten a sus hermanos por drogas y el dinero para comprarlas está Navidad.

Pronto los descendientes de nuestros primeros padres se convirtieron en cónyuges infieles debido al egocentrismo. Hoy en día las víctimas del amor fracasado descubren el peor tipo de oscuridad. El hombre y la mujer, designados como parejas complementarias de por vida, se alejan, se separan y se ponen solos. La desconfianza añade amargura al temor de la oscuridad.

Únicamente Dios pudo llevar la luz y el conocimiento a la familia humana que está perdida desesperadamente en la oscuridad y la ignorancia. Su propio Hijo se hizo uno de nosotros como la luz salvadora y la palabra confiable de la verdad. Jesús revela a Dios quien es el amor fiel en sí.

La Navidad es una fiesta de amor. En el pesebre dentro del establo oscuro lleno de animales tontos, Cristo brilló como la Luz del mundo y la Palabra de la verdad. Todo comenzó con un pequeño niño que nació de una madre

cariñosa y de un padre valiente que lo vigilaba.

Esta Navidad se celebra en la sombra del humo y polvo que suben de Nueva York, Washington y Pennsylvania y luego las imágenes ardientes de las bombas en Afganistán. ¡Que delicada es la vida!

Algunos dicen que el destino incontrolable llevó a nuestros antepasados a inventar hechiceros y deidades. Aquellos que crean en un Dios tienen otra perspectiva, y ésta comienza con la Navidad. Celebramos el misterio que ofrece el único sendero de la seguridad humana. Dios manda el destino por completo; no nos corresponde. Su plan maestro es que a fin de cuentas todo se resuelve.

El cordón que está atado al gran regalo navideño de "la venida de Dios a vivir entre nosotros como la luz y la palabra de amor" es que creemos tanto en su amor y aceptamos el mismo como aceptamos por fe que esta vida (tal como la conocemos) no es toda la historia.

Todo se complementan y comienza con la Navidad. Jesús afectó al destino humano. Al celebrar su nacimiento celebramos el extraordinario hecho que Dios llegó a ser uno de nosotros para salvarnos y enseñarnos como vivir y amar, y de hecho, como morir en este mundo transcendente. ¡El mejor regalo navideño es él mismo, Dios!

El regalo es gratuito y está disponible para todos nosotros, tanto los santos como los malvados. Demos gracias por medio de una celebración piadosa de Navidad.

Aquellos que conozcan el significado del establo y el sencillo nacimiento del Salvador tienen un deber especial a nuestro mundo turbulento. Nos ha sido pasada la antorcha. Se nos llaman a ser evangelizadores "Discípulos en Misión". Se nos llaman a llevar la Luz de Cristo y la Palabra a nuestro mundo. Una vez Cristo dijo que el mundo sabría que somos los suyos si nos amamos unos a los otros. Él instó "Ama a tu prójimo como a ti mismo". "Pon la otra mejilla". "Perdona tu enemigo 70 veces 7". "Alimenta al hambriento, viste al desnudo".

Nuestras luces de colores y los nacimientos nos recuerdan la promesa de Navidad y nuestra parte en ellas. ¡También nos recuerdan el dar gracias a Dios por su regalo de Navidad!

Quisiera añadir un muy sentido "gracias" a todos ustedes que ayudan a cargar la luz de la esperanza de la Navidad in el centro y el sur de Indiana. Dios los bendiga a todos y a cada uno de ustedes! Mi Misa de Medianoche es para todos ustedes. †

Traducido por: Language Training Center, Indianapolis

La intención del Arzobispo Buechlein para vocaciones en diciembre

Escuelas primarias católicas: que ellos puedan enseñar la fe católica a nuestros niños y puedan ayudarles a oír y contestar la llamada de Dios para servir en la Iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes o religiosos.

Letters to the Editor

Humans called to be like God

Re: [Your Dec. 7] editorial was about human cloning. This letter is not about that.

It is about the headline "You will be like God," which is interpreted negatively and the logic that human effort to become like God, inevitably results in a sinful desire to be God. This is simply not true. There is a distinction; one does not lead to another. Quite the reverse: Christian theology precisely calls humans to be like God.

Jesus reveals a God with a preferential option for the poor, the oppressed, the marginalized. In sum, we are to love all our neighbors. The earliest Christians were sometimes called "the way" because of the way they acted. To be a disciple of Jesus is to hear what he preached, do what he did, and do what he taught.

If we are not to be like God or Jesus, who is our model to be?

Charles E. Stimming, Indianapolis

Response:

We are speaking of two things here.

In the context of the Genesis account of the Fall referred to in the editorial, the tempter urges our first parents to disobey their Creator because in so doing, "You will be like God" (Gn 3:5). But, this is a desire to be like God "without God ... and not in accordance with God" (St. Maximus the Confessor, *Ambigua*: pg. 91, 1156C. See *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #398). This is a sinful striving to be like God.

The editorial's point is that those persons who clone and then destroy human embryos for reproductive or therapeutic purposes are making life and death decisions regarding human beings. These are decisions reserved to God alone.

However, we couldn't agree more with Mr. Stimming that, as Christians, we are called to be like God. In fact, just as Jesus is God's image, or "face," to us, we are called to be the image, or "face," of Jesus to our world.

An ancient teaching of the Church, especially prevalent in the Eastern Churches, says that the saving work of Jesus Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit began a process through which all creation is undergoing a process of divinization so that we become more and more like God as we share more deeply in his divine life. (This concept is especially prevalent in the writings of St. Athanasius, the fourth century bishop, Father and doctor of the Church. He called this process *theopóiesis*. It is seen as a restoration of creation to the existence and relationship it enjoyed with God before humanity's fall from grace.) — WRB

Image of Christ radically changed

As a youth minister for the parish of St. Vincent de Paul in Shelbyville, I felt it necessary to write and describe to your readers how, after attending this year's National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) hosted and made a reality by none other than our own Office for Youth and Family Ministries (OYFM), as well as hundreds of volunteers, and led by our very own archbishop, my image of Christ was shattered. In fact, the image of Christ that I have carefully created over almost 37 years was so thoroughly crushed that I have come to accept the truth that I will never be able to use it again.

As the conference began, I knew exactly what Christ looked like and even what he sounded like. I knew how he would dress, and how he would walk. *I knew my Lord*, and if he were to return, I would spot him in a second, that is, until I attended the NCYC. Now I must start all over.

Now I am not sure what my Lord looks like because those who put on this event threw 24,000 new faces into the mix. And though it may sound coldhearted, it must be said: I think they did it on purpose. I think they wanted to crush the image of Christ I had, so that a new image might come forth. Be mindful all who read this, the OYFM will go to any length to introduce us to Christ, and this past week was no exception.

Left with no options, I will restart my journey in search of Christ, but I have to say that image will never be as defined as it was before this experience, and for that I say thank you to all who made this week a reality. You served your Lord not only at the highest level, but in every shape, size and flavor known to man. May God bless you and keep you.

Dave Gehrich, Shelbyville

Found letter challenging

I found [Joe Zelenka's] letter challenging ["Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, Dec. 7]. It has motivated me to examine my own feelings about the U.S. military action in Afghanistan.

I'm not a pacifist. I don't believe using violence is always wrong. Remember reading about Jesus driving the moneychangers out of the Temple? Thank God that some of the passengers of the hijacked airliner in Pennsylvania weren't pacifists. I'm sure most of them prayed to God for guidance to know what the best thing to do was. When some of them found out the plane was going to be used as a missile to kill more people, they acted, using violence to subdue the hijackers. Maybe there were pacifists aboard that plane who didn't want to use violence. Maybe they wanted the others to wait, hoping that prayer and diplomacy would have changed the hearts of the hijackers.

They all died in the crash. Would the hijackers have been converted at the last minute? Could violence have been avoided while preventing another terrorist attack?

It's possible, but we will never know. But we do know that violence was used and that that plane did not become a missile like the three that destroyed the Twin Towers and the Pentagon and the people in them. But the question could be asked, "Were the pacifists aboard that plane innocent victims of the 'military action' of the other passengers? Were they the ones with the true faith to wait on the Spirit of Peace to work, instead of trusting in violence to stop the hijackers?"

Is this example similar enough to the war in Afghanistan to help us Christians know the will of Jesus?

Maybe not. But I believe those passengers who used violence did so not because they hated the hijackers, but because they wanted to save more innocent people from dying. Their lives were sacrificed out of love. They are both civic heroes and Christian examples, laying their lives down for their friends.

I believe that our government is doing that same thing, not to indiscriminately punish the Afghan people with brutal vengeance, but to prevent the promised future attacks by the terrorists and the Taliban government that protects them.

If I am wrong, pray for my conversion and respond to this letter with the evidence to help convince me.

Mike Haigerty, Indianapolis

Agrees with editorials

I have read your editorials on the actions of our country in response to the attacks, and how we might respond as Catholic Christians. I agree strongly with your remarks, as I believe many others do as well, both within our Church and out.

Our Church should foster prayerful free-thinking as a way to better understand and discern God's call. However, I

Check It Out . . .

“What is the New Testament?” will be offered by Saint Meinrad School of Theology’s Ecclesial Lay Ministry Program from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. each Monday for 10 weeks, starting on Feb. 4. The course will meet in the library at St. Louis School, 17 St. Louis Pl., in Batesville. Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard will

be the presenter. The course introduces reading and interpreting the New Testament as the primary document of the faith of the Church. The cost is \$150; qualified participants may be eligible for subsidies. For more information or to register, call the Indianapolis Office of Saint Meinrad School of Theology at 317-955-6451.

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Office for Film and Broadcasting movie ratings

The Majestic (Warner Bros.)
 Rated **A-II (Adults and Adolescents)** because of a car crash and fleeting profanity with a few crass words.
 Rated **PG (Parental Guidance Suggested)** by the Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA).

Not Another Teen Movie (Columbia)
 Rated **O (Morally Offensive)** because of brutal violence played for laughs, recurring nudity, perverse sexual situations, brief recreational drug use, occasional rough language and much shrill profanity.
 Rated **R (Restricted)** by the MPAA.

The Royal Tenenbaums (Touchstone)
 Rated **A-III (Adults)** because of an attempted suicide, implied promiscuity and substance abuse, brief nudity, some rough language and minimal profanity.
 Rated **R (Restricted)** by the MPAA.

Vanilla Sky (Paramount)
 Rated **A-III (Adults)** because of a few sexual encounters and vulgar references, brief violence including suicide, and recurring rough language with some profanity.
 Rated **R (Restricted)** by the MPAA. †

There will be a **Retrouvaille Weekend retreat** from Jan. 18-20 at Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis. The Retrouvaille program is designed to help married couples that are experiencing difficulties in communicating and loving. The Catholic program, open to all faiths, consists of one weekend and six follow-up sessions over three months. Retrouvaille seeks to focus on key problems, present techniques of communication and provide ways for the couple to place and keep their individual, marital and spiritual needs in balance. For more information on the program and the weekend, call the Office for Youth and Family Ministries at 317-236-1596 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1596.

Mount Saint Francis Retreat Center in Floyd County is offering a healing retreat titled **“Blessed Grieving: When a Loved One Dies”** from Jan. 18-20. The retreat is for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. The fee is \$95. For more information, call 812-923-8817 or e-mail mtstfran@cris.com.

Alumnae of the former St. John Academy in Indianapolis are planning a **Golden Jubilee Reunion** for members of the Class of 1952 and are looking for five classmates whose addresses are unavailable. They are Patricia Chilton Crouch, Catherine Collignon Wiwi, Cassandra Smithy Neria, Sheila Sullivan Cramer and Lila Gillaspay Baker. Anyone with information is asked to call Gwen Weber at 317-356-8405. †



Archbishop Buechlein thanks Sacred Heart of Jesus parishioners for their hard work and dedication, which made their new church a reality.

CHURCH

continued from page 2

come as a wonderful proclamation of our faith, our hope and our love. It is a dream come true.”

Parishioner Margie Javid of Jeffersonville, a member since 1987, said the new church represents “a step into the 21st century and a new beginning” and is “a wonderful experience for our parish.”

After the liturgy, Benedictine Father

Noah Casey, director of the archdiocesan Office of Ministry to Priests, admired the interactive aspects of the Stations of the Cross.

“Rather than just have one-dimensional or two dimensional images of the Stations of the Cross, they wanted to make it a Way of the Cross that people can follow,” Father Noah said. “Imprinted in the floor of the church are various stations that commemorate Jesus falling to the ground. There are actually handprints and body prints in the floor representing Jesus’ falls on the way to Calvary. It really becomes a journey. It’s very nice.” †

West Deanery Recognition Awards Dinner

Cardinal Ritter High School **2002** January Thirty-first at 6:30 p.m.

Committed to Excellence

Recognition Honorees

William Braier

Robert Bullock '79

Sr. Julann Butz

John Childers, Sr.

Rev. Charles Henry, OSB

Alfonso Hernandez, Sr.

James & Carol Jenks

Rev. Richard Zore

20+ Year Service Awards

Marcia Dowden
St. Gabriel

Mary Feeney
St. Malachy

Beth Lewis
St. Malachy

Please join us as we pay tribute to these very special people. This evening will begin with a reception at 6:30 p.m. The price is \$350.00 for a table of 10 or \$40 per person. Gifts in tribute to honorees may be made to CRHS.

For more information or to reserve your table or seat please contact the Office of Development at Cardinal Ritter High School at 317-927-7825

1999 Honorees

Father William Cleary
 Father Clarence Walden
 Frank Velikan
 Mike and Sharon Morley
 Joseph Pfennig '78

2000 Honorees

Fred Fath
 Father Glenn O'Connor
 Cecelia Sparks
 Vince Welch '82
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2001 Honorees

Dan & Beth Elsener
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 Henry Bryant '76
 Ann Bordenkecher
 Jeannine Vesper
 Sue Ann Yovanovich



Cardinal Ritter High School
 3360 West 30th Street
 Indianapolis, IN 46222

Manger connects to the crucifix and Resurrection

By Fr. Eugene LaVerdiere, S.S.S.

We all have our favorite Christmas stories. Mine is a story told by Maryknoll Sister Mary Coleman, who spent most of World War II in a prison at Los Banos in the Philippines.

"The Japanese guards were kind to us," she said. "When they had enough to eat, we also had enough. We were able to put aside a place for prayer in the camp, and a Filipino carved a fine wooden crucifix for our prayer room, and we set it up on the wall. When Christmas came, someone carved a manger set, which we put out early, but without the figure of the infant Jesus. We waited for Christmas Eve.

"One of the Japanese guards who never had seen a Christmas manger watched us when we were praying silently before the manger," Sister Mary said. "But as we were leaving, he pointed to Jesus in the manger and then to Jesus on the cross and asked, 'The same one?'"

"I answered, 'Yes, he is the same one,'" she recalled. "Looking again from the manger to the crucifix, he said, 'I am so sorry.'"

The Gospel stories of Jesus' birth written by St. Luke (Lk 1:5-2:52) and St. Matthew (Mt 1:1-2:23) are among the most cherished chapters in the New Testament. Like Luke, Matthew related the story of Jesus' birth to the story of his passion and resurrection.

Often, particularly at Christmas, we read or listen to the Gospel infancy narratives of Jesus' birth romantically through our childhood experience. Luke and Matthew wrote them, however, for adult Christians in their communities. The Gospel infancy narratives are simple but deep, like a bottomless well.

