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Washington Letter

FOCA's effects seen as dire, but chance of it passing is still uncertain, page 9.

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A father's gift



Members of the extended Hammans family help to keep alive the Holy Cross Parish tradition of feeding the needy at Thanksgiving and Christmas. Andrea Hammans, left, Mary Hammans Qualls, Ann Tobin Piller, Candice Qualls, Lori Hammans Tobin, Amy Tobin Kinnaman, Cecelia Hammans and Kelly Qualls stand with bags of food.

Forty years later, family's holiday outreach continues at Holy Cross Parish

By John Shaughnessy

Lori Hammans Tobin has learned to believe at least two realities of Christmas: Sometimes Christmas arrives early. And the best gifts don't often come in a box.

For Tobin, her best gift as a child came in a phone call, a phone call that left her mother crying tears of joy, and she and her siblings dancing and clapping in delight.

Looking back on that moment, Tobin shares the story of that special gift that changed a person, a family, a parish and the larger community.

It's a Christmas story that began nearly 50 years ago—with a promise from a father who was dying.

It's a Christmas story that continues today as that man's children and grandchildren try to help other families who are struggling in perhaps the toughest and most heartbreaking holiday season in recent economic times.

A father's promise

In 1960, Francis Hammans was a young husband and father trying to make a good life for his family. He didn't have a high school diploma because his father had died when he was 15 and he needed to go to work to help his mother and his siblings.

Still, he had a strong work ethic and a deep sense of faith, being a faithful member of Holy Cross Parish on the near-eastside of Indianapolis.

That faith and the family of Francis and his young wife, Jody, became severely tested when he was diagnosed in 1960 with tuberculosis, an infectious, life-threatening disease.

"I was 5 then," recalls Tobin, one of their children. "He was in the hospital for a four-year period and he was on his deathbed all the time. My mom was getting calls all the time telling her he was about to die."

Her mom was also struggling to keep the family together.

"We had nothing," Tobin recalls. "There were six of us kids then, in one bedroom, in bunk beds and cribs. We were living in my grandmom's house, which was right next to Holy Cross Church. Catholic Social Services took care of us, with a lot of help from family and friends. I remember at Thanksgiving and Christmas how people brought boxes of food, and made sure we got presents."

She also remembers the faith that her parents showed.

"My mom taught us to pray the rosary, that God hears the voices of little children," Tobin says. "My memories are of us praying every day to let my dad live. My dad was praying to live, too, so he could provide for his family. He told God that if he was allowed to live, he would serve him."

By then, his lungs had collapsed and he had kidney failure. His death was imminent. Then came the phone call.

"It was my dad calling my mom to tell her he was coming home," Tobin says. "The doctors didn't know how he had recovered. He was a miracle. My mom held up the phone and we just danced and clapped. That's the day our world changed."



Bags of food for the needy line Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis as the parish once again prepared to help families at Thanksgiving. The tradition, started by Holy Cross parishioner Francis Hammans in 1968, will also continue at Christmas.

Keeping the promise

Francis Hammans kept his promise.

At first, he did it by helping people whenever he could. Even though his family was on a shoestring budget after his recovery, he reached into the refrigerator for milk or bread whenever he learned that another family needed it.

Then, in 1968, he helped to start a food pantry for the poor at Holy Cross Parish. That effort led to making special food baskets for families in need at Thanksgiving and Christmas.

It's a holiday tradition that still continues 40 years later.

On Dec. 22, members of Holy Cross Parish, including a sizeable number of people with family connections to Francis Hammans, will distribute bags of

See OUTREACH, page 8

Vatican confirms tentative plans for papal visit to Holy Land in 2009

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican has confirmed tentative plans for

Pope Benedict XVI to visit the Holy Land in 2009.

Israeli sources said the most likely time for the visit would be in May with stops in Israel and the Palestinian territories.

The pope was invited to visit Israel by Israeli President Shimon Peres in 2007. At that time, the pope made it clear he hoped to make the trip, but Vatican diplomats said the timing would depend in large part on efforts to calm the simmering Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In recent months, Israeli and Vatican officials began making more concrete plans for a papal visit. The contacts were first reported on Nov. 27 by the Israeli newspaper *Ha'aretz* and were confirmed by the Israeli Embassy to the Holy See.

Ha'aretz said the most likely time frame for the trip is the second week in May. It said the papal nuncio to Israel and the Palestinian territories, Archbishop Antonio Franco, told Peres in early November that the pope had decided to visit the country.

The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, confirmed that "diplomatic contacts are under way to study the possibility of a papal trip to the Holy Land during the course of next year." He gave no dates or details.

Father Lombardi declined to speculate on whether the papal visit would include a stop at the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Jerusalem. The Vatican has urged officials at the memorial to remove from a permanent display a photo caption stating that Pope Pius XII did nothing to condemn the Nazis and their slaughter of the Jews.

Church officials have called the caption offensive and have defended Pope Pius for working quietly during World War II to help save thousands of people, including many Jews. In October, Father Lombardi reiterated the Vatican's objections to the Yad Vashem display, but said it was not a decisive obstacle to a papal visit.

Pope Benedict has one other scheduled

See PAPAL, page 2



Pope Benedict XVI

Pope condemns terrorist attacks in India, prays for victims

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI condemned the wave of terrorist attacks in India as acts of “cruel and senseless violence,” and led prayers for the more than 170 people who died and the hundreds injured in the bloodshed.

A Vatican spokesman, meanwhile, warned that if extremists continue to exploit the ethnic and religious tensions of southern Asia, the results could be even more tragic.

Speaking at his noon blessing on Nov. 30, the pope asked for prayers for the victims of the attacks in Mumbai, the Indian financial capital, where suspected Islamic militants assaulted at least 10 targets in a three-day siege that began on Nov. 26.

The pope also expressed concern for the clashes between rival ethnic and religious groups in Jos, Nigeria, where at least 200 people were killed on Nov. 28-29. Churches and mosques were burned in the rioting.

“The causes and circumstances of these tragic events are different, but there should be a common sense of horror and condemnation for the explosion of such cruel and senseless violence,” the pope told pilgrims from his apartment window overlooking St. Peter’s Square.

“Let us ask the Lord to touch the hearts of those who delude themselves by thinking that this is the way to resolve local or international problems,” he said.

The morning after gunmen attacked the targets in Mumbai, including the luxurious Taj Mahal hotel, the pope deplored the brutality of the violence in a telegram sent to Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai.

The papal telegram appealed “for an end to all acts of

terrorism, which gravely offend the human family and severely destabilize the peace and solidarity needed to build a civilization worthy of mankind’s noble vocation to love God and neighbor.”

The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, said the well-coordinated attacks were reminiscent of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist acts against U.S. targets.

In a commentary on Vatican Radio, Father Lombardi said the terrorists had clearly chosen India, a place of tensions and conflicts, as a “critical point at which to try to ignite an even more frightening conflagration, whose consequences are difficult to imagine, given the demographic dimensions of southern Asia and its role in world development.”

In addition to political tensions in the region, he said, India has been troubled by “persistent and perhaps growing fundamentalist currents, not only in the Islamic world but also among Hindus.” He noted that India’s minority Catholic community had suffered recent discrimination and attacks just as the country’s Muslim community did several years ago in a wave of anti-Islamic violence.

“It is horrible that in today’s world religion is mixed up with violence. Fundamentalism is one of the most dramatic risks faced by humanity, and it challenges the conscience of every religious person,” the Vatican spokesman said.

In India, Cardinal Gracias immediately expressed the Church’s shock and sadness at the terrorist attacks, which he said were an attack upon the entire country.

“The Church in India condemns this attack in the strongest possible terms. Innocent and unconnected people have been killed. Very brave police officers have been



Forensic experts and policemen look through a window of Nariman House in Mumbai, India, on Nov. 30. Pope Benedict XVI condemned the wave of terrorist attacks in India and led prayers for the more than 170 people who died and the hundreds injured in the bloodshed.

killed,” the cardinal said in an appeal issued on Nov. 27. He said the Catholic Church in Mumbai was making all its medical services available to the wounded.

“We must fight together as a nation and as a united people to combat the terrorists. We must never give up hope because ultimately hope will prevail,” the cardinal said.

The Indian bishops’ conference, meanwhile, appealed to the government to take all necessary means to “guarantee the safety of citizens, who yearn for peace and calm.”

India’s National Security Guard commandos killed the last group of terrorists when they battled their way into an area of the Taj Mahal hotel on Nov. 29. Shortly before that, the commandos had stormed a Jewish center in the city and found six hostages dead. †

Holy Father begins Advent by asking Christians to be signs of hope

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—In their prayers and through their actions in Advent, Christians are called to be signs of hope for the world, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“Advent is the spiritual season of hope par excellence, when the whole Church is called to become hope for itself and for the world,” the pope said on Nov. 29 as he celebrated vespers on the eve of the first Sunday of Advent.

The pope’s homily at the evening prayer service in St. Peter’s Basilica, the morning Mass he celebrated on Nov. 30 at Rome’s Basilica of St. Lawrence Outside the Walls and his midday Angelus address at the Vatican afterward all focused on Advent as a time to remember that Christ became human, died for our sins, rose from the dead and will return at the end of time.

Advent hope, he said during the evening prayer service, is a recognition of the ongoing need for salvation.

“We do not await the Lord as some beautiful decoration for a world already saved,” he said, but as the only one who can bring to completion the work begun with his incarnation, death and resurrection.

In his Angelus address, the pope said Advent is a time when Christians prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ by making sure they welcome him fully into their hearts and lives.

But, he said, it also is a time for Christians to set their sights on the end of time and to reform their lives in a way that shows they are ready for the Last Judgment.

“This requires a correct detachment from earthly goods, sincere repentance for one’s errors, concrete acts of charity and, especially, humbly and trustingly placing oneself in the hands of God, our tender and merciful father,” the pope said.

Visiting the parish community at the Basilica of St. Lawrence Outside the Walls, the pope said the Gospel of the first Sunday of Advent urges believers to be watchful and stay awake.

“To watch means to follow the Lord, to choose that which he has chosen, to love that which he loves, to conform one’s life to his,” the pope said. †

PAPAL

continued from page 1

foreign trip on his calendar for 2009, a visit to Cameroon and Angola in March.

Pope Paul VI was the first modern pontiff to visit the Holy Land, making a pilgrimage there in 1964. In 2000, Pope John Paul II made a Holy Year visit to the Holy Land, one of a series of biblical pilgrimages he undertook in his later years as pope. †

Dec. 8 is holy day of obligation

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on Dec. 8.

It is a holy day of obligation due to the fact that it is the patronal feast of the United States.

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Challenge of hunger addressed at annual interfaith service

By Mary Ann Wyand

Hundreds of candles lit from one flame symbolized the light of faith, the glow of hope and the fire of charity during the ninth annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on Nov. 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.

Participants represented the Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Hindu, Islamic, Buddhist and Sikh faith traditions.

Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar general, welcomed the gathering on behalf of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, who was not able to preside at the interfaith service but joined them in prayer.

"We are coming from many different cultures, many different faith traditions," Msgr. Schaedel said, "and we gather tonight

to unite ourselves in the common spirit of thanksgiving, praying for unity and peace in our world. With one voice, let us all pray together."

Ethnic music from many countries and cultures enabled the participants to experience hymns and chants from a variety of faith traditions as songs of praise and thanks to God.

Keynote speaker James T. Morris of Indianapolis, who directed the United Nations' World Food Programme for five years from 2002 to 2007, reminded the gathering that people of all faiths and ages go hungry throughout the world every day.

Morris also initiated the Interfaith Hunger Initiative, a coalition of faith-based organizations working to end hunger in the U.S. and abroad.

"No child should ever be hungry," Morris emphasized. "It's not right, it's not fair, not in this world of plenty, of goodwill, of huge brainpower and technology. We know how to feed the world's population."

Each day, he said, there are 850 million hungry people in the world and half of them are children.

An estimated 2 billion people live on less than \$2 a day, Morris said, and another 1.25 billion people live on less than \$1 a day.

Tragically, 25,000 people die of hunger every day, he said, and of that number 18,000 are children.

Every five seconds, Morris said, all day long, someone dies of malnutrition somewhere in the world.

"During the five years that I had the extraordinary gift plus the pleasure and privilege of leading the United Nations' World Food Programme," he said, "which feeds more than 100 million people each year in 80 countries, and with a special focus on women and very vulnerable children, often I would come back [from fact-finding missions in developing countries] to Rome

and my office, and be perplexed and bewildered and almost beside myself trying to understand why my children and my grandchildren had life so good [in the U.S.], and were so blessed and so fortunate, and why so many of the children around the world were so at risk. It wasn't fair. Where was the equity? Where was the justice?"

Morris said he would often seek out clergy from various faith traditions to try to gain some spiritual understanding about the harsh reality of worldwide injustices.

"It's not acceptable for a single child anywhere in the world to be lonely or sad, to be hungry and not loved," he said, because God wants "the world [to] come together and accept as universal the notion that the life of any child, of every child, of any faith, anywhere in the world, is equally sacred, equally blessed and equally precious."