When we celebrate the birthday of ordinary historical persons, we do not celebrate only their birth. We also celebrate their life, their relationships and their achievements.

At Christmas, when we celebrate Jesus' birthday, we do not celebrate only his birth. We also celebrate his entire life, including his mission, his ministry, and his death and resurrection.

Traditionally, the early Christian creeds connected the birth of Jesus to his passion and resurrection: "[Christ Jesus was]

descended from David according to the flesh, but established as Son of God in power according to the spirit of holiness through resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom 1:3-4).

For many years, Luke and Matthew meditated again and again on this creed or other similar creeds.

The Gospel infancy narratives actually are the Gospels in miniature, introducing the principal themes of their Gospels, including the mission of Jesus and his passion and resurrection.

Look at Luke's story of Jesus' birth: She "laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn" (Lk 2:7).

Mary placed Jesus in a manger, a feeding trough for the animals. In this context, Mary offered Jesus, her son, the firstborn of God, as nourishment for the flock (Lk 2:8) because there was no place for the Son of David (Lk 1:32; 2:4) in the hospitality in the city of David (Lk 2:4, 6).

The flock, in Luke's Gospel, is a symbol of the community of his disciples and also the Christian community (Lk 12:32; Acts 20:28-29).

The "inn" (in Greek "katalyma"), literally the place of the hospitality, refers to the "guest room" (in Greek "katalyma") in which Jesus will eat the Passover as the Last Supper with his disciples (Lk 2:11).

Jesus was denied hospitality—or rejected—by the city of David at the time of his birth. In response, Mary, as a symbol of the Church, offered Jesus as nourishment for our flock, that is, our Christian community.

Jesus also was rejected by the city of David at the time of his death. In response, Jesus gave the ultimate hospitality, offering himself as nourishment for the world.

Thus, in Luke's Gospel, the story of Jesus' birth refers to the story of his passion and resurrection.

It is similar in Matthew. Look at Matthew's story of the magi: "Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh" (Mt 2:11). Their gifts evoked Isaiah's prophecy: "All from Sheba shall come bearing gold and frankincense" (Is 60:6).

In this prophecy, there are only two gifts: gold and frankincense. Matthew added a third gift, myrrh, used in the



At Christmas, when we celebrate Jesus' birthday, we do not celebrate only his birth. We also celebrate his entire life, including his mission, his ministry, and his death and resurrection.

ancient world as an ointment for the dead. In Matthew's Gospel, the gift of myrrh evokes Jesus' passion.

When the magi with their three gifts prostrate themselves before the newborn king, Matthew is saying that Emmanuel will reign in the kingdom of heaven as a messianic king through his passion.

Without his passion and his resurrec-

tion, the story of Jesus would not be a Gospel story or good news for us. That is why every Gospel creed, hymn and story of Jesus' birth refers to his passion and his resurrection.

(Blessed Sacrament Father Eugene LaVerdiere is a Scripture scholar and senior editor of Emmanuel magazine.) †

Discussion Point

Memories enrich holidays

This Week's Question

Share a favorite memory of Christmas in your own life.

"I have eight grandchildren, all under age 9. A few years ago, all of us were together, and every year my favorite memory of Christmas is being together as a family." (Eileen Anderson, Affton, Mo.)

"My favorite memory is decorating for the holidays with my father, who died when I was 12." (Maureen Godwin, Wilmington, Del.)

"On Dec. 25, 1918, the flu epidemic was going in full swing, having claimed the lives of my maternal grandmother and my 33-year-old godfather. It was being said that the 'Kriss Kringle' would probably not make the rounds. On Christmas morning, I crept down the dark stairway and headed for the parlor door. It seems I can still feel my bare feet riveted to the floor with both my hands on the doorknob. I dared to take a

peek. To my great delight, 'Kriss Kringle' had indeed paid us a visit. There was something for everyone." (Hattie Hipp, Great Bend, Kan.)

"On Christmas Eve, the doors of the parlor were closed while our parents and Santa Claus set up and decorated. Then we children lined up in order of age and marched into the parlor lighted only by the lights on the tree and the one in the Nativity set. There we stood and sang ['Silent Night' in German], after which we opened our presents. As we grew older and had music lessons, we performed a concert for our parents. I am 88 now, and can never forget those holy Christmases." (Anna W. Pavlik, Ocean Springs, Miss.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What is wrong, as you see it, with a spirit of vengeance?

To respond for possible publication, write to *Faith Alive!* at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †



From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Luke's infancy narrative is Christological

Last week, we examined the infancy narrative in Matthew's Gospel. We saw that it was more than a birth story; it was a retelling of the story of Israel. This week, let's look at Luke's longer infancy narrative, the first two chapters of his Gospel.



The focus of Luke's narrative, like Matthew's, is Christological. He uses Old Testament references and legends to tell us just who Jesus was, and he does it with a literary balancing of details.

There are, for example, two parallel annunciations, one to Zechariah announcing the birth of John the Baptist and the other to Mary announcing the birth of Jesus. These announcements are culminated in the meeting of the two mothers.

There are parallel accounts of the birth and circumcision of John, including a canticle by Zechariah (the *Benedictus*), and the birth, circumcision and presentation of

Jesus in the Temple, including a canticle by Simeon.

Zechariah and Elizabeth are described as too elderly to have a child, just as were Abraham and Sarah.

The biblical story of the presentation of Samuel in the Temple before the aged Eli is paralleled in two places in Luke's Gospel. The first is Mary's Magnificat during her visit to Elizabeth, very similar to the canticle of Samuel's mother Hannah (1 Sm 1-10). The second is Jesus' presentation in the Temple before the aged Simeon.

Other Old Testament allusions are included in the angel Gabriel's appearance to Zechariah. He tells him that John will drink neither wine nor strong drink, like Samson and Samuel. And Gabriel says that John will have the power of Elijah. (Gabriel, by the way, previously appeared in the Book of Daniel to announce the coming of an anointed one (Dn 9:21-27).

There is a verse in the story of the Annunciation that might have been the first allusion to the Trinity: "And the angel said to [Mary] in reply: 'The Holy Spirit

will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.

Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God'" (Lk 1:35). This was perhaps clear to Luke's first readers, but I can't help wondering if it was clear to Mary, a good Jewish girl.

Matthew's Gospel had its magi, but Luke's has the shepherds. This is in keeping with Luke's emphasis, throughout his Gospel, on the lowly as the recipients of God's blessings. The shepherds are the first to receive the good news, and that news is the most important message of the infancy narrative: "Today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Messiah and Lord" (Lk 2:11).

Only Luke among the synoptic Gospel writers uses the word "savior." Luke sees Jesus as the one who redeems humanity from its alienation from God. He is the long-awaited Messiah and Lord—the title applied to God, as in the Old Testament.

Luke elaborates on this message in the rest of his Gospel.

Have a holy and blessed Christmas. †

Cornucopia/Cynthia Dewes

Appreciating Christmas in a different way

For as long as I can remember, Christmas to me has meant the coming of our Lord and (most importantly) our Savior. To me, the Incarnation has always been the starting point in history for the execution of God's plan to redeem us from sin.



This idea was reinforced for me, much to my surprise, even in a secular college course on the humanities. Our professor outlined the theological concept that human sin against a perfect God demands perfect atonement. Only God is worthy enough to redeem a sin against himself. Thus the Son of God, incarnated in human form, is the only sacrifice great enough to merit forgiveness for our sins.

In this view, Christmas is a joyous feast because it starts in time and space the process of human redemption. Christ comes chiefly to save us from our human condition, which is imperfect.

With this understanding, Advent can be celebrated (and was celebrated in my younger days) as a kind of mini-Lent,

focusing on reconciliation and spiritual cleansing. The feast of Christmas, then, offered us a kind of joyful relief, similar to what we might feel at Easter.

Imagine my surprise, then, in reading in several places lately about a different theological reason for God becoming human. Unlike the most prevalent idea, which emphasizes human sin, this concept centers on Christ being the ultimate realization of God's love for his human creatures. In this concept, Christ is the culmination of the promise of salvation, not just atonement for human sin.

Instead of coming late on the scene as the solution to a problem, Christ is rather the logical conclusion of God's unique relationship with us. Scripture says, "In the beginning was the Word." And, later in the Incarnation of Christ, "the Word became flesh."

Jesuit Father Ken Overberg, in an article titled "Light Over Darkness: The Meaning of Christmas" in the December 2001 issue of *St. Anthony Messenger* magazine, presents the most complete and understandable explanations of this concept I've read to date. I recommend it.

Now, this is heavy stuff. Most of us during this time before Christmas are

preoccupied with wrapping gifts, mailing greetings and packages, baking cookies and going to parties. Most of us aren't spending a lot of time considering the theological implications of the coming feast.

On the other hand, many of us participate in our parish reconciliation service, the giving tree, the food collection. We pay special attention to the lonely, the elderly, all the folks who probably have the least to celebrate on any day of the year.

We say special prayers over the Advent wreath at dinnertime, and encourage our kids to remember what's really important about what is, after all, a Christian holiday. We try to spend the pre-Christmas season in a way that earns the reward of the day itself.

So it seems to me that, no matter which theological reasons for the season we favor (if any), joy must be the result of any effort to do God's will. Tiny Tim really captured the essence of Christmas when he said, "God bless us, every one!"

(Cynthia Dewes, a member of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Greencastle, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Let us kneel with reverence before the Lord

When my niece's son, Jonathon, was about 6, he loved listening to a song by the Nashville Bluegrass Band. Every time the group sang a certain line, Jonathon thought the words were "Every bumble bee surely must bow." Actually, the line is "Every humble knee surely must bow." I wish readers could hear the simple but catchy melody of this refrain:



*Hear this, heavenly Father,
once more and again
I'll be your handmaid servant
Bowed down before Thee.
Put your loving arms all around me;
Prop every leaning side.
Every humble knee surely must bow,
Surely must bow.*

Now it's once more and again the Christmas season, the time when adults and children humble themselves in adoration while kneeling before the Nativity scene, capturing in our hearts the simplicity and the complexity of Jesus, the Son

of God, made man.

St. Paul, in his letter to the Philippians (2:10-11), wrote: "... at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

So Jonathon, in his innocence, was right. All of creation—including humankind and bees—should bow on bended knee, literally or figuratively, to acknowledge the Lord's power and love. (God understands the intent of those who can't physically do so).

Once, I came across a greeting card of encouragement that I've sent to others. It was a blessing to me, and it made me chuckle. I share the idea and text with permission from DaySpring Cards of Siloam Springs, Ark. The card's front shows a man struggling through a jungle. The message is:

*This is not one of those
"When the going gets tough ..."
"Keep your chin up"
"Things could be worse"
type of cards.
Times like these call for
a much more manly approach.*

When opening the card, the message is:

*Hit the deck
and pray
like crazy!*

At the bottom of the card is a quotation from Ephesians 6:12.

Haven't we all knelt in supplication when times are tough? Haven't we all knelt, praising God? And shouldn't we humbly do it more?

I've even seen billboards or articles promoting more "knee-mail" in our churches and homes—and through e-mail. The Internet makes available countless Web sites encouraging prayer.

Especially during this holy season, we Catholics could also pay more attention to genuflection. One Church document approved by John Paul II says, "In order that the heart may bow before God in profound reverence, the genuflection must neither be hurried nor careless."

"Every humble knee surely must bow"—"once more and again."

(Shirley Vogler Meister, a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Research for the Church/
Dr. James D. Davidson

Is society increasingly secular?

For years, social scientists have believed that, as a result of modernization,



our society would become increasingly secular. As science provided more answers to questions about our universe, there would be less need for religious explanations.

In short, with modernization, reason would reduce the need for faith, prosperity would reduce dependence on God and reliance on the state would reduce the need for churches.

Proponents of secularization theory have cited evidence pointing to the declining significance of religion and the increasing secularity of modern society. They have noted that membership in many Churches is declining and that the percentage of Americans saying they have no religious preference is five times what it was only 40 years ago.

For the most part, prayer has been removed from our public schools. Nativity scenes have been removed from courthouse squares.

However, a number of scholars are rethinking secularization theory. For one thing, they suggest that the term secularization has so many meanings (that religious symbols, doctrines and institutions have lost prestige or that religion increasingly is confined to personal and family life) that it is no longer useful.

They also question whether it is possible to make a clear distinction between the sacred and the secular, believing instead that the two are inevitably intertwined.

Third, they question the assumption that there once was a time (e.g., the Old Testament era, medieval Europe, colonial America?) when society was wrapped in a sacred canopy and people were more religious than they are today.

Fourth, they argue that, even though modern society meets many of our material needs, it does not meet our spiritual needs.

Fifth, they point to evidence that seems to conflict with secularization theory. They note that Church membership, religious belief, and religious practice are more common today than they were in medieval Europe and colonial America (for example, two-thirds of Americans now belong to a Church, compared to only 15 percent of American colonists).

While membership in mainline Protestant Churches is declining, membership in the Catholic Church and evangelical Churches is increasing. More than 90 percent of Americans still believe in God. Scientists are among the most religious, not the least religious, members of university faculties. Instead of being strictly private, religion affects the nation's economy and leads some people to view their work as a calling. It also puts issues such as abortion and economic justice on the political agenda and affects the way many people vote in presidential elections.

As this debate over secularization theory proceeds, Catholic clergy and lay leaders might want to consider programs in which parishioners could explore the arguments on both sides, examine the evidence bearing on this debate and consider the motives of those who support and question secularization theory.

(James D. Davidson is professor of sociology at Purdue University. His latest book is *American Catholics: Gender, Generation, and Commitment*, Alta Mira Press, 2001.) †

Fourth Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 23, 2001

- Isaiah 7:10-14
- Romans 1:1-7
- Matthew 1:18-24

The Book of Isaiah is the source of this Advent weekend's first reading.



The author of this first section of Isaiah lived at a time when anxiety and compromise reigned supreme in the kingdom of Judah, the southern part of what had been the one unified kingdom of David and Solomon.

Isaiah was not alone in seeing as the root of the country's problems a decline in religious fervor. Yet he was among a distinct minority. He saw policies that toyed with the law of God as the prelude to disaster.

Of course, history would prove him right.

However, in the time in which this Scripture was written, hope dawned on the horizon. The king's young wife, or perhaps his concubine, would conceive and bear a son. In time, this son would ascend the throne. His reign would bring an era of peace and security.

Kings of Judah, and their counterparts to the north in what had survived as the kings of Israel, presided over what the prophets such as Isaiah saw as an abomination. God had created the nation to be one. Human greed and intrigue had broken the kingdom apart.

Still, the king of Judah occupied a special place. Obviously, as ruler, he could direct the kingdom toward God. He also spoke on behalf of the people.

Ahaz appears as if he was belligerent and unsure of himself. Sinfulness robs the soul of confidence and strength. It clouds vision and dulls true feelings.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans provides the second reading.

This weekend's second reading is from the beginning verses of the epistle. Paul identifies himself as an apostle. He declares that God called him to apostleship to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus.

As an apostle, therefore, Paul was an instrument of divine love and mercy. God knows that all be saved through a knowledge of, and devotion to, the Lord Jesus.

Only two of the four Gospels discuss in depth the coming of Jesus. Matthew is one; Luke is the other. This weekend's Gospel reading is from Matthew's Gospel.

In this story, Mary has conceived not in the process of human reproduction, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. Her betrothed husband, Joseph, presumes she has been the victim of improper activity

on the part of another man.

An angel tells Joseph that her child was conceived in the power of God. The child's name will be "Jesus."

Joseph fully accepts this explanation. Joseph is devoted to God, and he trusts God.

Reflection

The Church moves toward the conclusion of Advent and the coming of Jesus at Christmas. In only two days, the bells will ring with the news that salvation has come. Mary has been delivered of her son, who is Jesus, the Son of God.

Looking ahead to the great feast, the liturgy places directly before us the image of the Lord.

Who is Jesus? Through the answer to Joseph's question long ago, from the words of an angel, the Church tells us that Jesus is the Son of God, as well as the son of Mary. It is a complete and unequivocal revelation of the Incarnation.

We need the Lord. Ahaz was unable to lead as he should have led. He needed divine help.

Even the faithful Joseph could not deduce everything. He needed the explanation offered by the angel.

However, the last word is not that humans are adrift in a sea of limitations, but rather that God lovingly provides for them amid their limitations.

To the kingdom of Judah long ago, God sent new hope in the person of a crown prince soon to be born. To the world of death and despair around Joseph and Mary, God sent Jesus.

The epistle reminds us that these events simply did not come and then go without consequence.

God cares for us. God saves us. Jesus lives. His word reaches us through the Church, which today rests on the foundation laid by the apostles. We, too, are heirs of the kingdom and are destined for everlasting life. †

Readers may submit holiday prose or poetry

The Criterion invites readers to submit original prose or poetry relating to faith or experiences of prayer for possible publication in the "My Journey to God" column.

Please include name, address, parish and telephone number with submissions.

Send material for consideration to "My Journey to God," *The Criterion*, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206 or by e-mail in care of criterion@archindy.org. †

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 24

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16

Psalms 89:2-5, 27, 29

Luke 1:67-79

Vigil of Christmas

Isaiah 62:1-5

Psalms 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29

Acts of the Apostles 13:16-17,

22-25

Matthew 1:1-25

or Matthew 1:18-25

Tuesday, Dec. 25

The Nativity of the Lord
(Christmas)

Midnight

Isaiah 9:1-6

Psalms 96:1-3, 11-13

Titus 2:11-14

Luke 2:1-14

Dawn

Isaiah 62:11-12

Psalms 97:1, 6, 11-12

Titus 3:4-7

Luke 2:15-20

Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10

Psalms 98:1-6

Hebrews 1:1-6

John 1:1-18

or John 1:1-5, 9-14

Wednesday, Dec. 26

Stephen, first martyr

Acts of the Apostles 6:8-10;

7:54-59

Psalms 31:3cd-4, 6, 8ab, 16bc-17

Matthew 10:17-22

Thursday, Dec. 27

John, apostle and evangelist

1 John 1:1-4

Psalms 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12

John 20:2-8

Friday, Dec. 28

The Holy Innocents, martyrs

1 John 1:5-2:2

Psalms 124:2-5, 7b-8

Matthew 2:13-18

(continued on page 10)

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Sufferers of celiac disease can't receive the Eucharist

QIn some ways, I feel sad that so much attention is given to the form of Communion bread, which you discussed recently. As a celiac sufferer who can eat nothing made of wheat, I would be grateful just for Communion.



It is good to read in your column about the greater awareness of celiac disease. After years of living in a vacuum, we are finally diagnosed. A friend asked her pastor if she could receive only from the cup. He answered, "We will not serve wine in this parish." Do you have any more suggestions? (California)

AFor those readers who are not familiar with the sickness, celiac, or celiac sprue, disease is a malabsorption condition in which the small intestine cannot absorb food nutrients in the presence of gluten.

People with this illness cannot tolerate wheat, rye, barley or oats, but they are not affected by other flours like potato, corn or rice. Sometimes even a small amount of wheat may excite the allergic reaction, causing severe illness, even death.

Complete elimination of these grains from the diet, however, usually allows those with this syndrome to live normal, healthy and full lives.

Alleviation of certain other afflictions, autism for one, now is believed to be related to the exclusion or control of gluten in the diet.

As one who is blessedly spared this ailment, I had no idea how many people suffer from it—well over 100,000. The many Catholics among them share the same dilemma and disappointment you have concerning the Eucharist. For them, it is a major concern since Communion bread must be made of wheat flour for a valid eucharistic celebration.

I have several times suggested the most obvious alternative, receive Communion only under the form of wine. Many with the celiac problem take advantage of that possibility.

Unlike the priest your friend encoun-

tered, most parish priests cooperate with this need in every possible way, sometimes providing small cups exclusively for the use of the celiac patient.

Even the minute contact with the wheat particle the priest places in the chalice before Communion can make the wine dangerous for people with this allergy.

Wine is no universal solution, however. As you apparently have discovered, for some with the allergy only wine fermented with particular yeasts or in particular regions is safe.

In 1995, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, again reaffirmed to the American bishops that bread from which all gluten is removed is not valid for the Eucharist.

Manufacturers of Communion hosts in the United States and Europe whom I have consulted have tried unsuccessfully to formulate a wheat bread with no gluten.

I am grateful to you and the many other readers who related their experiences, diet suggestions, frustrations and hopes. One thing all agree on: They feel there should be some way they, or their children, could receive Communion without endangering their health or their lives.

I wish I could provide a solution for you and your son, but I cannot. Perhaps in the future there will be an answer. Some have been able to work out a manageable lifestyle for everyone involved. For others, it is a heavy burden with seemingly no present answer.

Fortunately, good resources are available for celiac patients and their families, particularly through the Celiac Sprue Association (Omaha, NE 68131-0700). Their Web site, www.csaceliacs.org, also is loaded with helpful background and practical information.

(A free brochure in English or Spanish, answering questions Catholics ask about baptism practices and sponsors is available by sending a stamped and self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 325, Peoria, IL 61651. Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of jjdietzen@aol.com.) †

My Journey to God

One Beloved Babe of Bethlehem

Once more
As in the long ago
The Babe of Bethlehem
Takes center stage
And radiates
That sweet simplicity
That warms our earthly hearts.
So—let the blessings flow
Steeped in that holiness
From long ago—
Once more a little child
Shall lead us safely home.

By Margaret McClelland

(Margaret McClelland is a member of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.)



CNS photo from Reuters



From Left to right: Dan Frederick, Account Executive; Loretta Williams and Barb Brinkman, Senior Account Executives and Ron Massey, Criterion Business Manager.

As the year 2001 draws to a close,
The Criterion sales team would like to wish
 our advertisers and our readers a
 Blessed Holiday Season.

May Peace, Joy and Hope prevail in the New Year.

*
 Happy Holidays!

MARRIAGE SUPPLEMENT



Be a part of our Marriage Supplement
 February 1, 2002, issue of *The Criterion*

If you are planning your wedding between January 30 and July 1, 2002, we invite you to submit the information for an announcement on the form below.

Pictures

You may send us a picture of the bride-to-be or a picture of the couple. Please do not cut photograph. The picture must be wallet-size and will be used as space permits. We cannot guarantee the reproduction quality of the photos. Please put name(s) on the back of the photo. Photos will be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

Deadline

All announcements and photos must be received by Friday, January 11, 2002, 10 a.m. (No announcements or photos will be accepted after this date).

— Use this form to furnish information —

Clip and mail to:
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 Deadline: Friday, January 11, 2002, 10 a.m.

Please print or type:

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Daytime Phone

Mailing Address City State Zip Code

Name of Bride's Parents

City State

Name of Bridegroom: (first, middle, last)

Name of Bridegroom's Parents

City State

Wedding Date Church City State

Signature of person furnishing information Relationship Daytime Phone

Photo Enclosed No Picture

Daily Readings, continued from page 10

Saturday, Dec. 29
 Thomas Becket, bishop and
 martyr
 1 John 2:3-11
 Psalm 96:1-3, 5b-6
 Luke 2:22-35

Sunday, Dec. 30
 The Holy Family
 Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14
 Psalm 128:1-5
 Colossians 3:12-21
 or Colossians 3:12-17
 Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

Monday, Dec. 31
 Sylvester I
 1 John 2:18-21
 Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13
 John 1:1-18

Tuesday, Jan. 1
 The Blessed Virgin Mary,
 Mother of God
 Numbers 6:22-27
 Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
 Galatians 4:4-7
 Luke 2:16-21

Wednesday, Jan. 2
 Basil the Great, bishop and
 doctor of the Church
 Gregory Nazianzen, bishop
 and doctor of the Church
 1 John 2:22-28
 Psalm 98:1-4
 John 1:19-28

Thursday, Jan. 3
 1 John 2:29-3:6
 Psalm 98:1-3, 6
 John 1:29-34

Friday, Jan. 4
 Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious
 1 John 3:7-10
 Psalm 98:1, 7-9
 John 1:35-42

Saturday, Jan. 5
 John Neumann, bishop
 1 John 3:11-21
 Psalm 100:1-5
 John 1:43-51

Sunday, Jan. 6
 The Epiphany of the Lord
 Isaiah 60:1-6
 Psalm 72:2, 7-8, 10-13
 Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6
 Matthew 2:1-12

Monday, Jan. 7
 Raymond of Peñafort, priest
 1 John 3:22-4:6
 Psalm 2:7-8, 10-11
 Matthew 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday, Jan. 8
 1 John 4:7-10
 Psalm 72:2-4ab, 7-8
 Mark 6:34-44

Wednesday, Jan. 9
 1 John 4:11-18
 Psalm 72:2, 10-13
 Mark 6:45-52

Thursday, Jan. 10
 1 John 4:19-5:4
 Psalm 72:2, 14, 15bc, 17
 Luke 4:14-22a

Friday, Jan. 11
 1 John 5:5-13
 Psalm 147:12-15, 19-20
 Luke 5:12-16

Saturday, Jan. 12
 1 John 5:14-21
 Psalm 149:1-6a, 9b
 John 3:22-30

Sunday, Jan. 13
 The Baptism of the Lord
 Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
 Psalm 29:1a, 2, 3ac-4, 3b,
 9b-10
 Acts of the Apostles 10:34-38
 Matthew 3:13-17



Christmas in Afghanistan

Staff Sgt. Dan Hottle of Kansas City, Mo., brings a bit of holiday spirit to a warehouse taken over by U.S. Marines at Camp Rhino in Afghanistan Dec. 13. He discovered the Christmas tree in a shipment of ready-to-eat meals for the troops.

LETTERS

continued from page 5

was dismayed at the backlash of letters published in *The Criterion* in such strong disagreement with your editorials. I challenge those who wrote to think beyond the bounds of their own geography and consider humanity as our Creator views us. God loves no one of us less or more than any other, and that includes those who might do harm. It is not the measure of his pure love to weigh actions.

I seek instead a seemingly bold prayer: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"—the words that Jesus

himself uttered while hanging in agony on the cross. A prayer that we, too, must grasp to utter as well in order to reach the peace that we so desperately need now. For we will not find any true solace in retaliatory actions, although our country must protect its people as best as it can.

I have another prayer, one that is equally bold: that those who seek to do harm to others may have a change of heart and instead seek peace and the building of a better world for all humanity. To offer the other cheek is truly the only way to disarm our aggressors, as they would finally discover the futility of their deeds.

Eric R. Boes, Indianapolis

CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT



*Peace
on Earth*

The Christmas crèche is a teaching tool

It represents Luke's Nativity story, with some of Matthew's

By John F. Fink

We are all familiar with the traditional Christmas crèche. The word itself is French, meaning *manger* or *crib*, and it is used specifically for the manger in which Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

Tradition holds that the actual crèche has been preserved as a relic in the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome, but it's difficult to see how its authenticity could be proved.

However, the word also refers to any representation of Christ's birth, and crèches suddenly, if not exactly miraculously, appear each Christmas Eve in Catholic churches throughout the world. After Mass on Christmas, parents (and grandparents) point out Baby Jesus and the other statues to the children.

St. Francis of Assisi is sometimes credited with building the first crèche (although I assume he would have called it a *mangiatoia*). He used it the same way those parents (or grandparents) were doing—as a teaching tool to explain the birth of Christ.

Of course, it's doubtful that crèches can teach the whole doctrine of the Incarnation. It doesn't try to, any more than the second chapter of Luke's Gospel does. But the crèche does represent Luke's story, usually with some of Matthew's thrown in.

One of the main businesses of Christian Palestinians in Bethlehem is the carving and sale of crèches—and the

current strife in the Holy Land has meant destitution for many in that business. Strangely, even though the Palestinian artisans know better than anyone that Jesus was born in a cave, most of their crèches show a stable—the Western idea of where a manger should be located.

Crèches can be simple or elaborate. The simplest require only statues of the Baby Jesus, his mother Mary and St. Joseph. Jesus, of course, is in the manger—a feedbox for animals—because that is where Luke says his mother put him after his birth. Luke says that she wrapped Jesus in swaddling clothes, perhaps an allusion to the birth of King Solomon who, though a great king, was wrapped in swaddling clothes like any other infant (Wis 7:4-6).

Mary is usually hovering over her newborn son while Joseph stands protectively off to the side. This seems appropriate since Jesus and Mary should be the focus, Jesus because he is the newborn baby and Mary because she has become the mother of God. Putting Joseph off to the side is a symbol of the Virgin Birth. Joseph is the protective foster father, but his role is not the same as Mary's.

Other participants in the crèche are usually shepherds, perhaps with their sheep. According to Luke, the shepherds were the first to hear about the birth of the Savior, Messiah and Lord. They hurried to Bethlehem “where they found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.”

The shepherds, of course, heard the message from an angel, so a proper crèche should also have an angel—perhaps high above the scene. It could be holding a scroll proclaiming “*Gloria in Excelsis Deo*” (Glory to God in the highest), the song sung by the choir of angels



The “Nativity and the Adoration of the Shepherds,” a painting attributed to Bartolome Esteban Murillo, is among the artworks being presented at the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven, Conn., this holiday season.

when they appeared to the shepherds.

Most crèches also have two other figures—an ox and a donkey. Where did they come from? They aren't mentioned in Luke's Gospel. We might suppose that they are the regular inhabitants of that cave or stable and that Jesus is lying in their feedbox. Actually, they come from one of the many apocryphal gospels written during the first centuries of Christianity. This one is known as Pseudo-Matthew. It was written in the fifth century but is probably rooted in an older tradition.

A passage in chapter 14 reads: “On the third day after the birth of Our Lord

Jesus Christ, the most blessed Mary came out of the cave, went into a stall and laid her little boy in a crib, and the ox and the ass worshiped him. Then was fulfilled what the Prophet Isaiah had foretold: ‘The ox knows its owner, and the ass its master's crib’ (Is 1:3). In this way even the animals, the ox and the ass, ceaselessly adored him while he was among them. This was to fulfill the words of the Prophet Habakkuk, who said, ‘In the midst of two animals you shall be known’ (Hb 3:2).”

The symbolism, of course, is that even the animals recognize and adore their

See NATIVITY, page 13

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Family Christmas photograph is a priceless gift

By Stan Konieczny
Catholic News Service

Jesus' birth in a stable captured the imagination of artists.