Turning to the Bible, Morris said, "I would seek out support and encouragement in the holy Scriptures. ... It seemed to me that the universal lessons that human life is created in the image of God, that what we are given must be shared with those who are in need, and that we can reach our highest potential through our sacred community with others, ... these universal truths, were affirmed by all of the world's great faiths."

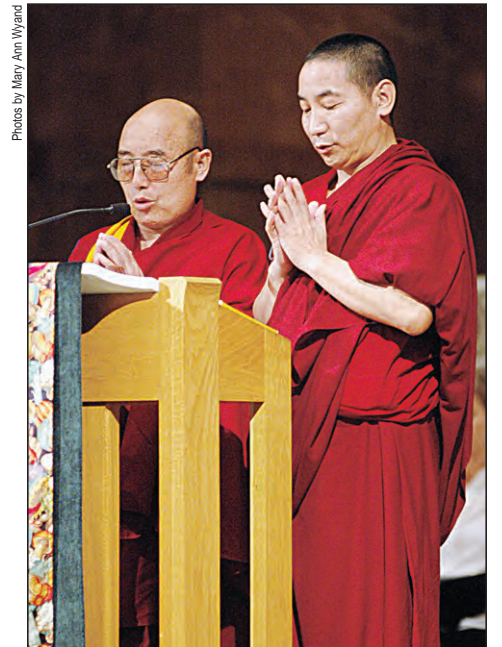
The prophet Mohammed taught that one of the five pillars of the Islamic tradition is feeding the hungry, Morris said, and giving the greeting of peace to everyone.

In the Christian tradition, he said, Jesus taught that what you do for the least among us you do unto me (Mt 25:45).

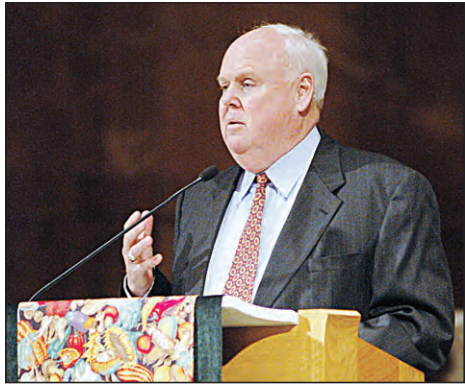
The Hebrew Scriptures cite the abundance of food in the world, Morris said, and how it is meant to be shared with all people.

"In the words of [Mohandas] Gandhi," Morris explained, "the great Hindu leader said, 'To a hungry person, God can only appear as a piece of bread.'"

The Buddhist tradition also identifies with the suffering of the poor, he said, and the



Geshe Lotin, left, and Ven. Dhamcoe Chopel of the Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center in Bloomington chant the dedication prayer from *Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way* during the Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on Nov. 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis.



James T. Morris of Indianapolis, former executive director of the United Nations' World Food Programme from 2002 to 2007, discusses the urgent need to provide food for starving people throughout the world during his keynote address at the ninth annual Interfaith Thanksgiving Service on Nov. 25 at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis. Morris founded the Interfaith Hunger Initiative, a coalition of faith-based organizations working to end hunger in the U.S. and abroad. He currently serves as president of Indiana Pacers Sports and Entertainment.

Sikh tradition speaks of the need for social consciousness.

"Mother Teresa told us that 'our humanity unites us,'" Morris said, "'and if we don't have peace it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.'"

The World Health Organization reports that hunger and malnutrition is "the single most serious health issue in the world today," he said, but there is hope for a better future because the world's people "have so much more in common than the artificial barriers that humankind has found to divide us. ... We share the notion of giving and caring and sharing when we come together." †

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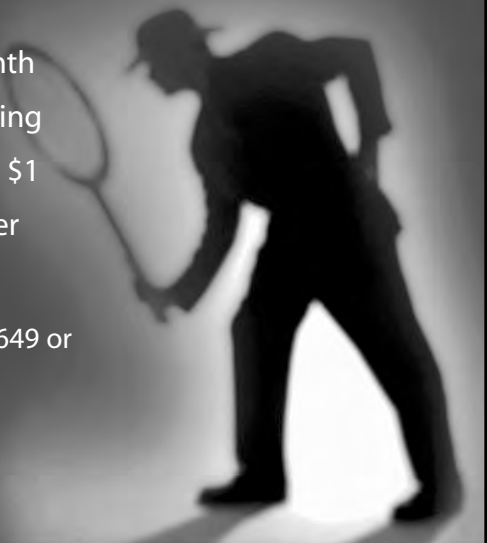
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Editorial



Pope Benedict XVI blesses the faithful during his pastoral visit to Rome's Basilica of St. Lawrence Outside the Walls on Nov. 30 for the 1,750th anniversary of the martyrdom of St. Lawrence.

Gratitude makes wholeness and healing possible

In one of his many articles on the Eucharist as communion, Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, quotes the Greek philosopher Plato, who writes about the reciprocal communion between gods and men.

According to Plato, "communion with the gods also brings about fellowship among men." He notes that this communion is the ultimate intention and the most profound content of all sacrifices, of all worship as such.

In this connection, Plato coins a marvelous phrase that we might refer to as a presentiment of the eucharistic mystery when he says that "worship is entirely concerned with the wholeness and the healing of love."

Worship heals the brokenness and vulnerability of love, and makes it whole again.

When we participate in the Eucharist, we become one with the Lord and with his body, the Church. We bring to the table our wounds and our incompleteness, and we allow the sacrifice of Jesus, and our communion with him, to make us whole again.

In the Eucharist, we offer to God our praise and thanksgiving for all that he has given us, and we open ourselves to the power of his love, which is our only true source of healing and of hope.

Gratitude has an important part to play in Christian worship. When we acknowledge all of the ways that we have been blessed by God, and give him thanks, we forget about the hurts we suffer and the wrongs that have been done to us.

We focus not on our weakness, but on God's strength—not on our loneliness, but on the union with God and with one another that have been made possible in and through Christ.

The Greek word for "thanksgiving" has the same root as Eucharist. And we Christians are convinced there is no greater way to give thanks to God than to share in the body and blood of his son in the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

This is the worship that heals our love—which has been wounded by sins of lust, bitterness and fear. This is the worship that makes us whole again after we have been divided by politics, ideology and petty jealousy.

When we are focused on our blessings, and express our gratitude to God, how can we feel sorry for ourselves? And when we acknowledge all the gifts we have received from a good and gracious God, how can we be envious (or covetous) of our neighbor's gifts?

Pope Benedict writes that the mystery which has been revealed to us in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ is the inner life of God himself. As a result of the Incarnation, and the Paschal Mystery, we now know that "God is in himself a dialogue of eternal love." God is love, the pope reminds us, and our love, wounded and incomplete without God, is healed in and through the eucharistic sacrifice.

What must we do to be healed, to become holy? We must thank God for his goodness to us. We must open ourselves to the power of his love and let his healing power (his grace) enter into our minds and hearts. We must give ourselves to him wholly and completely so that he can restore us to our true selves.

This is the time of year when we remember our blessings and give thanks to God for all his gifts. As we begin December and move into Advent, may it also be a time of healing and wholeness—for each of us, for our nation and for the Church.

May our observance of Thanksgiving this year extend beyond one day and become a way of life, an expression of stewardship, for all God's people.

May our thankfulness lead us to the Eucharist, and may our worship bring us wholeness and the healing of love.

—Daniel Conway

Your Family/Bill and Monica Dodds

Tips for a festive but frugal Christmas celebration this year

We are not going to say the recent economic turmoil has a silver lining for

families. (If it did have one, many families would have grabbed it and sold it by now.)

But it does offer some opportunities to help you do what you have wanted to do—or at least have talked

about doing—for several Christmases past.

And that is to spend less.

So here is the good news. This year, you probably will spend less. The not-so-good news? You will do that because you have less to spend or you have a well-founded concern (or fear) that all too soon that will be the case.

Here are some tips and reminders for those who in the not-so-distant past may have been "frugally challenged."

1. Decide on a realistic budget and stick to it.

2. Tell the kids that this year, when it comes to gifts, simple (read "not expensive") is "in." (Or, to paraphrase a popular expression, "Twenty dollars is the new 50 dollars.")

3. Stick to your guns! There is no better way to help your sons and daughters learn that:

a. You stick to your guns!

b. It is possible to have a wonderful Christmas without spending a wad of money and ringing up more credit card debt.

This January can be the first year in a long time that begins without a visit from the terrifying Ghost of Christmas Just Passed (i.e., a big, fat credit card bill in the mail).

And speaking of things to watch out for ...

4. Avoid choosing to give a homemade gift that ends up costing more than something store-bought. As every craftsman and hobbyist knows, that can easily happen.

5. Don't "re-gift" an item to someone unless you are sure that he or she didn't first give it to you. (And neither did anyone else in the circle of family or friends at that particular gathering where this latest gift exchange is taking place.)

6. Never give an item to senior family members without seriously considering:

a. Will she just see this as one more object that has to be dusted once a week?

b. Is he just going to toss this into the sock drawer with so many other gifts from so many other years?

If either seems likely, give the gift of yourself: A pledge that you will call or visit on a regular basis. (Keep that promise!)

And speaking of gifts and visits ...

7. Remember that at that first Christmas the initial celebration was low-budget. No, we aren't referring to the stable. We mean the angels sang and the shepherds came to praise God. It was only later that the wise men showed up with packages.

And, while the Gospels don't tell us, it seems possible that Mary and Joseph later "returned" those presents to raise some money for what the Holy Family really needed: a way to cover expenses for the flight into Egypt.

(Bill and Monica Dodds are the founders of the Friends of St. John the Caregiver and editors of My Daily Visitor magazine. Their Web site is www.FSJC.org. They can be contacted at MonicaDodds@YourAgingParent.com.) †

Letter to the Editor

When it comes to immigration, 'right is right because it is'

Regarding Joseph Kelly's article on immigrants in the "Faith Alive!" section of the Nov. 14 issue of *The Criterion*, what do the immigrants of the past—which included my grandparents—have to do with the illegals coming across the border today?

My grandparents came in legally (at the time through Ellis Island), became citizens and embraced the totality of the United States of America.

The article gave a true and proper view of immigrants during our history.

The difference between my grandparents, and other immigrants of that time, and today's Hispanics coming in is that the former obeyed the laws of this country while those coming from Mexico do not, have no or little intention of becoming citizens and hope to take as much advantage of the largesse of this country as they possibly can.

It is sad that our hierarchy has fallen into

this trap and lost sight of "right is right because it is," and have decided to play the semantics game with a faithful who are already wondering what will happen in the future.

Breaking a duly constituted law is wrong. The good nuns taught me that many years ago. We need to return to what they taught.

We obviously need a Mexican hierarchy willing to take a stand to help their people in Mexico rather than condoning their breaking the laws of a neighboring country, the U.S. We need a U.S. hierarchy to work with them in this endeavor.

Do not compare those here illegally now with my grandparents and those of my friends, who obeyed the laws and worked hard to instill this respect for authority in their children and grandchildren.

Barbara L. Maness Vevay

Letters Policy

Letters from readers are published in *The Criterion* as part of the newspaper's commitment to "the responsible exchange of freely-held and expressed opinion among the People of God" (*Communio et Progressio*, 116).

Letters from readers are welcome and every effort will be made to include letters from as many people and representing as many viewpoints as possible. Letters should be informed, relevant, well-expressed and temperate in tone. They must reflect a basic sense of courtesy and respect.

The editors reserve the right to select the letters that will be published and to edit

letters from readers as necessary based on space limitations, pastoral sensitivity and content (including spelling and grammar). In order to encourage opinions from a variety of readers, frequent writers will ordinarily be limited to one letter every three months. Concise letters (usually less than 300 words) are more likely to be printed.

Letters must be signed, but, for serious reasons, names may be withheld.

Send letters to: "Letters to the Editor," *The Criterion*, P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, IN 46206-1717. Readers with access to e-mail may send letters to criterion@archindy.org.

ARCHBISHOP/ARZOBISPO DANIEL M. BUECHLEIN, O.S.B.



SEEKING THE FACE OF THE LORD

BUSCANDO LA CARA DEL SEÑOR

Immigrants make a positive contribution to our society

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception is the patroness of the United States. We celebrate her feast as a solemnity on the 8th of December.

Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patroness of America: North, Central and South America. The latter declaration was decreed by the late Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the Synod on America.

It was an appropriate declaration considering that Our Lady's appearance to St. Juan Diego in Tepeyac, Mexico, is a unique appearance in America.

In that same synod, Pope John Paul II spoke of our continent as being one America.

The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe has been entered in the liturgical calendar of the United States on Dec. 12. Both celebrations honor the same Mother of God and Mother of the Church, and add an appropriate recognition of Mary in the joyful and hope-filled season of Advent.

When we observe the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, we join our Catholic sisters and brothers of Mexico for whom this feast is enormously important.