Great masters have interpreted the scene with oils and canvas, and artisans around the world have fashioned figures of clay, wood, plaster and porcelain in an attempt to transport their contemporaries back to the Bethlehem scene.

We all treasure a favorite depiction of that first Christmas.

In my house, the manger scenes are the first decorations to appear during Advent, and sometimes they linger in the living room until early February. One crèche is a family hand-me-down, another is a souvenir from a foreign adventure.

Yet the most recent addition to these portrayals of the Incarnation conveys a powerful message of God sharing our humanity.

This most-favored Christmas memento is a very special family photograph that will grace the spinet piano for years to come.

It all started out as a well-planned seasonal outing for extended family. Everyone gathered for an intergenerational excursion

to enjoy the sights and sounds of Christmas at a popular holiday festival.

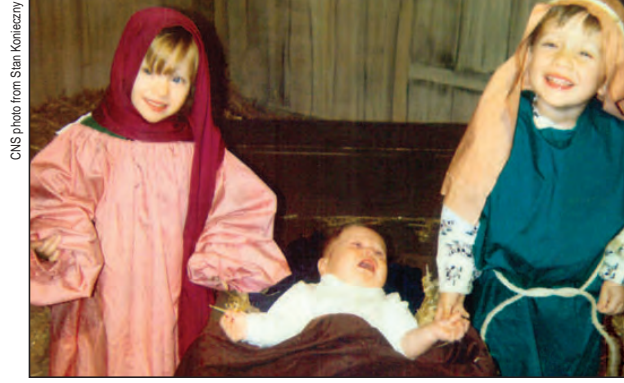
After dinner, everyone listened as Grandma's choir performed a concert of carols.

We then were dragged by the 3-year-old twins, Jack and Ann, through a maze of shops and shoppers to the Children's Village. One attraction of the Children's Village was a photo opportunity that allowed little ones to pose as Mary and Joseph standing watch over their newborn infant.

Jack and Ann were ready for this adventure long before anyone else. Since there was no wait for Bethlehem photos, it seemed wise to stop then, despite the fact that the twins' 5-month-old baby brother, Aaron, was due for a diaper change.

With the help of bright robes and headgear, the twins were transformed from all-American tots to a miniature Holy Family, and they dutifully took their places on either side of the manger, managing to convey some sense of reverence while still hamming it up for the camera.

Just as the photographer was ready to snap a very cute picture, one of the relatives asked, "Hey, couldn't we use our own baby for the picture?"



CNS photo from Stan Konieczny

It is an innocent, joyful souvenir photograph of a pilgrimage to the Bethlehem stable. But it prompts a powerful reflection for those of us who know its secret—the stark reality that this little baby was in need of a diaper change, driving home the Christmas message that almighty God came as a helpless baby to share our frailties and needs.

In a matter of minutes, Aaron—damp diaper and all—was lying uncomfortably on the manger's hay under a course blanket. He let everyone know that he was not happy, but his tearful protests only added to the scene's charm.

The flash went off, and twin grins and baby tears were captured for a lifetime on film. It was now time for a change. As another would-be Mary and Joseph were dressed in the wings, Aaron was dispatched to the nearest changing station. And the less essential adults of the entourage were left to contemplate the age-old scene made new by the latest arrivals to our family circle.

It is an innocent, joyful souvenir photo

of a pilgrimage to the Bethlehem stable. But it prompts a powerful reflection for those of us who know its secret—the stark reality that this little baby was in need of a diaper change, driving home the Christmas message that almighty God came as a helpless baby to share our frailties and needs. He had to rely on the love of others to get through dark nights, drafty accommodations and even dirty diapers.

The Incarnation is real!

(Stan Konieczny, former communications director for the Adorers of the Blood of Christ in Ruma, Ill., is a student at Mundelein Seminary in Mundelein, Ill.) †

NATIVITY

continued from page 12

creator who has become a human.

Sometimes, but not often, a crèche includes two female characters in the background. These are more commonly found, though, in Eastern Church icons, where paintings take the place of statues. Those two characters are the midwives

and nursemaids Zelomi and Salome mentioned in the apocryphal gospel *Protoevangelium of James*.

Matthew's Gospel usually doesn't become involved in the crèche until the feast of Epiphany. Then the figures of three magi (wise men) and their camels are sometimes added. Of course, we don't know if there actually were three magi because Matthew doesn't tell us that. But they presented three gifts—gold, frankincense and myrrh—so it is

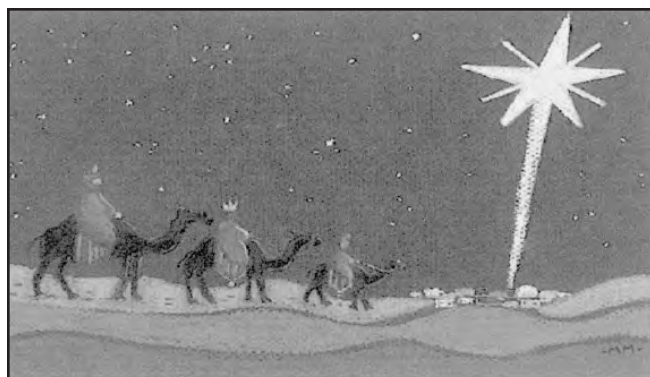
naturally assumed that each magi had a gift to present.

Perhaps a star is added to the crèche at the same time as the magi. Matthew wrote that the magi saw the star and followed it to the house where the Holy Family was living. Here is what St. Ambrose, a doctor of the Church, wrote about the star in his *Commentary on Luke*:

"Only the Wise Men can see the star; where Herod dwells it is invisible, but

where Christ dwells it becomes visible and shows the way. So this star is the way, and Christ is the way, because in the mystery of the Incarnation Christ is the star. For 'a star shall come forth out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel' (Nm 24:17). So wherever Christ is, the star is also, for he is the 'bright morning star' (Rv 22:16). Thus it is with his own light that he points to himself."

There is much to be seen in the Christmas crèche. †



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Students reflect on post-Sept. 11 Christmas

By Theresa Sanders

Catholic News Service

This Christmas is different.

Sure, the stores are stocked with ribbons, wrapping paper and gifts, just as always. Festive carols serenade us in the coffee shop and the dentist's office, in the malls and on elevators. Yet things are different.

Everything is different since Sept. 11.

I teach in Washington, and many of my students are from New York City. These two cities were, of course, the ones hardest-hit by the terrorist attacks. So I asked the young people in my classes how these events changed their priorities for Christmas this year.

In response, some students spoke of a newfound longing to be with the people they love.

"Usually, by now I would have made up my list of Christmas presents to buy," one student said. "This year, all I can think is that I want to get home."

"September 11th made me feel like, for lack of a better word, a jerk for not spending more time with my family," another student said.

One student reflected on the terrible loss that her family had endured.

"My uncle was a firefighter who died in the World Trade Center," she said. "He is gone, and we won't be able to hear the sound of his voice telling us the most colorful stories. I never would have thought that someone in my family wouldn't get to see Christmas this year. We now all make it a point to tell each other all the time that we love each other. We don't know when we will see each other again."

Many students noted that the traditions of Christmas would take on a different meaning this year.

"My family and I will put less emphasis on presents and material things," a student said, "and more emphasis on how lucky we are that we are all safe and that we have each other."

"The cozy atmosphere of the hearth

and the familiar traditions are now things I am looking forward to as signs that there is a limit to the terrorists' power," another student said.

"We will celebrate not only the traditional holidays," a student said, "but will celebrate our nation as well."

"This year, instead of buying gifts for our family," a student said, "we are going to a toy store and will purchase gifts for the children's hospital."

One student explained how the recent events affected her plans in very practical ways.

"Christmas is my favorite holiday, but I live overseas," she said, "and this year I will not be able to travel to see my family because of all the problems with the planes. Moreover, my parents told me not to send them anything because of the difficulties with the postal system. Alone in the United States during the holiday, I hope Santa Claus will come to see me!"

Other students offered more philosophical reflections.

"This year, more than ever, everyone needs to feel that spirit of giving that grabs hold of us during the holidays," one student said.

"My favorite Christmas song, sung by Frank Sinatra, says, 'It's that time of year when the world falls in love.' I think we all need to fall in love this winter—with life and with one another," another student said.

Yes, Christmas is different this year. It will be darker maybe, and colder.

But wasn't it on a dark, cold night that the first Christmas star shone?

Wasn't that the point of Christmas—to offer a weary world some glimmer of hope?

It's the time of year when the world falls in love. Let's fall in love—with life and with one another.

(Theresa Sanders is an assistant professor of theology at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.) †



Above: When asked how the Sept. 11 events changed their priorities for Christmas this year, Georgetown University students in Washington, D.C., told theology professor Theresa Sanders that the familiar traditions of Christmas would take on a different meaning this year.

Left: Disaster and relief workers share in a moment of silence during a prayer service Oct. 7 at ground zero where the World Trade Center once stood in New York. The same day, the U.S. began air strikes and sea-based missile assaults on military and terrorist targets in Afghanistan as part of its response to the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

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Readers share favorite holiday memories

Grandmother thanks God for Christmas blessings

By Bernadine Purcell

Being old isn't all bad. I can still look forward to Christmas. I have a large box with my name on it filled with memories of my Christmases Past.

The season of Advent prepares me for the spiritual joy of Christmas. The colorful lighted rooftops and doorways of houses in my neighborhood are a reminder to me that the small artificial tree with strings of colorful lights and ornaments is waiting to be brought down from the upstairs closet and placed on that special table in our living room. Santa Claus has been appearing in the stores at the mall, ready for the children to sit on his lap and tell him what they want for Christmas.

I often wished that I had asked my mother and father how they spent the Christmas holidays when they were young. Did they really have candles on their Christmas tree? This was the time when homes were lighted with gaslights and kerosene lamps. What kinds of toys were placed under their Christmas tree? Did they chop down their own tree? Did the boys ask for wagons? Dolls were probably on the girls' lists. I am sure many family customs were handed down to us by their parents.

We always had a houseful of aunts and uncles and cousins during the Christmas season. I always enjoyed being with my cousins. There was only one problem. When supertime came, Mom, Dad and our aunts and uncles sat at the first table. My mother was a very good cook. They not only enjoyed their food, but also enjoyed reminiscing and joking. We could hear their laughter as we played around the Christmas tree.

When they were finally finished, the table was cleared and set a second time for the older cousins to eat. They didn't linger as long, but they did take time to decide which picture-show they wanted to see.

Finally, we younger children were called to eat at the third setting. We were glad to leave our toys because we were starving. We only got to play a short time after supper because the day was slipping away. Parents were anxious to get home. The next day was a regular working day.

We children would have a free day from school. We were ready to rest after a full day of excitement.

This Christmas will also have sad moments for me. It will be my second year without my husband after 59 years of marriage. I know he will be looking down on us, checking to see if we put the Christmas tree, that he so artfully decorated so many years ago, in the right place.

Our family is scattered, living in other states. Who will be able to make the trip home? Those who do will gather together to reach the missing relatives by telephone. Great-grandchildren will give us that special excitement that only the innocent can bring to Christmas.

The Nativity set will take its place under the Christmas tree. When I look at Jesus, Mary and Joseph, I will be reminded again of the true meaning of "family." I thank God for Christmas.

(Bernadine Purcell is a member of St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Clarksville.) †

Wife and children make every Christmas special

By Mark R. Hummer

While growing up as a child in Michigan, my family made our annual 100-mile trip down U.S. 23 to Toledo, Ohio, to visit Grandma and Grandpa Hummer and Grandma Aubell at Christmas. I came to understand the deeper meaning of the holiday season as I grew from a child to a young adult, and I appreciated someone to share Christmas with and also to share life's ups and downs.

While working in Fort Wayne in 1990, I was introduced to my future wife (Siming Chen) as a pen pal through her Uncle Victor, a retired pathologist. In August of 1991, I made the 20,000-mile trip to my wife's hometown of Shanghai, China. The following month, on Sept. 1, we were married at the cathedral in Shanghai. Two weeks later, my visitation visa to China was due to expire, so I made the long journey back to Fort Wayne by myself.

As soon as I arrived home, I started working on the

maze of paperwork to bring Siming to the United States. The new Mrs. Hummer arrived in America by the end of the year and celebrated her first American Christmas.

This Christmas will be Siming's 10th year in the U.S. as well as her 10th Christmas. She became a U.S. citizen in April of 1996. She also completed the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults process at St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis and was baptized during the Easter Vigil in 1999. We have two daughters, Valarie and Lillian.

That's why this Christmas is so special to me.

(Mark R. Hummer is a member of St. Christopher Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Family Mass has become special holiday tradition

By Carrie Smith Kemp

Our family's favorite memory of Christmas is still an ongoing affair.

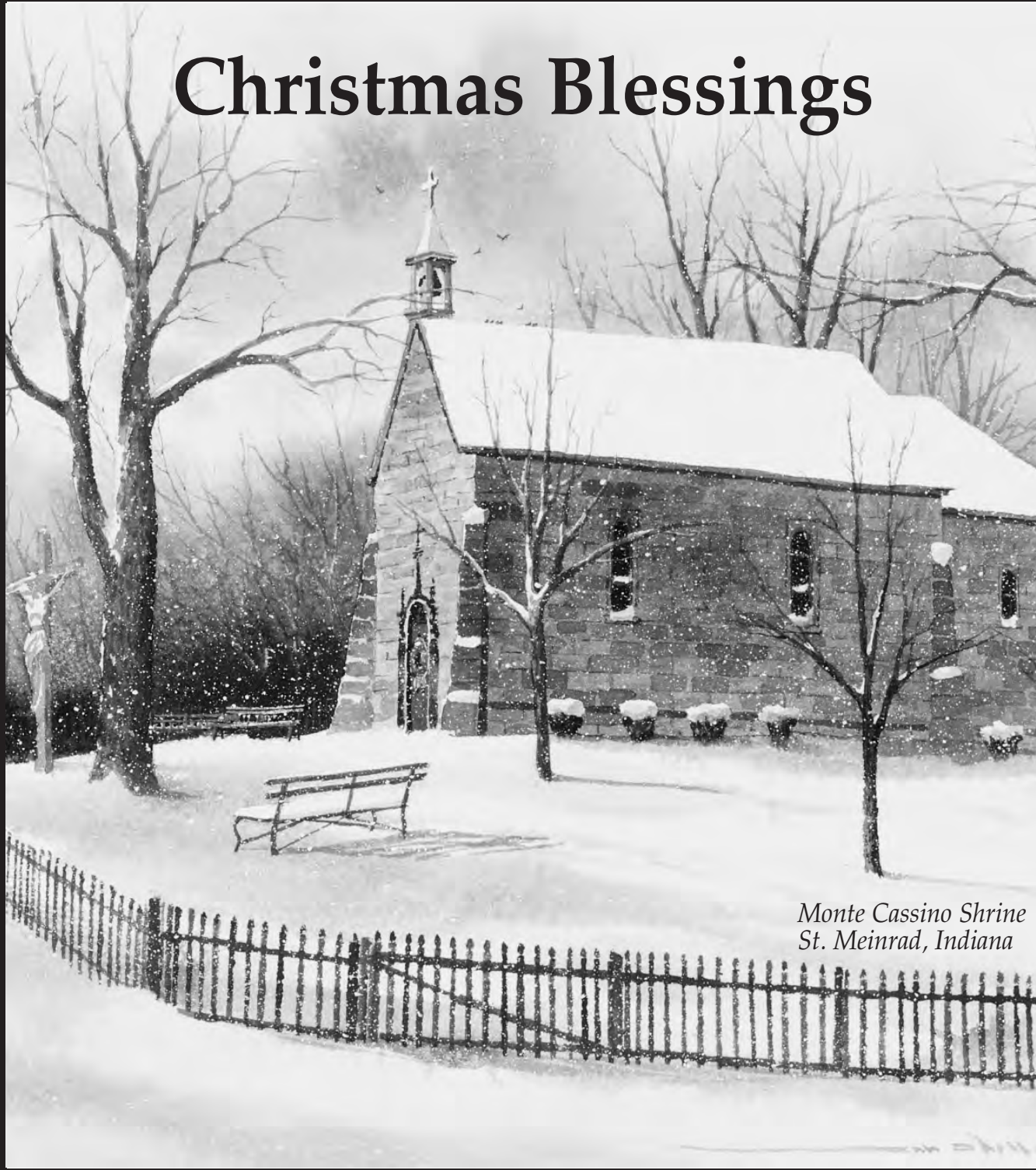
The most important aspect of our plans surrounds the choosing of the best time during the week just before Christmas when each of us siblings can gather for our annual home Christmas Mass, which is so graciously presided over by one of the many priests who is and has been a favorite of our family.

The idea was conceived a few years ago when either Mom or Dad was unable to travel to church for a special Mass, and the offer was made for a Mass to be celebrated in the home. It became an annual affair at Christmas to have a home Mass in my brother's home when everyone (only one brother lives away now) is available.

The beautiful aspect of this holiday tradition is the full participation of all the families, children, grandchildren and the in-laws, who gather together to offer thanks for all the blessings from God during the past year. Hopefully, we will be able to continue this tradition for many years.

(Carrie Smith Kemp is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.) †

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Readers share favorite Christmas memories

Man laments that he has 'too much' at Christmas

By Eleanor Fletcher

One of the pleasures of being postmaster in a small community is the luxury of taking the time to listen to your customers. You never know who is going to walk through the door with a tale or message.

One such messenger appeared at my window on Christmas Eve in 1997, and I have not forgotten him or his words.

Christmas Eve is usually a quiet day at the post office in contrast to the hustle and hurry of the previous days. Packages are in the mail, cards are either sent by now or postponed, and most folks are busy making final preparations for their festivities.

I was enjoying the quiet, catching up on some paperwork at my desk. It was the middle of the afternoon when my messenger entered the post office. He was from a neighboring route, not one of my regular customers. I did not recall seeing him before, nor have I seen him since. He was middle-aged, of medium height and stocky, with a pleasant, florid countenance. He could have been St. Nicholas himself in civilian garb.

"I'd like a book of stamps please," he requested in a gravelly voice.

"Certainly, sir," I replied.

A quick exchange of cash for stamps completed the transaction.

"Are you ready for Christmas?" I asked brightly in my best postmaster banter.

"Oh, yes," he paused thoughtfully, then continued, "but it's too much, really. I have too much."

"I work at a power plant on the other side of the river with a maintenance crew of 12 men," he explained. "About half of them don't have enough. Of course, some people bring on their own problems. One man has been married a couple of times and had children by his wives, and then lived with another woman and had children with her. He doesn't have a choice about working on Christmas Day. Of his weekly paycheck, he only gets to keep one day's wages for himself. The rest goes for child support. He brought that situation on himself but that really doesn't matter."

"We have to do our work outside," he said. "One man didn't have any warm clothes to wear, so I gave him an old pair of coveralls. He patched the holes and those coveralls are just like gold to him."

"Yes, I'm ready for Christmas, but it's too much," he said as he picked up his stamps, put them in his wallet and turned to leave. Continuing to speak, he pushed the door open, shaking his head slowly and sadly. "I have too much. I have too much."

Even as he walked out, his words remained, echoing in the silent lobby.

I thought about the excessive amount I had spent on

my own family and of my refrigerator, filled to near bursting with enough food to feed a family for a week. I thought of the countless blessings that have been showered upon me.

And I, too, began to chime in with his litany, "I have too much. I have too much."

(Eleanor Fletcher is a member of St. Lawrence Parish in Lawrenceburg, and is the postmaster of Cross Plains, Ind.) †

Last Christmas at home and first in convent were special

By Sr. M. Alma Braun, S.J.W.

Christmas memories began in my early childhood in our "Home Sweet Home." These beautiful memories culminated in my last Christmas in our home.

All Christmas Days had their beautiful memories, but this last Christmas at home was a bit different for me. I asked Mom, Dad, my six sisters and my one and only brother to gather around the Christ crib (made by Dad) and the Christmas tree. I wanted to tell them that next Christmas I would celebrate my first Christmas in the convent home far away. The feast of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8 was an entrance day for girls who desired to enter the Sisters of St. Joseph the Worker.

After my intention was made known to my family, everyone was silent. Only the soft playing of "Silent Night" was heard. Then Mom, with tears in her eyes, asked, "Why so far away? Why not go where your Sister Aunts are located?"

Then Dad spoke in a rather firm voice, "Let her go. See what happens."

My one brother spoke next in a rather doubtful and joking manner. "She will never make it," he said. "She will change her thinking."

The younger members of the family did not quite understand. Baby Joan was only 4 years old, and I loved her dearly. There were many questions.

With God's all-powerful grace, my intention became a reality. The following year, on Dec. 8, I did enter the convent. So Christmas Day in 1939 was indeed my first Christmas in my new convent home.

Today I have fond, lasting and grace-filled memories of my first Christmas in the convent and my last Christmas at home. I can recall those memories with gratitude in my heart in these sunset years of my life, for I am in my 80s.

First, last and in-between Christmas Days can all be a Mary's Christmas and a Merry and Joyous Christmas.

(St. Joseph the Worker Sister M. Alma Braun resides at the convent in Walton, Ky.) †



New York tradition

The Rockefeller Center Christmas tree glows in front of 30 Rockefeller Center in New York on Nov. 28. First Lady Laura Bush and New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani had the honor of lighting the tree, which was strung in a patriotic spirit with 30,000 red, white and blue bulbs.

Santa's taxi ride with mom was the talk of the parish

By Catherine M. Keating

I grew up in a small town.

On Christmas Eve, two little friends came to stay all night with me. It was really great when we awakened to "Ho, Ho, Ho!" and sleigh bells!

We all received wonderful gifts. It was Santa's last stop, and he'd sent his sleigh and reindeers back to the North Pole.

A taxi was called for him when he left our house. My mother left at the same time for the 5:30 a.m. Mass.

I walked to the 10 a.m. Mass and went to the school to march into church, as did other children whose parents were not with them.

How wonderful! How absolutely earth-shattering! The sister said—in front of all of the other children—that before the 5:30 a.m. Mass some people had seen Santa help my mother out of the cab!

Wow! That proved to my whole world—positively forever, then and there—that Santa had been to my house!

I'm in my '90s now, and it feels like this Christmas memory happened yesterday!

(Catherine M. Keating is a member of St. Anthony Parish in Indianapolis.) †



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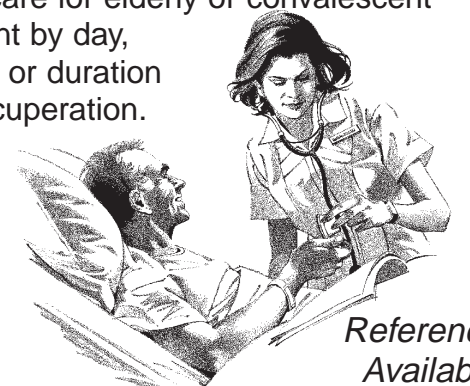
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Readers recall special Christmas stories

Perfume and crosses were perfect gifts for Mom

By Nancy Nobbe Cuskaden

I come from a rather large family by today's standards—seven boys and two girls, nine children in all. Christmas was a holiday we all always looked forward to with much anticipation.

Mom was never without a Christmas gift from each of us as we spent many hours at school or at home making a special gift just for her.

One year, in the late 1950s, Dad decided we could get Mom a store-bought gift. He gave each of us a dollar bill, piled us all in the car, and into town we went, which was a treat in itself since we rarely got to go into town, with the exception of 6 a.m. Mass on Sunday morning and, of course, school.

We were let out at the local Dollar General Store. With our precious money in hand and so many items to choose from, all each for one dollar, only heaven could be better than this.

We all decided that Mom did enough work in the house and on the farm that something to work with was out of the question. It had to be something just for her. We split up to find that perfect gift. Imagine our surprise when half of us ended up at the perfume counter and the rest of us congregated at the jewelry department.

We all were looking at the same two items—"Evening in Paris" perfume in a cobalt blue bottle and a cross necklace that was surrounded with rhinestones, but to our inexperienced eyes were beautiful diamonds.

After much discussion on who would buy what, several of us decided to put our money together to purchase a bigger bottle of perfume and a necklace with even more of those "diamonds." Still others held out for the single gift of a smaller cross necklace or a smaller bottle of perfume.

I guess we decided that Mom could never have too much perfume and she could always wear a different necklace to Mass each Sunday.

After all these years, I can still see the look of surprise and delight on Mom's face that Christmas Eve when she opened all those boxes of perfume and necklaces.

She said, "My, won't I smell good and look so pretty at Mass on Christmas Day!"

Our mom has been gone now for 20 years. She died at age 57 in early December of 1981. I feel that she is not

really gone as she lives in all of our hearts.

This year, when my children and grandchildren gather for our tradition of opening gifts on Christmas Eve, I know that I will remember again our mom's smiling face and hear her say, "My, won't I smell good and look so pretty at Mass on Christmas Day!"

(Nancy Nobbe Cuskaden is a member of St. Mary Parish in Greensburg.) †

Midnight Mass meant a long walk to church

By Roderick A. MacDonald

Our grandmother had to be about my age then, in her 60s. Her name was Mary, and she left Ireland when she was 21.

Every Christmas, my younger sister and I would walk with our grandmother to Midnight Mass. This was on the Blue Island and Chicago border near 119th Street and Vincennes.

There was always snow on the ground, cold night air and a light snow falling. Grandmother would dress in an old fur coat and galoshes over her shoes and, of course, a hat. All of us would be dressed to stay warm and dry.

We would set off walking through the fields. The fields would even have snow paths to follow. It was a good long walk along the Rock Island train tracks.

We then walked about five blocks in the fields to Sacred Heart Mission Church. It was a small brick building, with the sanctuary on the second floor. It held, at the most, 250 people.

All came for Midnight Mass early to hear the poor choir singing to a house organ. It seemed cold in the small church, and we snuggled to keep warm. Father McNally and later Father Bouchart carried the statue of the infant Jesus to place in the small crib.

After Midnight Mass, we would trek back along the same path to our grandmother's house. There we would sit by her Christmas tree, eating potato bread and gazing at her small crib. All of us would fall asleep listening to the steam engines of the Rock Island Railroad.

One summer, I served Mass daily at Sacred Heart Church. My grandmother was later buried from there. The steps to the ground floor were so narrow that the pallbearers and the casket could not fit through the corridor so the funeral director carried the casket on his back



Advent launch

A Christmas tree provides a festive scene at the launch of the space shuttle Endeavour on Dec. 5 from the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. The shuttle was carrying seven crew members to the International Space Station on a crew-exchange mission.

up the stairs! Our grandmother never made it up those steps so fast before.

The church has been closed for years now.

(Roderick A. MacDonald is a member of St. Joan of Arc Parish in Indianapolis.) †

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Christmas in Papua New Guinea was a time to cherish

By Nora Cummings

Thirty years ago, a tiny seed was planted and nurtured in the heart and soul of a young boy in a mountain mission of Papua New Guinea. That young boy is now Capuchin Father Matthias Olabe.

In 1999, I had the privilege of spending Christmas with him. He invited me to go with him to celebrate the Christmas liturgies in remote areas on Lake Kutubu in Papua New Guinea.

Very early in the morning, Father Matthias, a high school student, a lay missionary and I climbed into a four-wheel drive vehicle. It was to be a long eight-hour trip over a rough and almost impassable road.

On the way, the vehicle broke down several times because the battery became dislodged. At one time, I gave up my shoelaces to help tie it to the engine, but that repair didn't hold for long. We were lucky to find an old inner tube, and strips were cut to keep the battery in place for the rest of the trip.

Finally, as the sun was setting, we reached the lake and the mission station. There was a little log cabin on top of a ridge. The only way up was a steep, muddy path, which was impossible for me to climb without laces in my boots. But with the help of the others, I managed to get to the top. The view was spectacular with the setting sun reflecting on the lake below and the surrounding mountains casting varied colors and shadows.

Our Christmas dinner that night was cooked on a kerosene burner. We had rice with chunks of Spam. A catechist living at the mission brought fresh fruit from his garden. The pot and fruit were placed on the little table along with an assortment of plates, forks and spoons, and candles to keep the darkness at bay. It was a simple meal, but to me it was better than dining in any four-star restaurant.

As we talked late into the night about the Church, theology, spirituality and world problems, I couldn't help remembering the little boy of 8 or 9 who sat in my classroom years ago. He struggled then to express himself in English and tried to comprehend the world beyond the mountain ranges—a world vastly different than the one into which he was born.

It was even better the next morning. The old dugout canoe had been beached, and we traveled in his new fiberglass motorboat to several churches on the islands.



A child is born

In these paintings of the Madonna and Child done for Vatican Radio Christmas cards, artist Irio Ottavio Fantini depicts the newborn Jesus (far left) as already bearing the suffering of the world within him and (left) as alert and seeing everything, even all that will happen in the future. Mary is shown symbolically abandoning herself to the will of God.

Attending these Masses with Capuchin Father Matthias Olabe as the presider are memories that I will hold dear in my heart for many Christmases to come.

(Nora Cummings is a member of SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Choir rehearsal sounds like chorus of angels

By Anna-Margaret O'Sullivan

Back in the 1920s and 1930s, my childhood home—with its high ceilings and long halls—was cold in the winter. Ice froze in a glass of water if left on a bedside table. Polar bears would have felt at home in our unheated bedrooms.

By Christmastime, we usually had a glinting white carpet of snow, beautiful to look at but hard to walk in. If a bitter wind came with it, people were glad to gain the shelter of home after going to and from work, doing outside chores around the house, laying in groceries, and checking on neighbors and relatives.

Evening was a quiet time of warmth and peace. The savage thrust of the wind had been put aside. The fire on the hearth had burned down to glowing embers. Though it was time for bed, the family lingered by the fire, dreading the plunge into the frigid hall and up the Artic stairs—

even though it was to featherbeds with lots of blankets. Sometimes a hot brick wrapped in an old jersey waited at the foot of the bed to thaw cold feet.

The windowpanes of our living room, too far to be warmed by the fire on the hearth, held fantastic frost pictures. White on white leaves, flowers and swaying grasses decorated our windows. Jack Frost was a talented artist to give us such beauty to enjoy.

One Christmas Eve, we finally made the break from the cozy fireplace and the masterpiece on the windowpanes. Next door, in the little YMCA building belonging to Franklin College, one of the choirs was practicing carols for a church service the next day.