The Mother of God appeared to a simple peasant with whom poor people everywhere can identify. I can't help but think of the thousands of Mexican immigrants who find hope and solace in their devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

I also believe that the Blessed Mother must look down with perplexity at the complexity and controversy surrounding the status of immigrants in our country.

It was disappointing that during the

recent presidential election this topic was largely overshadowed by other issues, especially the economic turmoil.

In fact, some of the myths surrounding the current controversy of immigration have an impact on the economy. Some prevalent myths would have it that this impact is negative.

Last May, Bishop William L. Higi of the Diocese of Lafayette did a great deal of homework concerning some of the myths that touch on the economy of our country and state. With his indulgence, I am borrowing from his enlightening study which was published on May 25 in his diocesan Catholic weekly, *The Catholic Moment*.

The first myth that the bishop addressed was this: *Immigrants take jobs and opportunities away from Americans*.

The United States Department of Labor projects that by 2010 the United States will have created 22 million new jobs. If a correct projection, 9 million more jobs will be created than the number of native-born workers entering the job market. As the baby boomers enter retirement age and leave the job market, after 2010 that gap will increase.

Bishop Higi rightly observed that immigration laws do not reflect the demographic and economic realities. He raised the question: Would native-born Americans take the low-paying jobs currently being filled by immigrants, documented and undocumented?

He noted that, in a birth control culture, we are not the only developed country that has come to rely on immigrants to fill its

labor needs. He also noted that, in the big picture, immigrants fill the gap between jobs filled and native-born Americans entering the work force.

There is a second myth: *Immigrants don't pay taxes*. In fact, both documented and non-documented immigrants pay taxes. A range of studies find that immigrants pay between \$90 billion and \$140 billion a year in federal, state and local taxes.

The Social Security Administration's "suspense file" (taxes that cannot be matched in worker's name and Social Security number) now totals approximately \$420 billion from the earnings of immigrants who cannot claim benefits.

Bishop Higi pointed out that the majority of undocumented immigrants pay income taxes using an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN), which the IRS has issued to more than 8 million people without regard to immigration status.

In addition to state income taxes, all immigrants pay the same sales tax as the rest of us. Whether they own homes or not, property taxes are passed on to them through rent.

The National Research Council estimates that the economic benefit of immigration runs as high as \$10 billion annually. People who want to claim that immigrants are a

burden for the American economy and the labor force are not doing their homework or else they are misrepresenting the facts.

Bishop Higi concluded his study: "The bottom line is that immigrants contribute more in taxes and Social Security payments than they consume in public resources. The fact is that immigrants contribute to the economy by taking jobs and performing services vital to our way of life. And they pay taxes. While there may be no easy way to fix our broken immigration system, efforts to do so should not be based on myths."

Immigrants make a positive contribution to our society just like our ancestors. The Mexican immigrants also witness an admirable devotion to the Mother of God and our Blessed Mother. †

Do you have an intention for Archbishop Buechlein's prayer list? You may mail it to him at:

Archbishop Buechlein's
Prayer List
Archdiocese of Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

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.

Los inmigrantes realizan un aporte positivo a nuestra sociedad

Nuestra Señora de la Inmaculada Concepción es la patrona de Estados Unidos. Celebramos su festividad como una solemnidad el 8 de diciembre.

Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe es la patrona de América: Norteamérica, Centroamérica y Suramérica. Esta última afirmación fue decretada por el difunto Papa Juan Pablo II en ocasión del Sínodo en América.

Resultó una declaración apropiada, tomando en cuenta que la aparición de Nuestra Señora al San Juan Diego en Tepeyac, México, es una aparición única en América.

En ese mismo sínodo el Papa Juan Pablo II habló sobre nuestro continente como una América unificada.

La festividad de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe ha sido incorporada al calendario litúrgico de Estados Unidos el 12 de diciembre. Ambas celebraciones honran a la misma Madre de Dios y Madre de la Iglesia y añaden un reconocimiento adecuado de María durante la temporada llena de júbilo y esperanza del Adviento.

Al observar la festividad de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe nos unimos a nuestros hermanos y hermanas católicos de México, para quienes esta celebración posee una importancia capital.

La Madre de Dios parecía ser una simple campesina con la cual los pobres de todas partes pueden sentirse identificados. No puedo menos que pensar en los miles de inmigrantes mexicanos que encuentran esperanza y consuelo en su devoción a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe.

Asimismo, considero que la Santa Madre debe mirar perpleja la complejidad y la controversia que existe en torno a la situación de los inmigrantes en nuestro país.

Resulta decepcionante que durante las recientes elecciones presidenciales este tema

fue relegado a segundo plano frente a otros problemas, especialmente la crisis económica.

De hecho, muchos de los mitos que rodean la controversia actual de la inmigración ejercen un impacto sobre la economía. Algunos de los mitos más predominantes exponen que dicho impacto es negativo.

El pasado mes de mayo el Obispo William L. Higi de la Diócesis de Lafayette llevó a cabo un gran estudio sobre algunos de los mitos que atañen a la economía de nuestro país y del estado. Con su venia, he tomado prestado pasajes de su estudio esclarecedor que fue publicado el 25 de mayo en su semanario diocesano, *The Catholic Moment*.

El primer mito que abordó el obispo fue el siguiente: *Los inmigrantes les quitan los trabajos y las oportunidades a los estadounidenses*.

El Departamento de Trabajo de Estados Unidos proyecta que para el 2010 Estados Unidos habrá creado 22 millones de trabajos nuevos. Si esta proyección es acertada, se crearán 9 millones de trabajos más que la cifra de trabajadores nacidos en el país que ingresarán al mercado laboral. A medida que los nacidos tras la Segunda Guerra Mundial, los *baby boomers*, salen del mercado laboral después de 2010, dicha brecha se hará aún mayor.

El Obispo Higi señaló acertadamente que las leyes migratorias no reflejan las realidades demográficas y económicas. Formuló esta pregunta: ¿Acaso los nacidos en Estados Unidos tomarían los trabajos mal remunerados que poseen actualmente los inmigrantes, tanto indocumentados como aquellos con papeles?

Expresó que en una cultura de control de la natalidad, no somos el único país desarrollado que depende de los inmigrantes para cubrir sus necesidades de mano de obra. Asimismo, señaló que tomando en cuenta todos los elementos, los inmigrantes cierran la brecha

entre los trabajos cubiertos y los estadounidenses nacidos en el país que ingresan a la fuerza laboral.

Existe un segundo mito: *Los inmigrantes no pagan impuestos*. De hecho, tanto los inmigrantes con papeles como los indocumentados, pagan impuestos. Una variedad de estudios demuestra que los inmigrantes pagan entre \$90 mil millones y \$140 millones anuales en impuestos federales, estatales y locales.

El "archivo de trámite" (impuestos que no compagan con el nombre y el número de Seguro Social del trabajador), de la Administración del Seguro Social asciende ahora a aproximadamente \$420 mil millones en ingresos de inmigrantes que no pueden reclamar beneficios.

El Obispo Higi señaló que la mayoría de los inmigrantes indocumentados pagan impuestos utilizando un Número de Identificación Personal del Contribuyente (ITIN, por sus siglas en inglés), el cual ha sido emitido por el IRS a más de 8 millones de personas sin importar su situación migratoria.

Además de los impuestos estatales sobre la renta, todos los inmigrantes pagan los mismos impuestos sobre las ventas que el resto de nosotros. Independientemente de si son propietarios de viviendas o no, los impuestos a la propiedad se reparten a estos inmigrantes mediante el alquiler.

El Consejo Nacional de Investigación calcula que los beneficios económicos derivados de la inmigración ascienden a \$10 mil millones anuales. Las personas que dicen

que los inmigrantes son una carga para la economía y la fuerza laboral estadounidense no han investigado lo suficiente o bien están tergiversando los hechos.

El Obispo Higi concluye así su estudio: "En resumen, los inmigrantes aportan más en impuestos y pagos de Seguro Social de lo que consumen en recursos públicos. El hecho es que los inmigrantes contribuyen a la economía tomando los trabajos y realizando servicios vitales para nuestro estilo de vida. Y pagan impuestos. Aunque quizás no exista una forma sencilla para remendar nuestro sistema migratorio averiado, los esfuerzos para hacerlo no deben basarse en mitos."

Los inmigrantes realizan un aporte positivo a nuestra sociedad, al igual que nuestros ancestros. Los inmigrantes mexicanos también son testimonio de una admirable devoción a la Madre de Dios y a nuestra Santa Madre. †

¿Tiene una intención que desee incluir en la lista de oración del Arzobispo Buechlein? Puede enviar su correspondencia a:

Lista de oración del Arzobispo
Buechlein
Arquidiócesis de Indianapolis
1400 N. Meridian St.
P.O. Box 1410
Indianapolis, IN 46202-1410

Traducido por: Daniela Guanipa,
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.

Events Calendar

December 5

Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. **Lumen Dei meeting**, Mass, 6:30 a.m., Mass, breakfast and program at Priori Hall, Anchorite Sister Mary Ann Schumann, presenter, \$15 per person. Information: 317-919-5316 or e-mail LumenDei@sbcglobal.net.

Knights of Columbus, Mater Dei Council #437, 1305 N. Delaware St., Indianapolis. **Christmas dinner and dance**, 7 p.m., \$20 per person. Information: 317-631-4373.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, 14598 Oakridge Road, Carmel, Ind. (Diocese of Lafayette). **Natural Family Planning (NFP) class**, 7-9:30 p.m. Information: 317-848-4486.

December 5-January 10

Saint Meinrad Archabbey and School of Theology, Archabbey Library, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Crèches display**, free. Information: 800-682-0988

or news@saintmeinrad.edu.

December 6

St. Lawrence Parish, Father Conen Hall, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **One-day retreat, "Touch My Heart,"** New Evangelization Sisters of Mother of Perpetual Help, presenters, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., lunch provided, free-will offering. Information: 317-845-9070.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis. **Day of prayer and reflection, "Advent: A Season of Waiting,"** Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard, presenter, bring brown bag lunch, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Information: 317-291-7014.

St. Francis Hospital, 8111 S. Emerson Ave., Indianapolis. **"Breakfast with Santa,"** 8-10 a.m., \$7 adults, \$3 children age 2 and older, story time with Santa, 2-4 p.m., \$3 for children. Reservations: 317-782-4422.

December 6-7

Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. **Right to Life Committee, bake**

sale after Masses, Sat. 5 p.m., Sun. 8 a.m. and 10 a.m. Information: 317-638-5551.

December 7

St. Rita Church, 1733 Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave., Indianapolis. **African Catholic Ministry, fifth anniversary celebration**, Mass, 3 p.m., reception following Mass. Reservations: 317-269-1276.

St. Andrew the Apostle Parish, 4050 E. 38th St., Indianapolis. **Contemporary Advent lessons and carols celebration, "Emmanuel, God With Us,"** 4 p.m. Information: 317-546-1571.

Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 1530 Union St., Indianapolis. **The Master's Chorale, Christmas concert**, 3:30 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 317-251-1692.

St. Pius X Parish, 7200 Sarto Drive, Indianapolis. **Support Group for Separated and Divorced Catholics, annual "Pitch In-Pitch Out" Christmas party**, 4:30 p.m. Information: 317-288-7780.

MKVS, Divine Mercy and Glorious Cross Center, Rexville, located on 925 South, .8 mile east of 421 South and 12 miles south of Versailles. Mass, 10 a.m., on **third Sunday holy hour and pitch-in**, groups of 10 pray the new Marian Way, 1 p.m., Father Elmer Burwinkel, celebrant. Information: 812-689-3551.

December 9

St. Paul Hermitage, 501 N. 17th Ave., Beech Grove. **Ave Maria Guild, Christmas party**, noon. Information: 317-885-5098.

Northside Knights of Columbus Hall, 2100 E. 71st St., Indianapolis. **Catholic Business Exchange and Catholic Professional Business Club, annual Christmas program**, Mass, 5:30 p.m., Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, celebrant. Information: LumenDei@sbcglobal.net.

December 10

St. John the Evangelist Church, 126 W. Georgia St., Indianapolis. **Organ recital**, Chris Schroeder, organist, 11:30 a.m.

Information: 317-635-2021.

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **Lecture, "Leadership in the Eyes of St. Benedict,"** Benedictine Sister Carol Falkner, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m., no charge. Information: 317-402-1636 or perigo5068@msn.com.

Vito's, 20 N. Pennsylvania St., Indianapolis. **Theology on Tap, Series on "The Theology of the Body,"** 7 p.m. Information: <http://indytheologyontap.com> or 317-413-6097.

December 11

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **Third annual dinner and Advent concert with Tony Avellana**, 6:30 p.m., dinner, 7:30 p.m. concert, \$35 per person. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

December 13

St. Roch Parish, Family Center, 3603 S. Meridian St., Indianapolis. **Single Seniors**, meeting,

1 p.m., age 50 and over. Information: 317-784-1102.

December 14

St. Maurice Parish, 1963 N. St. John St., Greensburg. **St. Anne, St. John and St. Maurice parishes, live Nativity**, 4:30-6:30 p.m. Information: 812-663-4754 or stmauricechrch@verizon.net.