My sister and I didn't usually sleep together, but because of the cold we had decided to share a bed and get up early (at the crack of dawn) to find out what Santa had left us. It must still have been fairly early in the evening for the singers to be practicing. We drifted off to sleep to what sounded like angel voices in the clear, cold night.

"Silent night, holy night ..."

"It came upon a midnight clear ..."

"Away in a manger, no crib for his bed ..."

Maybe they actually were angel voices singing two little girls to sleep on Christmas Eve, and remembered every Christmas for more than 70 years.

(Anna-Margaret O'Sullivan is a member of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin.) †

More Christmas memories on page 20



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Grandmother's love and advice were priceless gifts

By Larry Mason

My grandmother's house was nestled in a Kentucky valley at the base of forested hills. As a child, I spent many long hours wandering over these hills surrounding the old home place, hand in hand with a woman that God had blessed greatly with grace and simple wisdom.

She taught me about the animals, trees, herbs and medicinal roots that grew in the wilds of the forest. We often sat beside a small spring that gushed from the rocks on the hill behind the house. A great fallen oak was the seat for many a long conversation about God, life and the simple things that make life worth living.

My grandmother was a simple woman. She tended two large gardens that were tilled in the spring by the farmer who lived down the road. At the harvest, he was rewarded with produce that was alarmingly large. I remember sitting on a pumpkin that weighed well over 100 pounds.

She also tended two swine a year for the meat that was partially used as barter at the little general store down the road for cooking essentials such as flour, sugar and salt.

My grandmother was gifted with an amazing ability to plant anything organic and make it grow. In the summer, her house was surrounded with the most amazing floral array. The air was always heady with the perfumes of thousands of flowers that bloomed through the entire season. We often sat on the old porch swing after sunset, listening to the hymns being sung in the little country church a little way down the valley.

One spring morning, when I was in my early teens, my grandmother walked up the hill behind her house with a shovel and returned before breakfast with a perfect 2-foot white pine tree. She told me that she had always wanted a living Christmas tree in her front yard, and that she was looking forward to decorating it in a few years when it grew a little larger. Her faithful tending of this tree produced a Christmas masterpiece just as she had planned.

The fondest memory I have of my grandmother was when my family said our farewells as she stood at the door of the old home place one Christmas Eve long ago. The snow had fallen steadily for hours and it was well after dark. She was concerned about our long journey home.

As I put my arms around this wonderful lady, it sud-

denly occurred to me that she was very advanced in age. Her tiny frame was bent with the years, and her wrinkled features told the story of a long life's journey that was soon to be over. She noticed the tears that had begun to well up in my eyes, and she took my hands in hers and said very softly, "I will see you in the spring!"

As my father backed the car down the long drive and out onto the main road, I saw the tiny figure of the lady I held so dear still standing in the doorway with one arthritic hand held high. Her sweet face was illuminated from the brilliance of the glow from the corner of the yard, where arrayed in jeweled and dazzling splendor was the once tiny white pine tree now fully grown.

(Larry Mason resides in Indianapolis.) †

Franciscan sister inspired others to do God's work

By Mary C. Vinci

The late Franciscan Sister M. Philonilla Weintraut made a tremendous impact on our community during the time she was in our midst. Upon arriving at St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove, Sister Philonilla was like a whirlwind. This dedicated and tireless sister was never idle.

She formed the Twilight Guild to do God's work. Among other activities, the guild members helped the Marion County Sheriff's Department with their Christmas tour to institutions for children with special needs.

Sister Philonilla told me of one Christmas when she and the guild members worked diligently to wrap gifts for the children. She had arranged for a candy company to provide treats for the children, but the candy still had not been delivered as the guild members and sheriff's department volunteers were departing by bus to visit the children.

Previously, in her many prayers, Sister Philonilla prayed to St. Anthony to request that all would go well on this special day. She thought St. Anthony had let her down in her time of need, and she gave the saint a severe mental scolding. But just before the bus loaded with volunteers and gifts was preparing to leave the hospital, a delivery truck arrived with the candy. Sister Philonilla said she meekly apologized to St. Anthony for not believing that he would come through for her during this time of need.

The children nearly stampeded the volunteers to receive

their candy. Seeing the joy and happiness in the faces of the children, Sister Philonilla said she was in seventh heaven and would "rather be with these poor youngsters doling out treats than be with the queen in her parlor."

Sister Philonilla was an inspiration to me and to many others. She was a dedicated, faithful, wonderful person on the payroll of God.

(Mary C. Vinci is a member of Holy Name Parish in Beech Grove.) †

Attic door helped Santa surprise children with gifts

By Rosemary Robinson

There was a big, old, wooden door stored in our attic. A few days before Christmas, Daddy would comment to us that it would probably be a good time to get the old door out of the attic and hang it between the living room and dining room because Santa could be in the neighborhood anytime soon.

After a few days, my brother and I would try to peek through the keyhole then get down on the floor and sniff the wonderful scent of pine emanating from under the door.

We knew what was inside this room, and we dreamed about it. The tree would be decorated with lights and there would be some toys, but not too many because it was Depression time.

Mother's menu for Christmas Eve was always potato soup and cinnamon toast. Daddy was always treated to oyster stew because Santa had worked so hard.

After we washed the dishes, it was time for the news we had been waiting for all day. Daddy said, "Let's get the screwdriver and take down the door."

This was the most exciting time of the year. The counting time was over.

Wow! There sat the most beautiful lit tree. Beside it was the most longed for curly-haired doll for me and a chemistry set for my brother—a worrisome choice!—and filled stockings for both of us.

Those great family times will never be forgotten. Thank you, attic door, for keeping this wonderful secret.

(Rosemary Robinson is a member of St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis.) †

Karen L. Curtice-Rose
M.A., LCSW, LMFT

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YEAR

continued from page 2

expense of core civil liberties principles of privacy, due process and freedom of association.”

At their fall meeting, the U.S. Catholic bishops said the defense of the people against terrorism like that inflicted Sept. 11 was just cause for war, but they warned, “Every military response must be in accord with sound moral principles, notably such norms ... as noncombatant immunity, proportionality, right intention and probability of success.”

In his message for the World Day of Peace, released in mid-December, Pope John Paul II said countries have a right to defend themselves against international terrorists. But he added that true peace cannot be achieved without “justice and that form of love which is forgiveness.”

The U.S. bishops urged Catholics to fast one day a week for justice and peace and called for “creative and constructive U.S. engagement, particularly with the Arab and Muslim worlds” to build a lasting “peace based on justice.”

Religious leaders in the United States and many other parts of the world made new efforts at interfaith prayer and understanding to assure that people of other faiths would not confuse the fundamentalist Islamic ideology of Osama bin Laden and his Taliban hosts in Afghanistan with mainstream Muslim beliefs. Catholic and other Christian leaders urged their people to reach out to Muslim neighbors and stand up against any acts of hate directed toward them.

Catholic Relief Services launched a campaign to raise \$50 million to meet estimated post-Taliban aid needs for the people of Afghanistan.

Pope John Paul called on Catholics worldwide to fast for peace and justice on Dec. 14. Meeting with Iraq’s Chaldean bishops Dec. 11, he said such a fast would link Catholics with those who suffer around the world, including Iraqis suffering under a decadelong U.N. embargo.

In November, Pope John Paul invited representatives of the world’s religions to join him Jan. 24, 2002, in Assisi, Italy, for another prayer summit for peace like the one he convened in 1986.

The pope, who turned 81 in May, remained the world’s most notable religious figure as he guided the Church into the new millennium, traveled to places never before visited by a pope and continued reaching out to other faiths and religions.

Six days into the new year, he issued an apostolic letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte* (At the Beginning of the New Millennium), formally closing the yearlong celebrations of the jubilee year 2000 and setting out a vision of the Church for the third millennium.

In it, he called the Church to a “new sense of mission” marked by holiness and finding new ways to proclaim the Gospel in a culture marked by diversity and globalization.

He said that the personal encounter Christ’s followers have with Christ should not only affect their personal lives but also have an impact on the economic and social behavior of society.

In February, Pope John Paul created 44 new cardinals—setting new records for the most cardinals created at one time, for the total number of living cardinals, 184, and for the most cardinals ever eligible to enter a conclave and vote for a new pope, 135.

The cardinals hailed from 27 nations and included three from the United States: Cardinals Edward M. Egan of New York, Theodore E. McCarrick of Washington and Avery Dulles, a Jesuit theologian. Also notable among those promoted were two internationally known German bishop-theologians—Cardinals Karl Lehmann of Mainz and Walter Kasper, who shortly afterward was made head of the Vatican’s ecumenical office.

The pope visited Greece, Syria and Malta in May, Ukraine in June and Kazakhstan and Armenia in September.

In Greece, home of some of Orthodox Christianity’s strongest critics of ecumenical relations with Catholicism, the pontiff delivered a strongly worded apology for the

historical wrongs done to Orthodox Christians by Catholics. He prayed with Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens and the two issued a common declaration on Europe’s Christian roots and its future of political unity.

In Syria, where he became the first pope to visit a mosque, he said Christianity and Islam should forever put aside conflict and ask forgiveness for past offenses. At a Mass in Damascus, he called on Christians, Muslims and Jews to work together for regional peace.

Jewish leaders criticized him for not directly repudiating an anti-Israeli diatribe delivered in his presence by Syrian President Bashar Assad, but Church officials said a pope visiting a country makes his points by spelling out principles, not by directly criticizing his host.

In Ukraine, the pope honored all Christians who suffered under communism and reached out again to the Orthodox, urging mutual forgiveness for past wrongs. Officials of the country’s largest Orthodox Church, and the Russian Orthodox Church to which it is allied, opposed the papal visit and boycotted his June 24 meeting with Ukrainian religious leaders.

The aging pontiff appeared exhausted several times during his taxing six-day visit to Kazakhstan and Armenia Sept. 22–27. Arriving in predominantly Muslim Kazakhstan less than two weeks after the World Trade Center attacks, he made several pointed appeals for world peace and an end to religious divisions. He said Christians have deep respect for “authentic Islam: the Islam that prays, that is concerned for those in need.

“We must not let what has happened lead to a deepening of divisions,” he said. “Religions must never be used as a reason for conflict.”

In Armenia, he received an unprecedented ecumenical welcome as guest of the Armenian Apostolic Church, staying at the home of Catholicos Karekin II, head of that Church. When he celebrated Mass at Armenian Apostolic headquarters, it was the first time a pope had celebrated the liturgy at the main altar of a separated bishop’s church.

In May, Pope John Paul convened a special consistory of the world’s cardinals to lay out pastoral priorities for the Church in the new millennium. The first such meeting in seven years, it was widely regarded by Church observers as an occasion when the Church’s new cardinals would get to know one another and might start sizing up possible candidates for pope in the next conclave.

In other key Church events in 2001, the pope presided over the world Synod of Bishops, which met in Rome during October to reflect on the bishop’s role in the Church, and issued his post-synodal apostolic exhortation to the Church in Oceania, reflecting the deliberations of that regional synod, which met in late 1998.

When the pope met with President Bush July 23, he urged the president to oppose stem-cell research that would involve destruction of human embryos, saying that political decisions regarding human life “have the gravest consequences for the future of civilization.”

Bush, who had been consulting extensively with scientists and religious leaders on the embryonic stem-cell issue, announced Aug. 9 that he would support federal funding only for research on human embryonic stem-cell lines established before that date.

The compromise position satisfied almost no one. Advocates of wider latitude for research argued that the human embryos to be destroyed for such stem-cell colonies were fertility lab “leftovers” that would be destroyed anyway, and that the colonies available from embryos destroyed before Aug. 9 were too few and limited for such research to realize its full potential.

Catholic officials and ethicists argued that any federal funding of research based on the destruction of human embryos crossed the fundamental ethical divide of killing an innocent human being for the possible benefit of another.

The U.S. Congress also held hearings on cloning of human embryos. The House overwhelmingly approved a complete ban

on all human embryonic cloning, whether to produce babies or for research or medical use. The bill was stalled in the Senate and was not expected to reach the floor until February or March of 2002.

A new flurry of debate over human cloning arose in November when a Massachusetts biotechnology firm announced that it had produced the world’s first cloned human embryos, although none lived past early stages of cell division.

Israeli-Palestinian violence occupied world headlines throughout the year and escalated in December when Israel responded to a series of suicide bomb attacks with military assaults directed at central facilities of Yasser Arafat’s Palestinian Authority.

The pope and the U.S. bishops were among those who made numerous efforts to restart the abandoned peace process in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

Despite growing humanitarian concern, the economic sanctions against Iraq were renewed in June as Russia refused to go along with changes in the sanctions list proposed by Great Britain and agreed to by other members of the U.N. Security Council.

In November, the U.S. bishops stressed that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein is chiefly responsible for his people’s suffering but called for an immediate end to the sanctions “to relieve a morally unacceptable situation where innocent civilians suffer for the actions of a regime over which they have no control.”

In December, Russia agreed to a compromise plan on sanctions that could serve as a basis for progress in the coming year on the Iraqi weapons inspection stalemate behind the sanctions.

The African continent was a focal point of world concern for many reasons. Some 25 million Africans were infected with HIV/AIDS—70 percent of the world total—prompting the Group of Eight leading industrialized nations to launch a \$1.2 billion medical assistance program for the continent.

With most of the world’s heavily indebted poor countries concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa, the AIDS crisis there threatened to undermine recent efforts by world financial institutions and creditor nations to relieve those debt burdens and restore the region to a path of development.

In November, the U.S. bishops issued “A Call to Solidarity With Africa” urging special efforts by U.S. Catholics to “promote a just and equitable development in Africa.” The statement pledged strong cooperative efforts between the U.S. Church and the Church in Africa, which is one of the most important providers of schools, hospitals and other social services on the continent.

The Vatican viewed the debt crisis of poor countries as one of many issues related to economic globalization involving major social and ethical as well as economic dimensions. The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences devoted a meeting to the challenges globalization poses for Catholic social teaching.

Pope John Paul decried the globalization of violence and injustice and called for a global movement of charity to counteract it. His chief doctrinal official, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, said economic globalization has replaced the Cold War as the world’s new ideological battleground.

Religious persecution was a problem in several countries.

The Muslim government of Sudan continued to persecute embattled Christians and followers of traditional religions in the South, placing the country high on the list of those that seriously violate basic religious freedoms.

Also high on the list of religious freedom abusers were Afghanistan, where the Taliban regime imposed the world’s strictest Muslim rule, and China, where the Falun Gong movement faced repression and the government cracked down on Catholics who refused to renounce their loyalty to Rome.

About 70 Christians and Muslims died in September in street clashes in Jos, Nigeria, a city in the border region between northern states where strict Islamic law is imposed and the mainly Christian southern states.

In predominantly Muslim Pakistan, sporadic violence against Christians increased after Sept. 11. It peaked Oct. 28 when five masked gunmen burst into a Catholic church in Bahawalpur and fired automatic weapons at the Protestant congregation inside, killing 16 people.

Catholic-Jewish relations suffered a reversal when a joint commission of scholars studying the Vatican’s World War II archives suspended its work in an atmosphere of distrust.