Saint Meinrad Archabbey and School of Theology, Archabbey Church, 200 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Selections from Handel's "Messiah,"** southern Indiana chapter of American Guild of Organists presents New Albany High School a cappella choir, area singers, 2 p.m., no charge. Information: 800-682-0988 or news@saintmeinrad.edu.

December 16

St. Malachy Church, 9833 E. County Road 750 North, Brownsburg. **Church dedication**, Mass, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, celebrant, 6 p.m. Information: 317-852-3195. †

Retreats and Programs

December 6

St. Lawrence Parish, Father Conen Hall, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. **One-day retreat, "Touch Heart,"**

New Evangelization Sisters of Mother of Perpetual Help, presenters, 9 a.m.-4 p.m., free-will offering. Information: 317-845-9070.

December 8

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Men's Night,"** Franciscan Father

Carl Hawver, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 10

Benedict Inn Retreat and Conference Center, 1402 Southern Ave., Beech Grove. **"Leadership in the Eyes of St. Benedict,"** Benedictine Sister Carol Falkner, presenter, 7-8:30 p.m. Information: 317-788-7581.

December 13

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **Day of Reflection, "Advent Joy and Anticipation as a Way of Life,"** Franciscan Sister Barbara Leonhard, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., \$40 per person. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 14

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Evensong Scripture,"** 4-5 p.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

December 18

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Day of Silence,"** 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

December 19-21

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"A Monastic Christmas,"** Benedictine Brother Christian Raab, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

January 9-11

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **"The Book of Genesis: Stories of Creation and Faith,"** Benedictine Father

Eugene Hensell, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu.

January 17

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"Why Be Catholic?,"** Jeanne Hunt and Franciscan Sister Kathleen Mulso, presenters, 9-11:30 a.m. Information: 812-933-6437.

Monastery Immaculate Conception, Kordes Center, 841 E. 14th St., Ferdinand, Ind. (Evansville Diocese). **"Saturday Morning at the Dome—Grieving Our Losses,"** Benedictine Sister Maria Tasto, presenter, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m., \$35 includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 812-367-1411 or spirituality@thedome.org.

January 19

Our Lady of Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., Indianapolis. **"Day of Silence,"** 8 a.m.-4 p.m., \$25 per person includes continental breakfast and lunch. Information: 317-545-7681 or spasotti@archindy.org.

January 24

Oldenburg Franciscan Center, Oldenburg. **"A Church to Believe In,"** Father Norman Langenbrunner and Jeanne Hunt, presenters, 9-11:30 a.m., free-will offering. Information: 812-933-6437.

February 13-15

Saint Meinrad Archabbey, 100 Hill Drive, St. Meinrad. **Couples retreat, "Speaking Love: A Couples Retreat,"** Benedictine Father Noël Mueller, presenter. Information: 800-581-6905 or MZoeller@saintmeinrad.edu. †



Parish celebration

Father George Plaster, pastor of St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in Indianapolis, accepts the congratulations of members of the parish's staff after he was formally installed as their pastor during a Nov. 23 Mass at St. Mark the Evangelist Church. The Mass and a banquet also celebrated the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Indianapolis South Deanery faith community.

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Karim Sulayman, tenor
Nathaniel Watson, bass



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Parishes announce Masses, fiestas for feast days of St. Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe

Masses and celebrations for the feast days of St. Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe in December are scheduled at various parishes in the archdiocese.

Liturgies and other events reported to *The Criterion* include the following activities listed by deanery and date:

Batesville Deanery

• Dec. 12—St. Louis Church, 13 St. Louis Place, Batesville. *Misa (Español)*, 6 p.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Joseph Church, 125 E. Broadway St., Shelbyville. *Misa (Español)*, 8 p.m.

Bloomington Deanery

• Dec. 11—St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington. Serenade, 11 p.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington. *Misa (Español)*, 12:01 a.m.; *fiesta*, 1 a.m.

Connersville Deanery

• Dec. 14—St. Andrew Church, 235 S. 5th St., Richmond. Bilingual Mass, 9:30 a.m.

Indianapolis East Deanery

• Dec. 11—St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. Procession from Monument Circle to the church, 9 p.m.; serenade, 11 p.m.; *Misa (Español)*, midnight.

• Dec. 12—St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey St., Indianapolis. Bilingual Mass, noon; bilingual Mass, 7 p.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Philip Neri Church, 550 N. Rural St., Indianapolis. Mass, 10 a.m.; *Misa (Español)*,

Catholics are invited to celebrate Simbang Gabi

Simbang Gabi Masses, a Filipino Advent tradition, are scheduled in four deaneries throughout the archdiocese during December.

The liturgies are sponsored by the archdiocesan Multicultural Ministry Commission and are open to the public.

The Masses will be celebrated at the following churches:

• Dec. 18—7 p.m. at St. Paul Catholic Center, 1413 E. 17th St., Bloomington.

• Dec. 19—7 p.m. at St. Mary Church, 720 N. "A" St., Richmond.

• Dec. 20—4 p.m. at St. Patrick Church, 1807 Poplar St., Terre Haute.

• Dec. 22—7 p.m. at St. Barnabas Church, 8300 Rahke Road, Indianapolis. †

7:30 p.m.

• Dec. 12—Holy Spirit Church, 7243 E. 10th St., Indianapolis. *Rosario*, 6:30 p.m.; *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m.

Indianapolis North Deanery

• Dec. 12—St. Lawrence Church, 6944 E. 46th St., Indianapolis. *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m.

Indianapolis South Deanery

• Dec. 11—St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. *Rosario*, 8:30 p.m.; *Danza Asteca*, 9:30 p.m.; *Misa (Español)*, 11 p.m.; *Las Mañanitas*, midnight.

• Dec. 12—St. Patrick Church, 950 Prospect St., Indianapolis. *Las Mañanitas*, 6 a.m.; *Narración*, 6:30 a.m.; *procesión/Danza*, noon; *Mariachi*, 6 p.m.; *Misa*

(*Español*), *Danza/Obra*, 7 p.m.; *Mariachi*, 9:30 p.m.

• Dec. 12—Our Lady of the Greenwood Church, 335 S. Meridian St., Greenwood.

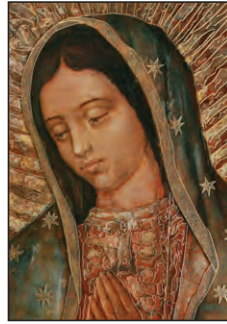
Misa (Español), 4 p.m.; procession and 13th annual bilingual, solemn Mass, 6:30 p.m., dinner after Mass.

Indianapolis West Deanery

• Dec. 11—St. Anthony Church, 379 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis. *Misa (Español)*, 6 p.m.; *rosario*, 7:30 p.m.; *Danza de Niños*, 7:30 p.m.; *mariachi*, 9 p.m.; *Danza de Adultos*, 10 p.m.; *vigilia*, 11:30 p.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Anthony Church, 379 N. Warman Ave., Indianapolis. *Las Mañanitas*, 7:15 a.m.;

bilingual Mass, 8:15 a.m.; *Misa (Español)*, 6 p.m.;



Our Lady of Guadalupe

procesión, 7 p.m.; *mariachi*, 8:30 p.m.; *representación*, 9:30 p.m.; *convivio*, 10:30 p.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Gabriel the Archangel Church, 6000 W. 34th St., Indianapolis.

Las Mañanitas, 4:30 a.m.; *rosario*, 5:30 a.m.; *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m.; *fiesta* after Mass.

• Dec. 12—St. Monica Church, 6131 N. Michigan Road, Indianapolis. Music, 6 p.m.; *rosario*, 6:30 p.m.; *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m.; apparitions, representations, 8 p.m.; dinner, 8:30 p.m.

New Albany Deanery

• Dec. 11—St. Mary

Church, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany. *Las Mañanitas*, 11 p.m.

• Dec. 11—St. Michael Church, 101 St. Michael Drive, Charlestown. *Rosario*, 8 p.m.; serenade, 10:30 p.m.; *Las Mañanitas*, ends after 12:30 a.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Mary Church, 415 E. Eighth St., New Albany. *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m., *fiesta*, 8:15 p.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Michael Church, 101 St. Michael Drive, Charlestown. Bilingual Mass, 7 p.m.; *fiesta* after Mass.

• Dec. 12—St. Joseph Church, 312 E. High St., Corydon. *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m.

Seymour Deanery

• Dec. 12—St. Bartholomew Church, 1306 27th St., Columbus.

Misa (Español), midnight.

• Dec. 12—Holy Trinity Church, 100 Keely St., Edinburgh. *Las Mañanitas*, 4 a.m.; *Misa (Español)*, 6:30 p.m.

• Dec. 12—St. Ambrose Church, 325 S. Chestnut St., Seymour. *Las Mañanitas*, 5:30 a.m.; Mass with school children, 2 p.m.; *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m.; *fiesta* after Mass.

• Dec. 12—Prince of Peace Church, 413 E. Second St., Madison. Bilingual Mass, 8:15 a.m. at Father Michael Shawe Memorial Jr./Sr. High School, 201 W. State St., Madison; *Misa (Español)*, 7 p.m. at St. Patrick Chapel, West State Street, Madison.

Terre Haute Deanery

• Dec. 12—St. Margaret Mary Church, 2405 S. Seventh St., Terre Haute. *Misa (Español)*, 7:30 p.m. †

"My heart surgery at St. Francis was the difference between life and death."

At 33 years old, Chris knew he would eventually need surgery to replace a calcified heart valve. However, he had no idea how urgent it was until his wife encouraged him to attend an *Ask the Doc* program and to have a cardiac screening, sponsored by the St. Francis Heart Center. "Your symptoms begin so gradually, you think what you are feeling is normal," he said. With only a small incision, Chris was able to make a quick recovery. Thanks to the work of the heart team at St. Francis, Chris can rest assured he will be there to watch his three small children grow up. "I told them Daddy's heart had a bad boom-boom before, and has a good boom-boom now."

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Chris, heart valve replacement patient

Chris participated in the first-of-its-kind innovative research study, which may allow more patients to avoid long-term use of blood thinners.

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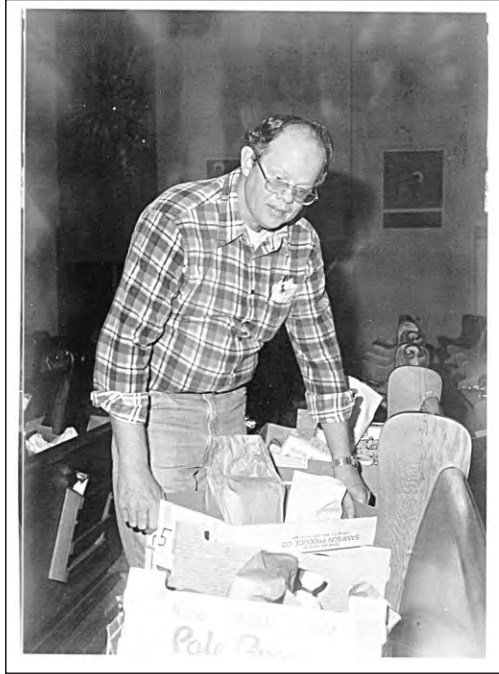
OUTREACH

continued from page 1

food—plus cookies and candy canes—to needy families at the parish church. All in the hope of making their Christmas more joyous.

That Christmas scene promises to be similar to the one at the parish three days before Thanksgiving this year. On Nov. 24, several hundred people lined up outside the parish hall on a gray, damp, chilly day to take home two grocery bags filled with two turkey rolls, apples, potatoes, green beans, corn, pies and bread. There was enough food to feed 585 families.

Some older people in line relied on walkers and canes while young mothers used blankets to cover the babies they held in their arms and the small children who rested in strollers.



Submitted photo
In this 1980 photo, the late Francis Hammans prepares boxes of food for the needy at Christmas. His family has kept alive his legacy of helping the poor—a commitment he made to God when he recovered from tuberculosis.

To prepare for the distribution of food, about 500 volunteers worked together on Nov. 23 to sort the food donations and put them in grocery bags.

Thirty-six members of the Hammans family were among the volunteers from parishes and Catholic schools across Indianapolis who helped that Sunday.

“For them, it’s very much a family tradition,” says Father Larry Voelker, the pastor of Holy Cross Parish. “It gives them a sense of pride to be involved in an effort that was started by their father and grandfather many years ago.”

Valerie Hammans has learned the importance of that family connection. She refers to the Thanksgiving-Christmas effort at Holy Cross as “one of the most faith-inspiring experiences” she has had.

“It’s the little things that God does that make some of the biggest impacts,” says Valerie, a 23-year-old granddaughter of Francis Hammans.

‘I’m always thinking of my dad’

One of her parents’ eight children, Tobin is moved by the difference that the special food baskets make to people.

“They’re just all in need,” says Tobin, who is 52. “When they come, you see the tired looks on their faces. Then you see the excitement. Some people cry. Others say, ‘God bless you. God bless you.’ A lady said to me one time, ‘Oh my gosh, there is fresh milk in my bag!’”

“We take so much for granted. I’m blessed with my family, my 30-year marriage, my children, my grandchildren, my job. When the bags are being handed out in church, I feel blessed to be there. The people look around. You can tell people are so relieved to have something to provide for their family. They know in that moment their life is being touched. They’re touching us, too.”

That sentiment is echoed by Mike Frazee, a 68-year-old, lifelong member of Holy Cross Parish. Frazee coordinates the special food basket committee on which Tobin also serves.

“Some of these people live in the streets. Some have four or five kids and no father,” Frazee says. “There’s a lot of satisfaction in giving to the people. We also know how lucky we are to be able to help them.”

Frazee is also grateful for having been a friend of Francis Hammans.

“I ran with Francis,” he says. “His kids and my kids ran together, too. Francis was a super guy. You could put him on a pedestal. He enjoyed helping people so much.”

While Hammans died 10 years ago, his legacy lives on in the work of his family, friends and strangers. The people who knew him best insist that he wouldn’t want any special recognition for starting this effort at Holy Cross. For him, the parish was an extension of his family, the spiritual setting

Photo by John Staughnessy



Mike Frazee fills a pew with bags of food at Holy Cross Church in Indianapolis. The 68-year-old, lifelong member of Holy Cross Parish is the coordinator of the parish’s special food basket committee that helps to feed the needy at Thanksgiving and Christmas each year.

that has been home to his family since 1946. For him, the people who rely on the Holy Cross baskets at Thanksgiving and Christmas were part of his understanding of family, too.

It’s that attitude from her father that leads Tobin to make sure that Frazee and Mark Scott, another longtime coordinator of the effort, get credit for all the hard work they’ve done through the years.

Still, like her siblings, her thoughts always turn to her parents when she’s in the church preparing the baskets and giving them to people.

She mentions how her mother still provides financial support for the food basket effort.

She recalls her father’s promise to God to serve others. “I think my dad would be extremely proud and honored that we’re fulfilling the rest of his bargain to serve others,” she says.

“I’m always thinking of my dad when I’m doing this. It always gives me a sense that he’s right there, that he’s at my shoulder.” †

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FOCA's effects seen as dire, but chance of it passing still uncertain

WASHINGTON (CNS)—About the only thing everyone with a stake in it is likely to agree on about the Freedom of Choice Act is that the legislation has languished in Congress for 20 years, only once rising—just barely—above the fate of hundreds of bills that are introduced each session and never heard from again.

What is harder to nail down is whether the bill, known as FOCA, is going anywhere under the 111th Congress that begins in January.

Although there was no effort in the 110th Congress to move the bill along, pro-life organizations have since the summer been sounding the alarm about what would happen to current restrictions on abortion if a Democrat was elected president.

They also voice concerns for possible administrative actions under Democratic President-elect Barack Obama, such as reversing the ban on federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research; and repealing the Hyde amendment, which bars federal funding of abortions, and the Mexico City policy, which prohibits foreign aid money from going to family planning programs that promote and offer abortion.

But stopping FOCA has become the rallying cry for the American Life League, the National Right to Life Committee and Priests for Life, among other pro-life groups. It was the central focus of a statement about the government transition issued on Nov. 12 on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops by its president, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, during the bishops' general fall meeting.

A legal analysis of the most recent version of FOCA by the general counsel's staff of the USSCB warned that it would wipe out many existing state laws and impede states' ability to regulate abortion.

The analysis cited as examples laws that could be overturned if FOCA became law, such as parental notification requirements; abortion clinic regulations; bars to government funding of abortion; prohibitions on procedures such as partial-birth abortion; and laws protecting the right of medical personnel and institutions to decline to participate in abortions.

In statements by pro-life leaders, much of the concern about FOCA refers to President-elect Barack Obama's July 2007 answer to a question during an address to a Planned Parenthood group that signing the bill would be "the first thing I'd do as president."

But that presupposes FOCA gets out of Congress.

Spokesmen for House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California, Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada, Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, and the

bill's chief sponsor, Sen. Barbara Boxer of California, all declined to discuss the prospects of any specific bill in a legislative session that doesn't start until January.

All pending bills expire at the end of each two-year congressional session so FOCA would have to be reintroduced.

Erica Chabot, press secretary to the Senate Judiciary Committee, said she can't recall Leahy "ever mentioning this piece of

legislation." That doesn't necessarily mean it couldn't suddenly move up on the committee's priority list, she said.

However, "if there were overwhelming support for a bill, chances are I would have heard something about it," Chabot told Catholic News Service.

Staffers for those Democratic leaders and staffers for other members of Congress—Democrats and Republicans—all emphasized that the priorities of the 111th Congress will be the economy and the Iraq War. Speaking on background, several said passing FOCA is not a priority for members of Congress.

Kristin Day, executive director of Democrats for Life, called FOCA a radical bill, but while it is worthwhile to highlight its problems, "I don't think it's likely to pass anytime soon."

Day said it is more likely that administrative orders will reverse the Mexico City policy or expand federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research. She wonders why there isn't more effort being put into highlighting opposition to such changes.

At a Democrats for Life event during the Democratic National Convention, Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa., called FOCA "dead on arrival," Day said. She said pro-life Democrats, including Casey and Reps. Lincoln Davis of Tennessee and Heath Shuler of North Carolina, who backed Obama during the campaign, expect their voices to matter when it comes to the legislative priorities of the White House.

Douglas Johnson, legislative director for the National Right to Life Committee, told CNS that FOCA's inertia so far doesn't diminish the danger of it progressing now.

FOCA moved forward only in 1993 when Democrats controlled the House, Senate and the White House for the first time in 12 years. Introduced in the first days of the 103rd Congress, the House and Senate Judiciary committees quickly moved it on for floor scheduling within weeks.

But it never came up for debate or a vote in the House or Senate.

Johnson is skeptical that pro-life congressional Democrats are numerous enough or powerful enough to stop a serious push to move FOCA forward if the party's leaders want it to advance. He is especially skeptical of whether the Senate majority leader would prove any obstacle to FOCA, despite Reid's pro-life

withdrawal from Iraq no later than the end of 2011. Under the pact, the United States would remove combat forces from Iraqi cities and villages by the end of June 2009.

"The vote represents a step forward, but anything can happen because the situation is still precarious. There is nothing stable or definitive. The country is going through a phase of fragile equilibrium that could collapse at any moment," Archbishop Sako said.

There remains the real threat of "a civil war if the nation is left to itself," he said.

The archbishop said the policies enacted by President-elect Barack Obama will be crucial for Iraq and the Middle East region.

"It is not possible to predict what initiatives the new American president will take, but his decisions will have a fundamental effect on future developments in the entire region," he said. †



WASHINGTON LETTER



Newly elected members of the U.S. House of Representatives pose for a group photo on the steps of the Capitol in Washington on Nov. 17. Opponents of the Freedom of Choice Act who believe the measure could come before Congress under the new administration say it has frightening implications, but whether the 111th Congress will pass it remains unclear.

voting record.

"Reid would be no impediment at all," he said. "His history has been that he may vote against something in the end after doing everything he can to have the pro-abortion side win," for instance by putting a bill on the floor for a vote.

Johnson acknowledged that it is unclear that either house of Congress has the votes to pass FOCA. He said there are more supporters of legal abortion in Congress than there were in 1993, though that doesn't necessarily translate to votes for the bill.

"Anybody who's even halfway pro-life isn't going to support FOCA," said Johnson.

NARAL Pro-Choice America, which supports FOCA and opposes any restrictions on abortion, counts both the House and Senate next term as having pro-life majorities. It projects 204 House members who generally oppose NARAL's agenda, and 185 who support it. It says another 46 members have a "mixed" record. NARAL counts 42 opponents of its issues in the Senate and 40 supporters, with 18 of "mixed" records.

Johnson credits a nationwide postcard campaign opposing the bill in 1993 with helping keep it from reaching a vote. But the makeup of Congress has changed significantly since then, he noted.

"Many of the current members of Congress weren't members in 1993," he said. "Lots of lawmakers have never paid any attention to FOCA." He said that raises the risk of "the other side" defining FOCA as more benign than how abortion opponents interpret it. FOCA opponents plan a new postcard campaign beginning in January.

Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity who is president and CEO of the Catholic Health Association, has concerns about people outside Catholic health care

"saying Catholic health care institutions are going to close" should FOCA become law, she told CNS.

She said CHA has always opposed FOCA and will continue to do so. But "even if this bad legislation were to pass, we would not be forced to participate [in providing abortions] and we will fight for that," she said.

Catholic health care institutions will not dismantle their systems or compromise their principles, she said. "We have many examples in this country of how to respond to unjust laws and we have learned from them. We will protect Catholic health care in this country without compromising our position on abortion."

First, however, Sister Carol said, "we must focus on protecting mothers and their unborn children."

"The first thing we are called to do is redouble our efforts to be sure pregnant women do not see abortion as their only option," she said in a statement released on Nov. 24. Easily accessible and high quality obstetrical care, assistance with food stamps, housing, education and child care can help women feel they have options other than abortion, she said.

She said the CHA has been in touch with Obama's transition team, as they were with Sen. John McCain's aides, when they were planning a possible transition.

"We've found [Obama's staff] more than willing to discuss our perspective," she said. "They recognize we play a fairly significant role in health care and are a large part of the social safety net." †



Sr. Carol Keehan

Iraqi archbishop: U.S. pact is step forward, but instability remains

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Iraqi parliament's approval of a timetable for U.S. troop withdrawal represents "a step forward," but the country still faces deep divisions and serious risks, an Iraqi archbishop said.

"Iraq is still profoundly divided within itself," Chaldean Archbishop Louis Sako of Kirkuk told the Rome-based agency AsiaNews on Nov. 28.

"One cannot speak of national unity, and even the government recognizes this. Everyone is trying to gain greater influence in his own territory, and even the capital, Baghdad, which should represent the symbol of unity, is in reality subdivided into sectors controlled by very specific factions," Archbishop Sako said.

He made the comments the day after Iraq's parliament voted to approve a security pact that requires U.S. forces to

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Advent penance services are scheduled at archdiocesan parishes

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to *The Criterion*.

Batesville Deanery

Dec. 6, 6:30 p.m. at Holy Family, Oldenburg
Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist, Enochsburg
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Rock, Franklin County
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Osgood
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Martin, Yorkville
Dec. 14, 1 p.m. at St. Maurice, Napoleon
Dec. 14, 3 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Millhousen
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Louis, Batesville
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg
Dec. 17, 6 p.m. at St. Nicholas, Ripley County
Dec. 17, 6:30 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Dover
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Shelby County
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Greensburg
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Morris

Bloomington Deanery

Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Agnes, Nashville
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Martin of Tours, Martinsville
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul, Bedford
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. John the Apostle, Bloomington
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Jude, Spencer

Connersville Deanery

Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Anne, New Castle
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for St. Michael, Brookville, and Holy Guardian Angels, Cedar Grove
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Cambridge City
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, Richmond

Indianapolis East Deanery

Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Simon the Apostle
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Bernadette and St. Thérèse of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower) at

St. Thérèse of the Infant Jesus (Little Flower)
Dec. 16, 1:30 p.m. at St. Philip Neri
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. for SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, St. Mary and Holy Cross at Holy Cross
Dec. 17, 6 p.m. at St. Rita

Indianapolis North Deanery

Dec. 14, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Matthew
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Matthew
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. deanery service at St. Matthew

Indianapolis South Deanery

Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove
Dec. 13, 9:30 a.m. at St. Barnabas
Dec. 15, 6:30 p.m. at Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at St. Jude
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Mark the Evangelist
Dec. 22, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood

Indianapolis West Deanery

Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Monica
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville

New Albany Deanery

Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
Dec. 11, 6:30 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier, Henryville
Dec. 13, 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Lanesville
Dec. 15, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Corydon
Dec. 21, 4 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany

Seymour Deanery

Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, North Vernon
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. for Our Lady of Providence, Brownstown, and St. Ambrose, Seymour, at St. Ambrose, Seymour
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus
Dec. 14, 2 p.m. for St. Rose of Lima, Franklin, and Holy Trinity, Edinburgh, at Holy Trinity, Edinburgh
Dec. 22, 7 p.m. for St. Anne, Jennings County, and St. Joseph, Jennings County, at St. Joseph, Jennings County

Tell City Deanery

Dec. 14, 2 p.m. deanery service at St. Paul, Tell City
Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m. deanery service at St. Meinrad, St. Meinrad

Terre Haute Deanery

Dec. 11, 1:30 p.m. at St. Ann, Terre Haute
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph University, Terre Haute
Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at Annunciation, Brazil
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at St. Paul, Greencastle †

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Advent resources are available on archdiocesan Web site

During the season of Advent, the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will have a special Web page at www.archindy.org/advent.