On the other hand, Catholic-Jewish theological dialogue advanced, with one international meeting in England and two in the United States during the year. At the last, Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Vatican Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, urged attention to the doctrine of the covenant, which he called “the central issue of the Jewish-Christian dialogue.”

Catholics lost a good Jewish friend Dec. 3 with the death in Geneva of Gerhart Riegner, 90, a founder of the World Jewish Congress and pioneer in promoting Catholic-Jewish relations.

In late November, Pope John Paul tried to revive the long-stalled Catholic-Orthodox theological dialogue. In a message to Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, he said the Catholic Church would do anything in its power to get the consultation back on track. “The dialogue must rediscover its initial positive spirit and be animated by the will to resolve the real problems,” he wrote.

In January and again in June, the Vatican issued new pleas for a global moratorium on capital punishment.

In the United States, many bishops publicly opposed the June 11 execution of Oklahoma City bomber Timothy McVeigh. The pope was among those who appealed for clemency for him.

The bishops made opposition to capital punishment a more integral part of their revised pro-life campaign in November, and their national legal office asked the U.S. Supreme Court to bar the execution of the mentally retarded.

Assisted suicide came back into the news when U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft announced a policy of prosecuting doctors who prescribe federally controlled drugs to help someone commit suicide, reversing the hands-off policy of the Clinton administration. Oregon, the only state with legalized physician-assisted suicide, immediately filed court appeals against the new policy.

At their June meeting, the U.S. bishops urged a constructive response to global climate change, warning that ideological bickering was delaying needed action. U.S. and Canadian bishops in the Pacific Northwest issued a major pastoral letter on environmental issues in the Columbia River basin.

In June, the bishops also issued a statement on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, revised their guidelines on receiving Communion under both kinds, adopted guidelines for bishops giving theology professors a mandate to teach, and revised their ethical directives for health care to deal with issues that may arise in Catholic and non-Catholic health care partnerships.

In June and again in November, the bishops discussed a controversial new Vatican instruction setting out strict rules for translation of Latin liturgical texts into other languages.

In November, they elected Bishop Wilton D. Gregory of Belleville, Ill., as president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for the next three years. The first African-American bishop and first convert ever to head the bishops’ conference, he succeeded Bishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of Galveston-Houston.

At the November meeting, they also adopted statements on solidarity with Africa and on the state of the world after Sept. 11, and updated their pastoral plan for pro-life activities. At the end of the meeting, those present overwhelmingly approved a pastoral statement on the growing Asian and Pacific presence in the U.S. Church; that ballot had to be completed by mail because too many bishops already had left the meeting, but the final vote count was 229-1 in favor. †

The Active List

The Criterion welcomes announcements of archdiocesan Church and parish open-to-the-public activities for "The Active List." Please be brief—listing date, location, event, sponsor, cost and time. Include a phone number for verification. No announcements will be taken by telephone. Notices must be in our office by 10 a.m. Monday the week of (Friday) publication: The Criterion; The Active List; 1400 N. Meridian St. (hand deliver); P.O. Box 1717; Indianapolis, IN 46206 (mail); 317-236-1593 (fax); mklein@archindy.org (e-mail).

December 21

Marian College, St. Francis Hall Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, **Indianapolis**. Catholic Charismatic Renewal, prayer meeting, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-927-6900.

December 21-22

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, Parish Hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., **Indianapolis**. Living Nativity, 5-8 p.m. Information: 317-638-5551.

December 23

Holy Name Church, 89 N. 17th Ave., **Beech Grove**. Christmas concert, 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m., tickets \$5. Information: 317-787-1682.

December 24

Marian College, Marian Hall Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, **Indianapolis**. Christmas vigil, Mass, 8 p.m. Information: 317-927-6900.

◆ ◆ ◆
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, St.

Meinrad. Christmas vigil, 7 p.m., Mass, midnight. Information: 812-357-6501.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Anthony Church, 337 N. Warman Ave., **Indianapolis**. Christmas anticipation Mass, 4:30 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., **Indianapolis**. Mass, Catholic Choir of Indianapolis, 4:30 p.m. Information: 317-872-0997.

December 25

Marian College, Marian Hall Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, **Indianapolis**. Christmas Mass, 11 a.m. Information: 317-927-6900.

◆ ◆ ◆
Saint Meinrad Archabbey, **St. Meinrad**. Christmas Mass, 11 a.m. Information: 812-357-6501.

December 26-January 1

St. Rita Parish, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Jr. Ave.,

Indianapolis. Annual Khrist Kwanzaa Celebration, Dec. 26-28, 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 29, fashion show, noon-3:30 p.m., Kwanzaa Celebration, 7 p.m.; Dec. 30, Mass, 10 a.m., Kwanzaa Celebration, 7 p.m.; Dec. 31, Tuhomee Harambee, 10 p.m. until 10 a.m. Jan. 1; Jan. 1, Mass, 10 a.m. Information: 317-632-9349.

December 28

Marian College, St. Francis Hall Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, **Indianapolis**. Catholic Charismatic Renewal, prayer meeting, 7-8:30 p.m., Information: 317-927-6900.

December 28-29

Convent of the Immaculate Conception, Main St., **Oldenburg**. Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg, Christmas tours of motherhouse, Fri. 6-8 p.m. Sat. 2-4 p.m. Information: 812-933-6476.

December 30

St. Luke Church, 7575 Holliday Dr. E., **Indianapolis**. Service of Christmas lessons and carols. No fee. Information: 317-259-4373.

December 31

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., **Indianapolis**. New Year's Eve Mass, songs of worship, 11 p.m., Mass, 11:30 p.m. Information:

317-927-6900.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., **Indianapolis**. Mass, Catholic Choir of Indianapolis, 4 p.m. Information: 317-872-0997.

◆ ◆ ◆
Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., **Indianapolis**. New Year's Eve retreat, "Cultivating the Grateful Heart," 5:30 p.m. Monday-1 p.m. Tuesday, Benedictine Father Noah Casey, \$135 per person, \$255 couple. Reservations: 317-545-7681.

January 4

Marian College, St. Francis Hall Chapel, 3200 Cold Spring Road, **Indianapolis**. Catholic Charismatic Renewal, prayer meeting, 7-8:30 p.m., Information: 317-927-6900.

January 4-6

Monastery Immaculate Conception, 802 E. 10th St., **Ferdinand**. Benedictine Life Weekend, single women ages 20-40, Fri. 7 p.m. EST; Sun. 1 p.m. Information: 800-738-9999.

Recurring

Daily

Our Lady of the Greenwood Parish, 335 S. Meridian St., **Greenwood**. Perpetual adoration.

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., **Indianapolis**. Tridentine (Latin) Mass, Mon.-Fri., noon; Wed., Fri., 5:30 p.m. Information: 317-636-4478.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Joan of Arc Parish, 4217 Central Ave., **Indianapolis**. Prayer line: 317-767-9479.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Thomas More Church, 1200 N. Indiana St., **Mooreville**. Perpetual adoration.

Weekly

Sundays

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., **Indianapolis**. Tridentine Mass, 10 a.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., **Indianapolis**. Mass in Vietnamese, 2 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
Christ the King Church, 1827 Kessler Blvd., E. Dr., **Indianapolis**. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, 7:30-9 p.m., rosary for world peace, 8 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Gabriel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., **Indianapolis**. Spanish Mass, 5 p.m.

Mondays

Our Lady of the Greenwood Chapel, 335 S. Meridian St., **Greenwood**. Prayer group, 7:30 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 523 S. Merrill St., **Fortville**. Rosary, 7:30 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
Marian Center, 3356 W. 30th St., **Indianapolis**. Prayer group, prayers for priests and religious, 9 a.m. Information: 317-257-2569.

Tuesdays

St. Joseph Church, 2605 St. Joe Road W., **Sellersburg**. Shepherds of Christ rosary, prayers after 7 p.m. Mass.

◆ ◆ ◆
Holy Name Parish, 89 N. 17th St., **Beech Grove**. Prayer group, 2:30-3:30 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Joan of Arc Parish, 4217 Central Ave., **Indianapolis**. Bible sharing, 7 p.m. Information: 317-283-5508.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Luke Church, 7575 Holliday Dr. E., **Indianapolis**. Marian Movement of Priests prayer cenacle, Mass, 7-8 p.m. Information: 317-842-5580.

Wednesdays

Divine Mercy Chapel, 3354 W. 30th St. (behind St. Michael Church), **Indianapolis**. Marian prayers for priests, 3-4 p.m. Information: 317-271-8016.

◆ ◆ ◆
Our Lady of the Greenwood Chapel, 335 S. Meridian St., **Greenwood**. Rosary and Chaplet of Divine Mercy, 7 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., **Indianapolis**. Adult Survivors of Childhood Sexual Abuse, Catholic Social Services program, 6-8 p.m. Information: 317-236-1538.

◆ ◆ ◆
Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, 5692 Central Ave., **Indianapolis**. Marian Movement of Priests prayer cenacle, 1 p.m. Information: 317-257-2266.

◆ ◆ ◆
Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., **Indianapolis**. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, between Masses, noon-5:30 p.m. Information: 317-636-4478.

SS. Francis and Clare Church, 5901 Olive Branch Road, **Greenwood**. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7 a.m.-9 p.m., rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet, 11 a.m. Information: 317-859-HOPE.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Thomas Aquinas Church Chapel, 46th and Illinois, **Indianapolis**. Prayer service for peace, 6:30-7:15 p.m.

Thursdays

St. Lawrence Chapel, 6944 E. 46th St., **Indianapolis**. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mass.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Mary Church, 415 E. Eighth St., **New Albany**. Shepherds of Christ prayers for lay and religious vocations, 7 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Malachy Church, 326 N. Green St., **Brownsburg**. Liturgy of the Hours, 7 p.m. Information: 317-852-3195.

◆ ◆ ◆
Christ the King Chapel, 1827 Kessler Blvd. E. Dr., **Indianapolis**. Marian prayers for priests, 5:30-6:30 a.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
Fatima K of C, 1040 N. Post Road, **Indianapolis**. Euchre, 7 p.m. Information: 317-638-8416.

◆ ◆ ◆
Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Hall, 1125 S. Meridian St., **Indianapolis**. Adult religious education, 7:30 p.m. Information: 317-638-5551.

Fridays

St. Susanna Church, 1210 E. Main St., **Plainfield**. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 8 a.m.-7 p.m..

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Lawrence Chapel, 6944 E. 46th St., **Indianapolis**. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Benediction and Mass.

◆ ◆ ◆
Affiliated Women's Services, Inc. (abortion clinic), 2215 Distributors Dr., **Indianapolis**. Pro-life rosary, 10 a.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., **Indianapolis**. Spanish prayer group and conversation, 7-9 p.m. Information: 317-546-4065.

Saturdays

Clinic for Women (abortion clinic), E. 38th St. and Parker Ave., **Indianapolis**. Pro-life rosary, 9:30 a.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., **Indianapolis**. Tridentine Mass, 9 a.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., **Indianapolis**. Mass in English, 4 p.m.

◆ ◆ ◆
St. Joseph Church, 2605 St. Joe Road W., **Sellersburg**. "Be Not Afraid" holy hour, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Monthly

Third Fridays

St. Francis Hall Chapel, Marian College, 3200 Cold Spring Road, **Indianapolis**. Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana, Mass and healing service, 7 p.m.

Third Saturdays

St. Andrew Church, 4052 E. 38th St., **Indianapolis**. Mass for Life by archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life Activities, 8:30 a.m.; walk to Clinic for Women (abortion clinic), 2951 E. 38th St., rosary; return to church for Benediction. †

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Death Row inmate creates Christmas cards

By Mary Ann Wyand

Federal Death Row inmate David Paul Hammer was abused as a child.

This year, the convicted murderer created two Christmas cards to raise funds to benefit Gibault Inc. in Terre Haute and other ministries that help abused children.

He painted the cards last July in his cell in the U.S. Penitentiary at Terre Haute.

"His art is an outlet to express himself," said Providence Sister Rita Clare Gerardot of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods.

Hammer's Death Row cell was hot, she recalled, but he still managed to create the whimsical winter landscape and unique Nativity scene to go on the holiday cards with verses written by Mercy Sister Camille D'Arienzo of Glendale, N.Y.

Sister Rita Clare and Sister Camille are Hammer's spiritual advisers.

"David knows about child abuse," Sister Camille said. "A victim himself, he became a drugged-out teen, then a violent criminal. By the time he was 19, he was behind bars for life. Now 43 and condemned to death for killing a cellmate five years ago, David wishes he could go

back in time to prevent that murder."

Hammer was scheduled to be executed by lethal injection on Nov. 15, 2000, at the penitentiary, but appealed the sentence and was granted a temporary reprieve by U.S. District Judge Malcolm Muir.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein confirmed Hammer as a member of the Catholic Church during a eucharistic liturgy on Nov. 27, 2000, at the prison.

This year, Sister Camille said, "this Death Row Santa is doing his best to bring some brightness to the dark lives of wounded children."

The Nativity scene shows a silhouette of the Holy Family, which is barely discernable to remind people of the need to search for Christ at Christmas.

"I want the infant in the manger," Hammer told Sister Rita Clare, "for Christ is never out of Christmas."

(The Nativity and snowman cards come in sets of 25 and sell for \$17.50, which includes postage and handling. To order cards, send a check addressed to the Sisters of Mercy to Mercy Sister Camille D'Arienzo, Cherish Life Circle, 72-25 68th St., Glendale, NY 11385.) †



Federal Death Row inmate David Paul Hammer adds a pig and reindeer to the traditional Nativity scene for this Christmas card he created to raise funds for programs that help abused children.



This cheerful snowman decorates a Christmas card that federal Death Row inmate David Paul Hammer hopes will raise money for Gibault Inc. of Terre Haute and other ministries that help abused children.

St. Joan of Arc community center serves parish, school, neighborhood

By Mary Ann Wyand

"Miracles do happen," Father Patrick Doyle, pastor of St. Joan of Arc Parish, told parishioners and guests during the Dec. 2 dedication of the new Parish Community Center on East 42nd Street in Indianapolis.

"They happen when people believe in a loving and caring God," he said, "when people of faith are willing to trust ... waiting patiently and praying consistently, when people are faithful and committed to furthering God's kingdom through serving the needs of others through ministry."

This "Miracle on 42nd Street" began six years ago, he said, when St. Joan of Arc parishioners created a new parish mission statement that defined present and future goals for the faith community founded in 1921 at 4217 Central Ave.

"Embracing Our Bright Future" was the theme for the parish capital campaign that resulted in a new gymnasium, cafeteria, offices and meeting rooms connected to St. Joan of Arc School.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein blessed the facility and thanked the parishioners for their commitment to parish ministries.

Father Doyle said the new facilities enable the parish to better serve St. Joan of Arc School students, expand parish social activities and provide additional Neighborhood Youth Outreach (NYO) programming for area children.

Carolyn Holder, NYO director, said the academic and athletic program serves about 200 center-city children annually in the after-school and summer programs.

"St. Joan of Arc parishioners started NYO in 1988," Holder said. "This Parish Community Center shows how strong of a commitment they have to the school and the neighborhood."

The new facility replaces the old parish social hall, which Father Doyle said was "worn out and beyond not safe," and allows St. Joan of Arc School to relocate the office and cafeteria to provide more classrooms in the school building. †



Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein listens as St. Joan of Arc School students sing during the Dec. 2 dedication of the parish's new community center.