The page contains various Advent resources, including links to the daily readings, reflections from Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, penance service schedules, images of past *Criterion* Christmas supplement covers and links of interest to other Advent Web sites. †

Jesus continues to do miracles through the sacraments

By Fr. Gerald O'Collins, S.J.

Miraculous activity was an essential part of Jesus' ministry. Any account of what he did for people would be dramatically distorted if we ignore his miracles.

Dictionaries define "miracles" as events caused by special divine actions that do not follow the normal laws of nature and carry a particular religious message. Such definitions sound dry as dust until we link them to Jesus himself.

Talk of miracles comes alive when we recall stories preserved in the Gospels.

St. Luke summed up much of what Jesus did by saying that "he went about doing good and healing all those oppressed by the devil" (Acts 10:38).

Luke called Jesus "the author of life" (Acts 3:15).

When some disciples of John the Baptist visited Jesus, he said to them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me" (Mt 11:4-6).

This saying from Jesus does not reach its climax with the startling reference to the raising of the dead. It moves at once to the very center of Jesus' activity—the

Apostles healed people for Jesus

By Carole Norris Greene

How did the miracles that Jesus performed differ from those of his followers?

Paulist Father Lawrence Boadt, a Scripture scholar, noted that, "One major difference is that Jesus performed miracles on the authority that he possessed in himself from his Father. The Apostles cured in the name of Jesus on his authority, not their own."

In Acts 3:6, he said, "Peter concretely cites the name of Jesus as the source of the cure. Otherwise, the texts that promise the disciples power almost always say they will be the same Jesus does" (Lk 9:6, 10:17-20).

"In some cases," Father Boadt said, "they used sacramental means, such as oil, that Jesus did not need to use when he healed people" (Mk 6:13).

(Carole Norris Greene is associate editor of Faith Alive!) †

Good News that he preached—and the ultimate challenge: Will I reject Jesus or will I open my arms to him?

Through his miracles, Jesus showed loving compassion to all kinds of people. His heart went out to them.

A leper asked for a cure, but Jesus would not heal him without first reaching out and touching him—presumably on his ravaged face (Mk 1:40-42).

The leper had boldly ignored the law about maintaining his distance from others. He had sought Jesus out, and falling on his knees had confidently asked for a cure with the statement, "If you wish, you can make me clean" (Mk 1:40).

"I do will it. Be made clean," Jesus replied (Mk 1:41).

Shunned and excluded from society, the leper was now restored to normal human living.

Luke tells of a widow of Nain who had lost her only son. She never asked Jesus to do anything for her. She may not have even known his name, but his heart went out to her and he brought her dead son back to life (Lk 7:11-17).

When we analyze the miraculous activity of Jesus, we find him doing good deeds for all—to those who asked for his help and also to those who did not.

Jesus did good deeds for those who responded with great gratitude, like the Samaritan leper he cured, and also to those who never bothered to thank him, like the nine companions of that leper (Lk 17:11-19).

By failing to return to offer thanks, the other nine lepers received only physical healing. They missed the greatest chance in their lives—the gift of faith in Jesus that brought the Samaritan leper salvation in the full sense.

That Samaritan shows us someone responding with gratitude and reverent homage to the saving activity of God operating in and through Jesus.

We also find Jesus working miracles when and where it was dangerous for him to do so.

When Jesus healed a man who had been disabled for 38 years, ominous threats were unleashed. He had cured the lame man on the Sabbath day. Some religious authorities started persecuting Jesus because in their eyes this healing had broken the regulations for the Sabbath (Jn 5:1-10).

For Jesus, the welfare of human beings always took precedence.

On a Sabbath day in a synagogue, Jesus called forward a woman who had been "bent over" and "completely incapable of standing erect" for 18 years (Lk 13:11).

In healing her, Jesus first said, "Woman, you are set free of your infirmity," and then



An unknown artist's depiction of Jesus healing a blind man was photographed in Belgium. Jesus' miracles are always signs of God's healing love. Jesus continues to do miracles today through the healing power that Catholics receive through the sacraments.

laid his hands on her. It is only after his word of command and sacramental gesture that she stood up straight and was instantly cured (Lk 13:12-13).

She responded by praising God at once for being released from 18 long years of infirmity (Lk 13:13).

In his miraculous activity, Jesus aimed at the total well-being of people. He cured them in mind and body.

Jesus also shunned mere exhibitionism. When pressed to do so, he refused to legitimate his claims by some fancy "sign from heaven" (Mk 8:11-12).

Jesus and the Gospel writers never thought of his miracles as overwhelming arguments that would force people to believe that he was the Messiah, Deliverer and Son of God. It remained open to his audience to disqualify these deeds as

evidence by attributing them to demonic influence (Mk 3:22).

Those who refused to be touched to the depths of their existence by Jesus' words were not going to be persuaded by his miraculous deeds.

Over and over again, Jesus associated his miraculous deeds with his call to faith. He wanted to forgive sinners, save them from all the forces of evil and share with them the utterly satisfying blessings of their loving God.

Jesus' miracles, like his preaching, invited people to open their hearts to a love that will never, ever end.

(Jesuit Father Gerald O'Collins has published 50 books. His latest book is *Jesus: A Portrait*, published by Orbis Books in 2008.) †

Discussion Point

Miracles are a measure of our faith

This Week's Question

When Jesus performed a miracle, what was he saying to those who witnessed it?

"The words he spoke after the miracle were the message, telling people that their faith had healed or saved them. Miracles are a measure of our faith." (Christopher Keough, S. Burlington, Vt.)

"I think his message was his love, compassion and concern for people. Whatever he was doing, it showed that love and compassion [prompted] people to follow his example." (Marilyn Collins, Mesa, Ariz.)

"I believe Jesus was saying to those gathered, 'Here is a glimpse of who I am, the son of God.' Understanding their human nature, Jesus was also

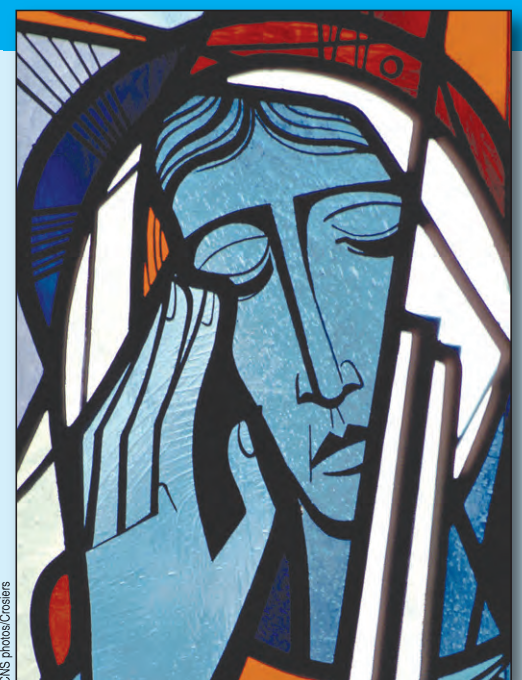
giving them something tangible, something they could see and touch and physically experience to bolster their faith." (Mollie Shirek, Lankin, N.D.)

"He was telling people to be observant. He was reminding us that he's out there and will help us, and that there are people with needs outside of ourselves." (Miletta Kittson, Billings, Mont.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What do you do to ensure that you do not live beyond your means? How do you stick to a budget?

To respond for possible publication, send an e-mail to cgreene@catholicnews.com or write to *Faith Alive!* at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100. †



From the Editor Emeritus/John F. Fink

Possible U.S. saints: Father Emil Kapaun

(Twenty-eighth in a series of columns)

Father Emil Kapaun was an Army chaplain who died on May 23, 1951, at age 35 in a Chinese POW camp during the Korean War. He is buried somewhere along the Yalu River in North Korea.

As he was being carried away to die, while suffering intense pain, he told his fellow prisoners, "If I don't come back, tell my bishop that I died a happy death."

He was born in 1916 in Pilsen, Kan. He was ordained a priest in 1940 and, during World War II, served as an Army chaplain in China and Burma. In 1949, he was sent to Japan and in 1950 to Korea.

He was captured by the Chinese on Nov. 2, 1950, as he was giving the last rites to a dying soldier. During the next six months and 21 days, he did everything he could to minister to his fellow prisoners'



spiritual and physical needs.

The prisoners suffered from wretched and unsanitary conditions with a meager and unhealthy diet. Father Kapaun soon learned that they had to steal food or slowly starve to death. He risked his life by sneaking into fields around the prison to look for hidden potatoes and sacks of corn. While other prisoners kept guards occupied, he would sneak into a supply shed, grab a sack of cracked corn and scurry off into the bushes.

But the men continued to die. The POWs had to bury their own dead, and Father Kapaun always volunteered to do it, praying for their souls as he dug their graves. He buried them naked, taking their clothing to help warm the living. He washed the foul undergarments of the dead, and distributed them to men who could barely move because of dysentery.

Enlisted men POWs were held in their own huts, and Father Kapaun learned how to escape to visit them. He would lead a quick prayer service before giving a short sermon, urging the men not to lose hope and not to fall for the doctrines that the Chinese were

trying to indoctrinate them with. A prisoner who survived, First Lt. Mike Dowe, said that Father Kapaun's presence turned a stinking, louse-ridden hut—for a little while—into a cathedral.

The prisoners were forced to sit for hours to listen to lectures by "Comrade Sun," a fanatic who hated Americans.

According to Lt. Dowe, "Father was not openly arrogant, nor did he use subterfuge. Without losing his temper or raising his voice, he'd answer the lecturer point by point, with a calm logic that set Comrade Sun screaming and leaping on the platform like an angry ape."

Father Kapaun was never punished, although he was threatened, and it soon became evident, Lt. Dowe said, that "the Chinese were afraid of him. They recognized in him a strength they could not break, a spirit they could not quell."

Eventually, Father Kapaun battled dysentery, pneumonia and a blood clot in one of his legs. The Chinese carried him to what served as a hospital, where he died. †

It's All Good/Patti Lamb

This Christmas, find yourself wanting what you've got

This week, I received three thick, glossy catalogs in the mail. Page after page featured colorful "picture perfect" holidays.



The front of one catalog showed mom and dad sitting in their coordinating pajamas near the tree with son and daughter in the foreground cooperatively building an impressive gingerbread house.

Despite the fact that their gingerbread cottage was complete with gumdrops, sprinkles and flawlessly piped icing, not a crumb was visible on the table.

The next catalog featured incredible electronics. On the inside front cover, a family was all smiles as they gathered around the wide-screen TV, enjoying a larger-than-life game in high definition.

The third catalog showcased the most gorgeous cashmere sweater I think I have ever seen. Retail price: unmentionable.

Maybe it was especially flattering because there was no baby spit-up or grape jelly on it. That and the fact that the model wearing it was gazing up at the glistening, lightly falling snow as she gathered firewood in a neatly manicured forest. Her flawless skin

glowed.

This is the season when we are flooded with catalogs and commercials about how to address everyone on our Christmas lists.

On the way out to do some shopping of my own, I flipped on the radio and came upon an upbeat song I hadn't heard in a while. I remembered why I liked that song. There is a particular line in it that's always stood out to me. The lyrics: "It's not having what you want; it's wanting what you've got."

When I dropped my son off at preschool this morning, it was below freezing. I was grateful to have my fleece jacket, scarf and hat, none of which matched. I didn't look like the woman in the catalog donning that high-end sweater. But I was wearing warm clothing, and I was comfortable.

And when my family gathers around the Christmas tree, we don't wear coordinating apparel and look like we stepped out of a magazine.

My daughter's hair is usually covering her eyes like "Cousin Itt" from "The Addams Family." My son inevitably has food on his face, and it is highly likely that we are already missing a piece from any given new toy.

But we are together. I wouldn't trade it for anything. No one can top daddy's pancakes shaped like mittens. And my son's rendition

of "Happy Birthday" to Jesus after breakfast warms my heart.

Please don't misunderstand me. A wide screen TV is a generous gift, and provides much enjoyment. But the real gift is the friends and family who gather around it, not the plasma screen.

It is not *things* that ultimately make us happy, but God's love, which is manifested in many ways.

He blesses us abundantly in ways no catalog can display: the unconditional love of family, true and lasting friendships, laughter, faith, good health, a safe place to call home, and a daily bounty of food, not to mention eternal salvation. These and countless others are genuine gifts—the kind you can't put a price on.

Sometimes those catalog pictures make me greedy. I need to realize how blessed I am instead of wanting more. It is a wonderful life. Right now, without more. If we think about it, we really have quite a lot.

So as the holidays approach, I hope you can embrace those song lyrics.

This Christmas, may you find yourself wanting *what you've got*.

(Patti Lamb, a member of St. Susanna Parish in Plainfield, is a regular columnist for The Criterion.) †

Faithful Lines/Shirley Vogler Meister

Advent musings: Looking back and looking forward

Earlier this year, I received a note from my daughter, Donna, and her husband,



Roby, in Cleveland. She wrote, "Now that I am a Mom ... I understand why you say that being a Mom is your greatest accomplishment."

She and her sisters—Diane, who lives in Plymouth, Ind., and Lisa, who

resides in Nashville, Tenn.—have expressed similar sentiments through the years. They know we love them without bounds, and we know their love is sincere. They have shown it in countless ways, especially when there have been family, medical or other crises from time to time.

More than that, we can communicate with them in their adulthood in satisfying and worthwhile ways, and they always keep in touch.

However, we also learned that they can be "sneaky," just as Paul and I were during their childhood years when we kept secrets from them, especially during end-of-the-year holidays. Parents know all the tricks

when it comes to keeping Christmas secrets from children!

This summer, however, our daughters proved they are also masterful with secrets. On July 12—one day after my birthday and two days after a grandson's birthday—Paul and I and some of our family members went to celebrate with a double-birthday dinner at the Athenaum's Rathskeller.

Upon arriving, we found more than 30 others gathered there and shouting, "Surprise! Happy 50th anniversary!"—or something equivalent.

Paul and I were stunned because our golden wedding anniversary wasn't until Aug. 27. Our daughters chose to surprise us early because of other family commitments later that month.

As it turned out, this was perfect. At the time of our actual anniversary, we needed to be elsewhere, too.

Hometown-related family and friends, including some of our original wedding attendants, plus some longtime local friends helped us celebrate early. Some guests came from faraway states.

Although I am a writer, I actually struggle for words to describe our emotions

so I will simply say that "our hearts soared."

What our daughters planned for us was an amazing success! As we ate and visited with everyone, photographs of our wedding and the times between then and now were displayed on a screen.

Even our wedding colors were used for the décor and cake—and our wedding album was there to view, too. (Lisa, who masterminded much of this event, took the album without our knowledge when she also made an unexpected visit on Father's Day.)

On Thanksgiving, we gave thanks for our blessings, including family members and friends. Now into the Advent season, we continue to thank God for our wonderful family and friends.

We are also grateful to have spent 50 years as members of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis. Our daughters attended the parish school and Bishop Chatard High School.

The future is bright!

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

Faith, Hope and Charity/

David Siler

Time to move back to the front porch

Have any of you had a recent conversation that did not include some element of



the current economic downturn? In my lifetime, I have never heard more pessimism or fear related to financial issues—much of which is certainly justified.

My thoughts quickly turn to the people already living on the margins of society.

The "margin" is widening, and if things continue on our current path, we will have a far greater number falling off the edge.

With the economy not just screeching to a halt but downright turning and running in the other direction, we will begin to see more and more individuals and families in desperate need of life's most basic necessities.

There have been numerous surveys conducted in the U.S. recently to find out what is happening to charitable giving. It will come as no surprise that most institutions that rely heavily on donations are already experiencing a significant decline.

And at the same time—for the same reason—the number of people seeking charitable assistance is skyrocketing. (A recent survey of Catholic Charities agencies revealed that 87 percent of programs are seeing an increase in demand.) This inverse relation will spell disaster for many of our neighbors.

I heard a theory today that I hope is true: When economic conditions become so bleak that people put off making big purchases like a house or new car, these significant savings (by delaying these purchases) allow people to keep more of their income and, therefore, makes them more able to make charitable contributions. However, for those who are laid off from their jobs, no income leaves nothing to give.

No one knows where this shifting reality will leave us but, as a believer that God works out all things for good, I am certain that much good will result from our increasing insecurity. Perhaps our lesson will be to put our security in the things that last.

One of my hopes at this time in our history is that we will begin to see a shift in our society—both here in the U.S. and throughout the world—from our staunch independence to a more clear understanding and appreciation for our interdependence, our connection as one human family.

Drive down just about any street in Indiana where the homes were built before 1950 and you will notice that many of the houses have large, open front porches. Drive through the newest neighborhoods and you will see very few front porches but, if you look around the back, you will see some elaborate decks.

Front porches call to mind a time when neighbors knew one another, where they gathered to share stories, a cup of coffee or a meal.

Today, families gather on the back deck—a wonderful thing to do—but few interact with their neighbors. We have moved from a front porch society to a back deck world.

These wild economic times will cause us all to re-evaluate our priorities, and may force us to rely more on one another. This might not be such a bad thing.

I will look for you on the front porch.

(David Siler is executive director of the Secretariat for Catholic Charities and Family Ministries. E-mail him at dsiler@archindy.org.) †

Second Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 7, 2008

- Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11
- 2 Peter 3:8-14
- Mark 1:1-8

The first reading for this Second Sunday of Advent is from the second section of Isaiah.



When this book was written, very bad times seemed about to end for God's people. Their long, dreary exile of four generations in Babylon was about to end. They were looking forward

to returning to their homeland.

The people's joy and relief is evident in this reading. Readers can sense their longing to return to their homeland. Also, and importantly, readers can realize that the people saw their rescue as a gift from God, given in God's faithfulness to the Covenant.

Divine mercy formed to provide this rescue. The people had neither created their escape, nor had they earned it. Actually, their sins had caused their troubles. God mercifully forgave them and eradicated the effect of their sins, namely the Exile.

Thus, the prophet urges the people to be thankful, insisting that upon returning to their homeland the people must go to Jerusalem, to the holy mountain where stood the temple, and proclaim aloud the goodness of God there.

To any who doubt, the prophet declares that this release from exile is proof of God's existence and God's love.

For its second reading this weekend, the Church presents a passage from the Second Epistle of Peter.

Its theme differs from that of the first reading. The first reading was wonderfully optimistic. This reading is grim in its predictions of dark days and gloom.

However, it does not forecast everlasting death. Bad things will happen. Difficult times will come, but God will protect the faithful. In this last reassurance, the reading parallels the message of the first reading.

The last reading is from the beginning of St. Mark's Gospel and relates the story

of the Lord's public ministry.

This reading quotes Isaiah's prophecy that God, as pledged, will send a representative to guide the people from death to life, from the deadly effects of their sins to the bright realms of God's forgiveness.

The Gospel then tells of John the Baptist, who went throughout Judea calling people to repentance.

John reinforced his role as a prophet by being thoroughly detached from the things of this world. His very appearance, and behavior, emphasized the fact that only the spiritual matters. Only God matters.

Mark's Gospel, however, is careful to say that John himself was not the messenger promised by God in the writings of Isaiah, but rather that John came before this messenger. The messenger, the Savior, of course, was the Lord Jesus.

Reflection

During Advent, through the liturgies and readings, the Church clearly, frankly and directly calls people to remember who they are as humans and to recognize the devastating results of sin in their lives.

This week, this message comes from Second Peter. It also echoes Second Isaiah and Mark. Sin, or total estrangement from God through personal sin, is indeed the root of all evil, producing death itself, not simply earthly death but eternal death. And, inevitably, it leads to misery in life on Earth.

However, these lessons, while unequivocal and admittedly dour, are not in the end terrifying or filled with doom. Instead, all three readings remind us that God's mercy is overwhelming and unending.

In God's mercy is hope. Through God's mercy, sins are forgiven and everlasting life is acquired.

The key to obtaining this mercy personally is to recognize personal sin and repent.

The Church's wondrous reassurance in these readings is that God never turns away a sincerely sorrowful sinner. We can always rely on God's love, but God does not drag us kicking and screaming into heaven. We must turn to God voluntarily and wholeheartedly.

Advent calls us to realize that we need God, especially in our sinfulness. We need God's mercy, but we personally must seek it by repenting. †

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 8
The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Genesis 3:9-15, 20
Psalm 98:1-4
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12
Luke 1:26-38

Tuesday, Dec. 9
Juan Diego, hermit
Isaiah 40:1-11
Psalm 96:1-3, 10-13
Matthew 18:12-14

Wednesday, Dec. 10
Isaiah 40:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, Dec. 11
Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 41:13-20
Psalm 145:1, 9-13b
Matthew 11:11-15

Friday, Dec. 12
Our Lady of Guadalupe
Zechariah 2:14-17
or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
(Response) Judith 13:18bc, 19
Luke 1:26-38
or Luke 1:39-47

Saturday, Dec. 13
Lucy, virgin and martyr
Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13

Sunday, Dec. 14
Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 61:1-2a, 10-11
(Response) Luke 1:46-50, 53-54
1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
John 1:6-8, 19-28

Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

Advent liturgies should reflect time of joyous waiting for Jesus

QI am writing about a recent trend in our parish that has made Advent almost indistinguishable from Lent.



Only penitential songs are sung, the "Alleluia" is only recited, not sung, and no decorations of any kind are allowed until Christmas Eve.

The priest's homilies are on sinfulness and repentance. Advent Masses are almost like Good Friday.

It is all very discouraging and confusing to our family.

Isn't the idea of Advent to be a time of preparation for Christmas with some anticipation and festivity about it? Or is this changed? (Illinois)

A Assuming that you reflect the circumstances accurately, the observance of Advent in your parish's liturgies is, to say the least, unusual.

Whoever is responsible for your parish's liturgical planning seems to be out of touch with, or perhaps has never learned, the Church's tradition and teaching about this beautiful season.

Certainly, there is a penitential aspect to these weeks, but their framework, spirit and focus differ significantly from that which characterizes the time of Lent.

At least since the time of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, nearly 1,000 years ago, the time of Advent has focused on the three comings of our Lord: his birth in the Incarnation, the final coming at the completion of his work of redemption and, between these two, his presence and saving power at work in the Church through the ages.

Advent, in other words, is primarily a time of joyous waiting, anticipating the commemoration of his birth, and celebrating his continued presence and saving grace among us.

All this happens under our awareness that, by living the mystery of Christ, we await with him his final victory over sin and death.

The Church repeatedly emphasizes that all Advent liturgies should reflect this watchful joy. In music, visual environment and the overall tone of the liturgy, it is quite distinct from the penitential time before Easter.

As the introduction to the *Roman Missal* says, these weeks before Christmas are a "season of devout and joyful expectation."

Throughout the centuries, even before Christianity, the acclamation "Alleluia" †

("praise to the Lord") has been by nature a sung prayer. Speaking it, rather than singing, is like reciting instead of singing "Happy birthday to you."

The Church's liturgical documents generally simply assume that the "Alleluia" is always sung. (See, for example, the 1972 decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship governing chants at Mass, #7.) The "Instruction on Sacred Music" of the U.S. bishops' Committee on the Liturgy says, "If not sung, the 'Alleluia' should be omitted" (#55).

QTwo years ago, I became friends with a man with whom I work. We can discuss anything and have developed a close relationship. We are beginning to talk of marriage.

Is there anything in the Bible that speaks of interracial relationships?

I am Caucasian and he is black, but with each other we don't see color. I'm interested in what God tells us, if anything, in Scripture. Thank you for whatever information you can offer me. (North Carolina)

A There is nothing in the Bible specifically about interracial marriage.

To begin with, you would want to examine carefully all those concerns faced by any other couple preparing for marriage.

In addition, of course, you need to ask yourselves very specifically how you would deal together with the social and perhaps economic implications for your biracial family if you marry.

Another major factor is how supportive and accepting both of your families will be for you and your children, and what the "climate" is for interracial families where you will live.

You will, I'm sure, be asked by your parish priest to participate in the usual marriage preparation programs for your diocese, which should be quite helpful.

Some books and other writings by couples in an interracial marriage are available in libraries and through the Internet. They might suggest some insights to think about.

I hope that everything works out for you. Good luck.

(A free brochure outlining basic Catholic prayers, beliefs and moral precepts is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. 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

The Rose Thieves

Nimble, they tugged at the stems
Imbedded in the bouquets
Like rubber gloves in the box
By the hospice bed,

Only more secure, tightly packed against
Chrysanthemums, lilies,
lupine, ivy and fern.

They collected the roses ... white, pink
and red ...

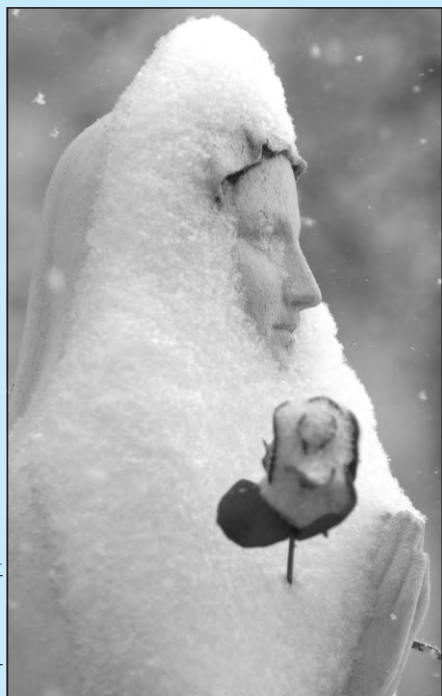
Out of the casket floral offering
And all the ones from vases on the
ground.

Gathered in their arms, the blossoms
Were presented to the grieving sister
To be dried and processed

Into holy beads, in honor
Of the Mother of the One
Who would comfort them all.

By Susie McAllister

(Susie McAllister is a member of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Indianapolis. She dedicated this poem to "all those who grieve and to those who stand beside them," especially during the holiday season. A rose adorns this snow-covered statue of Mary outside St. Theodore Church in Rochester, N.Y., in February 2007.)