Michael J. Schmidt

Cathedral High School
Class of 1996

University of Notre Dame
B. S., 2000

Operations Analyst
Boston Beer Company

In the winter of 1992, I made the decision to attend Cathedral High School. Months earlier, I had surprised my parents with my interest in exploring options other than attending public high school. Even though my two older brothers had graduated from the high school serving our community and all of my friends were planning to attend there, I knew I needed something different. Cathedral represented a different environment, and it was exactly what I wanted in a high school experience.

Cathedral High School exposed me to a whole new world that intellectually I knew existed, but as of yet had not experienced. Attending a school which pulled her student body from the entire Indianapolis community offered me diversity. A class size nearly half of my eighth grade class allowed for the best learning environment and individual attention from my teachers. Teachers such as Dick Nuttall challenged me and demanded that I master the fundamentals of English grammar. My religion classes exposed me to serious and relevant discussions about values. Throughout my four years, I was offered a broad curriculum that afforded me a number of college choices upon graduation. My academic preparation and the superior reputation of Cathedral and its graduates who preceded me enabled me to fulfill a lifelong dream of attending the University of Notre Dame as a member of the Class of 2000.

Not only did Cathedral offer the best academic situation for me, but it also provided a wide range of athletic opportunities. Participating in varsity baseball, football, and soccer allowed me to compete against athletes and programs statewide. The values of sportsmanship and competitive spirit developed under the leadership and guidance of both my family and coaches continue to impact my life today. Focusing on doing things the right way has led many Cathedral teams to heralded successes. Perhaps more importantly, Cathedral values and attitudes have led many athletes to make the right decisions in their personal and professional lives. I will always be grateful for the leadership, guidance, and personal interest shown by my Cathedral coaches.

It's been over five years since I graduated from Cathedral. Since then, I have graduated from the University of Notre Dame and moved to Boston, Massachusetts, to start my business career. Here in Boston, I am an Operations Analyst for The Boston Beer Company, more commonly known as the brewer of Samuel Adams Beer. My successful transition to college and then the business world all started with the solid foundation that was my education at Cathedral High School. The decision to attend Cathedral was my first as a young adult — and one that I will always count as among my best.



PLACEMENT TEST DATE

Saturday, January 12, 2002
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Rest in peace

Please submit in writing to our office by 10 a.m. Mon. the week of publication; be sure to state date of death. Obituaries of archdiocesan priests and religious sisters serving our archdiocese are listed elsewhere in *The Criterion*. Order priests and brothers are included here, unless they are natives of the archdiocese or have other connections to it.

ARNOLD, Raymond A., 84, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 27. Husband of Elsie Arnold. Father of Carol Atwell, Joani LaGrange, Brenda Peter, Patrick, Randy, Ronald and Wayne Arnold. Brother of Virginia Aldridge, Doretha Horlander, Mildred Williams, Alice Wittmer and Carl Arnold. Grandfather of 17.

BIRCHLER, Judy A., 56, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 22. Wife of Jerry Birchler. Mother of Leah Al-Abed, Brett, Dion, Kirk and Scott Birchler. Sister of Jane Schroeder, Alan, Bill, Donnie, Mark and Terry Owen. Grandmother of 11.

BLAND, Mary Ellen, 55, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 6. Wife of David Bland. Mother of Christina Smith and Michael Lynch. Stepmother of Cassandra Banta, Kristy Bland, Rhonda Bradford and Tammy Moore. Grandmother of four. Step-grandmother of 12.

DEOM, Zella L. (East), 88, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 27. Mother of Robert East. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of five. Great-

great-grandmother of two.

DIXON, Larry J., 46, St. Michael, Cannelton, Oct. 24. Son of Opal (LaGrange) Dixon. Brother of Jan Smith, Carolyn and Ralph Dixon.

DURKIN, William J., 74, St. Louis, Batesville, Dec. 10. Husband of Mary Rose (Overberg) Durkin. Father of Deborah Ahaus, Michelle, Daniel and Patrick Durkin. Brother of Mary Nunner and Jerry Durkin. Grandfather of nine.

EVARD, Pius R., 74, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 30. Husband of Corine Evard. Father of Joan, Warren and Wayne Evard. Grandfather of two. Step-grandfather of three.

FEENEY, Betty J., 77, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Dec. 7. Mother of David, John and Michael Feeney. Sister of Judy Kurtz and James Gephart.

FELDPAUSCH, Gerald, 70, St. Pius, Troy, Sept. 16. Husband of Susan L. (Riddell) Feldpausch. Brother of Janice Harpenau, Jo Ann Lutgring, Patricia Maegher, Joseph Jr. and William Feldpausch.

FORREST, Joan Isabel (Delaney), 70, St. Anthony, Indianapolis, Dec. 1. Wife of Frank Forrest. Mother of Katy, Maureen, Mike and Steve Forrest. Sister of Jeri Csire, Marie Donahue, JoAnn, Hugh and James Delaney.

FOX, Mary Elizabeth "Lib," 85, St. Gabriel, Connerville, Dec. 8. Mother of William Fox.

Sister of Phyllis Hignite and William Kang. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of nine.

FREIBERGS, Genoveva (Rudzats), 78, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 1. Mother of Arija Burkley, Ingrida, Aivars, Edgars, Paul and Valdis Freibergs. Sister of Vitalis Rudzats. Grandmother of four. Great-grandmother of two.

GAESSER, Francis C., 88, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 18. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of four.

GOFFINET, Claudina C., 87, St. Paul, Tell City, Nov. 14. Mother of Joyce Greenwood, Adrian, Allen, David, John and Paul Goffinet. Grandmother of 13. Great-grandmother of 11.

GRAHAM, Evelyn L., 92, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 8. Wife of George Graham. Mother of Gail Hoesli. Stepmother of Barbara Faslco. Sister of Hazel Thomas and John Taylor. Grandmother of seven. Step-grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of 14. Great-great-grandmother of four.

JAMES, Paul E., 46, St. Paul, Tell City, Sept. 13. Son of Robert James Sr. Brother of Deborah Maus, Mary Ellen Richards, Susan Toppel, Dennis, Patrick and Robert James Jr.

JENKINS, Elizabeth M., 85, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 29. Mother of Becky Hagedorn, Nancy Kast and Mary Seibert. Sister of Peg Pekinpaugh, Kate Rowe, Mary Rust and Bonnie Stiles. Grandmother of nine. Great-grandmother of 11.

JUNE, George A., 81, St. Anthony, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Husband of Phyllis M. (White) June. Father of Michael

June. Brother of Carolyn Hommel, Rosemary Tharp, David and William June. Grandfather of three.

KRAMER, Gesina H., 87, St. Paul, New Alsace, Dec. 10. Mother of Rosemary Fox, Frances Deddens and Frank Kramer. Sister of Angela Borutta and Lenie Nordenbrook. Grandmother of 27.

KRAMER, Rita A., 53, St. Mary, Greensburg, Dec. 10. Wife of Alvin Kramer. Mother of Adam, Chris and Eric Kramer. Sister of Bertha Bauman, Betty Dunbar, Marilyn Weller, Connie Witz, Cindy, Aloys, Gary and Mark Knecht. Daughter of Margaret (Vogelsang) Knecht. Grandmother of two.

LAKE, George, 69, Holy Guardian Angels, Cedar Grove, Dec. 7. Husband of Dolores (Bath) Lake. Father of Maria Barnes, Kimberly Carlson, Kendall, Kevin and Kraig Lake. Brother of Rita Holman. Grandfather of nine.

MEYERS, Mayme B., 88, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 20. Mother of Ruth Sandage and Helen Stiles. Sister of Rose Lemons and Glenn Sketo. Grandmother of five. Great-grandmother of four.

MURPHY, Madonna E., 75, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 19. Wife of Justin Murphy. Mother of Kathleen Amos and John Murphy. Sister of Mary Frances Lincoln. Grandmother of three.

MURTAUGH, Mary, 83, St. John the Baptist, Dover, Nov. 27. Wife of Justin "Jake" Murtaugh. Mother of Jeanette O'Loughlin, Ellen Patterson, Margaret Wilson and Joe Murtaugh. Sister of Rita "Mickey" Widolff and Frank

Ennis. Grandmother of three.

PEAK, Stacy Lynn, 36, St. Paul, Tell City, Sept. 11. Daughter of Bobbie Peak. Sister of Jody Rhodes, Toni, Mike and Philip Peak.

PEAY, Lorine, 77, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs, Dec. 10. Mother of Virgil Peay. Sister of Loretta Aalsma and John Maskie Jr. Stepsister of Verlee Heinze and John Skoglund. Grandmother of two.

PETERS, Herman W., 75, St. Pius, Troy, Oct. 11. Husband of Joyce Peters. Father of Patricia Gelarden, Beverly Keller, Rebecca LeClere, Laverne Peter, Marlene Rhodes and Brenda Zoglman. Grandfather of 16. Great-grandfather of eight.

PETRO, Michael David, 49, St. Monica, Indianapolis, Dec. 1. Husband of Terri (Powell) Petro. Father of Teresa Smith, Michael and Ronald Petro. Brother of Diana Purcell. Grandfather of three.

POLAK, James C., 77, St. Luke, Indianapolis, Dec. 5. Husband of Margaret Ann (Ernst) Polak. Father of Barbara Heyl, Meg Kee, Mary Ann Kurker, James and John Polak. Grandfather of 14.

REISTER, Mildred, 68, St. Agnes, Nashville, Dec. 3.

RIBIS, Joann S., 69, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 23. Mother of Paul Olberding. Sister of Mary Ruth Carr, Betty Litherland and Helen Snyder. Grandmother of one.

SANDAGE, Gertrude, 93, St. Michael, Cannelton, Oct. 8. Mother of Jean Fulkerson and Patricia Van Coney. Sister of Margaret Robinson. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of several. Great-great-grandmother of several.

SCHAFFER, Elsie M., 79, Prince of Peace, Madison, Dec. 9. Mother of Linda Greene, Donald, Richard and Robert Schaffer. Sister of Emma Rinus, John and Robert Dierkes. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of 26.

SPIVEY, Valerie J., 37, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs, Nov. 29. Daughter of Sarah Spivey. Sister of Christopher, Mark and Thomas Spivey.

STEIN, Eva L., 78, St. Mary, New Albany, Dec. 9. Wife of John Stein. Mother of Linda Haywood, Nancy Gish, Kris Jakoby, Emma Powell, Jenifer Schultz, Jim, John Jr. and Nick Stein. Sister of David and Joe Gohmann. Grandmother of 19. Great-grandmother of one.

STOUT, Marian Ann, 45, St. Paul, Tell City, Oct. 22. Wife of Cecil "Bud" Stout. Mother of Diana, Chris, Danny and Tim Stout. Daughter of Verena Blanford. Sister of Carolyn Briggeman, Jeanette Pannett, Forrest and Manford Blanford. Grandmother of one.

WISSMAN, Harold W., Sr., Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 30. †

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Terre Haute Christmas Store brightens holiday for more than 3,000

By Brandon A. Evans

TERRE HAUTE—It was shaping up to be one of those days.

Pat Armstrong, the manager of the Catholic Charities Christmas Store, 829 N. 14th St., in Terre Haute, had just finished helping a client with a special need when another problem arose.

The Christmas Store is a place where families in need can come to get presents for their household as well as essential clothing items. Each person that comes to the store must fill out paperwork in advance to verify their needs.

Ruth Alexander had added her two stepsons to the list of people she was collecting gifts for and somewhere along the way the paperwork got fouled up.

Alexander, a mother of two and step-mother of two, began to worry. She had been here years before, but in the interim had been doing well enough to donate items to the nearby Bethany House. Now, when she needed help, a roadblock appeared to threaten the Christmas she wanted to provide for her family.

"I had prayed to God to please let someone help me," she said.

Armstrong was the one to answer Alexander's prayers with patience and love. She tracked down the error and got a grateful Alexander into the store.

That's what makes it all worthwhile, Armstrong said. Sometimes it's just the look on someone's face, she said. Many stories of inspiration are at the root of why she continues her ministry.

"One lady this year was absolutely thrilled she got a winter coat," Armstrong said. "She kept saying, 'I've got a coat. I've got a coat.'"

One woman cried after receiving a heating pad. Her husband had cancer and she couldn't afford both the medicine and a heating pad.

"So many of the parents come through and say if we didn't do this the kids wouldn't have Christmas," Armstrong said. "This is their only Christmas."

She said that's why she works so hard along with the volunteers to make the Christmas Store a reality each year.

By that point, the day was only half over. Sixty-two families had come through the house that serves as a store, and 34 more were scheduled that day.

This year, the store served 967 families—3,283 individuals—in the two weeks that it was open before Christmas.

Armstrong sends out 1,000 applications to various churches and charity organizations in the Terre Haute area to find people in need each Christmas.

Clients bring their paperwork to the store and are taken through and helped by a volunteer.

It is usually the parent of a family that comes in. They may take one gift for each member of the family under 18.

"We used to call them toys," Armstrong said, "but when you give a 17-year-old a gift it's not usually a toy."

They also may take one household gift and one stocking for anyone over age 3. The stockings, designed for men, women and children, contain items appropriate to each.

Each member of the family also receives two articles of clothing, such as shirts and pants, as well as two pairs of socks and two pieces of underwear.

As much as the Christmas Store represents a bright spot in the lives of needy families, it also has a special place in the hearts of the volunteers that make it work.

Armstrong, the only paid employee, said that the store has about 50 volunteers.

"I have volunteers I never see," she said. "I have one lady who's in a wheelchair. She sews bags. We get material



Ruth Alexander shops for her husband, two sons and two stepsons at the Christmas Store in Terre Haute. She selected a gift for each of the children, as well as clothing, socks, underwear and a stocking for each member of the family.

delivered to her. One volunteer delivers the material, she sews it, then the [volunteer] picks it up and brings it back to me."

John Etling, the director of Catholic Charities of Terre Haute, said that many volunteers look forward to their work at the Christmas Store.

"It's a favorite project as far as my own concerns are," Etling said. "It addresses the whole family with gifts, not just children, or one element. And that's really what Christmas is all about."

Several clients in the waiting room expressed thanks for the kindness and giving that flows from the Christmas Store.

"Not anybody would open a home and try to help with everybody for Christmas so everybody can have a good Christmas,"

Alexander said. "You don't see anybody else doing it. I can tell the difference in somebody that is coming from the heart as opposed to just trying to make themselves look good. I really, really appreciate this."

During the two weeks that the store is open to customers, Armstrong spends all day there. She and a group of volunteers serve customers from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Another shift comes in to help restock the shelves and do paperwork after the store closes. It's usually 9 p.m. before Armstrong leaves.

Although Christmas day is still not here, Armstrong and her volunteers are already making plans for next year's store. †

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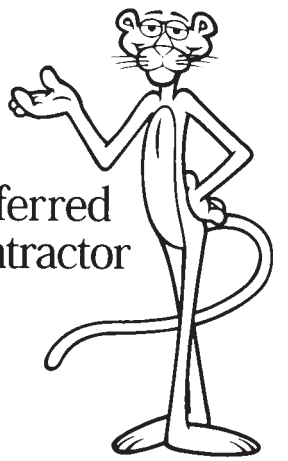
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