CNS photo/Mike Crupi, Catholic Courier

Rest in peace

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

BEER, Patricia (Mason), 75, St. Monica, Indianapolis, Nov. 12. Wife of Jerry Beer. Mother of Therese McKinney, Terry and Tim Beer. Sister of Robert Mason. Grandmother of four.

BOWE, Aileen Marie, 82, St. Joseph, Sellersburg, Nov. 7. Sister of Martha, Carl and Herman Bowe.

BREHM, Thomas Thornton, 76, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, Nov. 16. Father of Debra, Jody, Daniel, John and Michael Brehm. Brother of Gretchen Beck and Karen LaFuse. Grandfather of eight. Great-grandfather of two.

BUECHLER, John C., 87, St. Michael, Bradford, Nov. 5. Husband of Rita (Daus) Buechler. Father of Kathleen Black, Marilyn Craig, Dolores Martin, Darlene Smith and Larry Buechler. Brother of Valerie Daus, Geneva Smith and Herman Buechler. Grandfather of nine. Great-grandfather of six.

COLLINS, Joseph Lee, 62, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Nov. 11. Husband of Linda Collins. Father of Melissa Vail. Brother of Bridgette, Julie, Mary, Shannon, Mark and Tom Collins. Grandfather of three.

DRIVER, Vernon, 76, St. Rita, Indianapolis, Nov. 14. Husband of Dr. Robienetta Driver. Father of Damond and Kim Morris, Pauline Robinson, Virginia Wyatt, Elizabeth, Bryan and Mark Driver. Brother of Kanzetta Bernard. Grandfather of 17. Great-grandfather of two.

FAGAN, Jacquelyn (Niece), 77, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, Nov. 17. Mother of Karen McLeish, John and Mark Fagan. Sister of Judy Smithart and Dale Niece. Grandmother of six.

GANZA, Elmer, 87, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 11. Husband of Donna Ganza. Father of Carol and Kenneth Ganza. Brother of Patricia Benedetto and Phillip Ganza. Grandfather of three.

GREEN, Vernon Joseph, 82, St. Mary, Mitchell, Oct. 27. Husband of Dymple Green. Father of Chris Green. Brother of Pauline Taylor. Grandfather of one.

GROSSMAN, Veronika Helena, 79, Christ the King, Indianapolis, Nov. 15. Sister of John Paberzs.

HERMESCH, Marie E., 78, Immaculate Conception, Millhousen, Nov. 24. Wife of Ralph Hermes. Mother of Teresa Buening, Patricia Gray, Michelle Holcomb, Denise Powner, Alan, Dale, Gary, Mark and Paul Hermes. Sister of Alvina Kress and Ralph Hodapp. Grandmother of 22. Great-grandmother of three.

KAISER, Ozetta J., 72, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Nov. 12. Mother of Shelly Kraft, Sandy Nance, Susan Waiz, Mark, Matt and Mike Kaiser. Sister of Evelyn Burgenheim. Grandmother of 15.

KECK, Theresa Marie, 58, St. Gabriel the Archangel, Indianapolis, Nov. 18. Mother of Jean Lowhorn and Angie McGuire. Daughter of Betty Reeves. Sister of Elizabeth Dininger, Mary Huber, Alice MacGruder, Patty Stephens, Bob, Charles, Mike, Steve and Tim Reeves. Grandmother of five.

LAKER, Rose M., 85, St. Mark the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 23. Mother of Susan Cline, Annette Conlon, Michele and Rick Laker. Sister of Theresa Bergman, Annie Glasgow and Joseph Zappia. Grandmother of eight. Great-grandmother of nine.

MASARIU, Elizabeth Lee, 85, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Nov. 2. Mother of Diane Masariu-Carter, Nancy McGovern, Beth Ann, Danny, Mark and Mike Masariu. Grandmother of seven. Great-grandmother of five.

OSKAY, Matthew, 30, Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Indianapolis, Nov. 14. Husband of Erin (Bergeron) Oskay. Son of Eugene and Linda Oskay. Brother of Jason and Jeff Oskay.

PITSTICK, Florence C., 94, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Nov. 17. Mother of Lois Harmeyer, Mary Ellen Huffman, Elaine Sargent, David and James Pitstick. Sister of Alma Maxted and Paul Grogan. Grandmother

of 16. Great-grandmother of several. Great-great-grandmother of several.

SMITH, Dennis E., 61, St. Mary, New Albany, Nov. 20. Father of Edward Smith. Brother of Teresa Clark and Steven Smith. Grandfather of one.

SMITH, Marguerite L., 70, St. Luke the Evangelist, Indianapolis, Nov. 13. Wife of Ronald Smith. Mother of Debbie Lacy and Ronald Smith.

VERNIER, M. Lorraine, 86, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Nov. 21. Mother of Vivi Mason, Vette Jennings, Vicki Rennie, Venetia Shultz and Vaughn Vernier. Grandmother of 17. Great-grandmother of 24.

WATTS, Betsy R., 79, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Nov. 2. Mother of Robin Devine, Mickie Hoy, Deborah Smith, John, Michael, Raymond, Robert and Timothy Watts II. Grandmother of 19. Great-grandmother of two.

WHITE, John Vernon, 42, Good Shepherd, Indianapolis, Nov. 18. Husband of Audrey (Wheeler) White. Father of Elizabeth, Erica, Josi, Austin and Evan White. Son of Billie White. Stepson of Vicki White. Brother of Fay Boone, Sherry Dannattelle and Kay Stawick. Stepbrother of Chad, Matt and Rod Little.

ZIMMER, Lucille (Nix), 93, St. Pius X, Indianapolis, Nov. 17. Mother of Lois Remmers and Mary Jo Zimmer. Sister of Betty Beuligmann, Carolyn Lowe and Tom Nix. Grandmother of two. Great-grandmother of four. †

Franciscan Sister Callista Rosenberger taught for 59 years

Franciscan Sister Callista M. Rosenberger died on Nov. 16 at St. Clare Hall, the health care facility of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis, in Oldenburg. She was 101.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Nov. 19 at the motherhouse chapel in Oldenburg. Burial followed at the sisters' cemetery.

The former Elsie Margaret

Rosenberger was born on May 29, 1907, in Cedar Grove.

She entered the Oldenburg Franciscan community on Dec. 7, 1925, and professed her final vows on July 2, 1931.

Sister Callista taught at Catholic grade schools in Indiana, Ohio, Missouri and Illinois for 59 years.

In the archdiocese, she taught at St. Nicholas School in Sunman, the former

St. Martin School in Yorkville and the former St. Vincent de Paul School in Shelby County.

In 1990, Sister Callista retired to the motherhouse.

Surviving are a sister, Franciscan Sister Mary Helen Rosenberger of Oldenburg, and nieces and nephews.

Memorial gifts may be sent to the Sisters of St. Francis, P.O. Box 100, Oldenburg, IN 47036. †



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SHARE IN THE CARE December 14, 2008 RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS



From left to right, Sister Mary Lucien Dippel, O.S.B., Sister Mary Carol Messmer, O.S.B. and Sister Marie Olinger, O.S.B.

All three Sisters of St. Benedict are charter members of Our Lady of Grace Monastery in Beech Grove. They taught in schools in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Diocese of Evansville before retiring.

About 58 percent of women and men religious are past 70; 7 percent are past age 90. More than 4, 900 need skilled nursing care. Even at advanced ages, many work in compensated or volunteer ministry that benefits others.

Religious institutes are financially autonomous and responsible for the support of their members. Income sources include compensated ministry, government benefits and investment return.

Most elderly religious receive, on average, a Social Security benefit of just \$4,402 per year. Community living provides some economies of scale, but health care and living costs in most religious communities far exceed income.

Ninety-five percent of donations to the National Religious Retirement Office aid elderly religious.



Sister Mary Lucien Dippel, O.S.B.

"When I celebrated my diamond jubilee and my picture was in The Criterion, a girl I had taught at St. Anthony School [then] in

Jeffersonville way back in 1948 saw it and wrote to me. I had her in my second-grade class. We moved [the parish church and school] out to Clarksville and our first school year was in 1949. We had only four classrooms and we were crowded. We had more than 220 [students] in four classrooms. One sister had 72 [students] in her room. One year I taught 60 students in second grade."

"The first sisters came up in 1956 and then our first summer up here was 1957. If you were missioned in the archdiocese that meant you came up here."



Sister Mary Carol Messmer, O.S.B.

"I taught mostly in southern Indiana, just two parishes in the archdiocese that I taught in. I last taught at [the former St. John School

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Vatican makes clear its opposition to U.N. homosexuality declaration

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican has made clear its opposition to the United Nations endorsing a universal declaration to decriminalize homosexuality.

Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the Vatican's apostolic nuncio to the United Nations, and Vatican spokesman Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi said unjust forms of discrimination against homosexuals must be avoided.

However, the Vatican does not approve of a formal declaration with political weight that might be used to put pressure on or discriminate against countries that do not recognize same-sex marriage, they said.

A draft declaration, drawn up by France and endorsed by the European Union, was to be presented to the U.N. General Assembly on Dec. 10. It condemns discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Archbishop Migliore told the French news agency I.Media on Dec. 1 that adding these "new categories [to be] protected from discrimination" would create in turn "new and inflexible [forms of] discrimination."

For example, he said, "states that do not recognize same-sex unions as 'marriage' will be pilloried and put under pressure" to do so.

France, which holds the rotating

presidency of the EU, plans to present the proposal on the 60th anniversary of the U.N.'s Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the hope that U.N. member states will make a nonbinding declaration to decriminalize homosexuality.

Almost 80 countries have laws prohibiting homosexual activity, and several nations include the death penalty as a form of punishment for such activity.

Father Lombardi said that "obviously nobody wants to defend the death penalty for homosexuals."

The Church supports fundamental human rights and opposes every form of "unjust discrimination" which includes "not just the death penalty, but all violent or discriminatory criminal laws against homosexuals," he said in a commentary on Vatican Radio on Dec. 1.

The Vatican spokesman made his remarks after Archbishop Migliore's comments were published. He said the archbishop clearly expressed the Church's and the Vatican's position.

Father Lombardi said the problem with the draft proposal is that it does not just ask for the decriminalization of homosexuality.

It also includes a declaration that might put pressure on or discriminate against

communities that uphold marriage as only being between a man and a woman, the Vatican spokesman said.

Under such a declaration, nations or communities that "do not put every sexual orientation on exactly the same level can be considered contrary to the respect of human rights," he said.

It is no wonder then, he said, that fewer than 50 U.N. member states have endorsed the draft declaration and more than 150 have not signed on.

"The Vatican is not alone" in its opposition to the proposal, he said.

On Dec. 10, the U.N. General Assembly also was to be presented with a petition to make abortion a universally recognized human right.

Archbishop Migliore told I.Media that such a proposal was "sad and outrageous" and represented the kind of "modern savagery that will dismantle our society from the inside out."

The initiative would promote the dismantling of the human-rights system



Pope Benedict XVI waves to the media after visiting the United Nations in New York on April 18. At left is Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Vatican permanent observer to the U.N. The Vatican has made clear its opposition to the United Nations endorsing a universal declaration to decriminalize homosexuality.

by allowing declarations that are no longer about promoting and protecting fundamental rights but about "personal choices," he said. †

Catholic Charities USA warns against fraudulent e-mails on Internet

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Catholic Charities USA officials have demanded that groups using the Catholic Charities name to solicit funds on the Internet discontinue using the trademark and urged potential donors to research the authenticity of an organization before making a contribution.

"Fraudulent e-mails that are misappropriating the name of Catholic Charities USA and its affiliates are being sent to extract money and/or personal information from unsuspecting recipients and are circulating on the Internet," said Brandon Pinney, spokesman for Catholic Charities USA.

The e-mails are labeled with the subject titles "Grant Notification," "The Catholic Charity," "The Catholic Charity Foundation" and "From the Office of the Cash Grant

Program," Pinney told Catholic News Service on Dec. 1.

The name "Catholic Charities" was used within the body of some of the e-mails, said Candy S. Hill, senior vice president for social policy and government affairs at Catholic Charities USA.

The messages—which come from several different e-mail addresses and provide a variety of contact names—ask recipients for detailed personal information, Pinney said.


In an effort to stop the e-mails, Father Larry Snyder, Catholic Charities USA president, replied on Nov. 26 to each of the addresses brought to the organization's attention, insisting the sender stop disseminating such confusing

messages or suffer consequences.

"Your unauthorized use of the name 'Catholic Charities' is likely to cause confusion, mistake or deception among the recipients of the e-mail," Father Snyder said in his statement. "We insist that you immediately discontinue all further sending of the above e-mail."

In the statement, he said he wishes to settle the matter in an amicable way and asked for a reply within seven days to confirm they have halted such e-mails.

As of Dec. 1, Catholic Charities did get one automated response from one of the dozen or so e-mails it sent out, but had not received a reply stating the practice would be discontinued, Hill said. †




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