



The

Criterion

Serving the Church
in Central and Southern
Indiana Since 1960

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December 20, 1996

A Christmas greeting from Archbishop Buechlein



Mary offers grapes to the Christ Child in this oil painting titled "The Rest on the Flight into Egypt." The painting was painted by Gerard David in the 16th century. It is now a holding of the National Gallery of Art, Andrew W. Mellon collection, and is on display in Washington. Our annual Christmas supplement begins on page 13.

CNS photo courtesy National Gallery of Art

The Christmas crib scenario captures our fancy. Do you ever wonder why we romanticize a barnyard scene which surely was not an ideal place for a child to be born? I think I know why. All we need to do is look at a Christmas crib scene for a little while in order to realize that Christmas belongs to everybody. We like that. For one brief moment, Christmas brings everybody together.

Look who's there! Working shepherds represent the poor of the world. That already captures all of us because one way or other we are all poor—whether spiritually, physically, morally, emotionally or financially. The three wise men from the Orient represent the curious, the learned, the rich and the worldly powerful. That could be all of us, too, because we are all blessed with unique personal gifts.

Singing angels from God signal that this stable gathering is no ordinary scene. Yet it is a family scene: new parents are there; a new little baby is at the center of it all. We are all there somehow. And let's not forget the animals. After all the setting is a barnyard stable, probably a cave near Bethlehem.

Dumb animals, beasts who carry people's burdens, witness to a scene that was surely both common and uncommon to them as well. Even in those days not many children were born in a stable. Was this birth in an animal shelter simply an accident because Joseph might have forgotten to make reservations at an inn in Bethlehem? Did this happen because of poor planning? If so, isn't it like so many chance happenings in our own lives—God's mysterious workings often seem to happen "by accident"?

The Christmas crib scene lets most of our world stop for a brief moment and brings many of us together, but it does so much more. The simplicity of the animal stable masks a rich teaching, which should be no surprise. After all, the new baby at the center of it all is the Divine Word made flesh. Jesus is God's revelation of himself to us. The crib scene is a teaching scene, a classroom; it is a revelation. Somebody once called that stable Christ's cathedral; the manger was his first *cathedra*, his first teaching chair. No detail of that nativity scene is an accident!

What does the birth of the Word Incarnate tell us about God? God loves the

poor. God loves the curious. God loves the gifted. God loves simplicity. God loves the animals and God understands the burdens we carry, sometimes like beasts of burden. God can and does work through the reversals, the accidents of life, like forgetting to make reservations at the inn. God understands the suffering in our lives. Like us, God's Son was born into the unfairness of life's suffering. God meets us in suffering in a special way and in any circumstance, like in an animal shelter on a cold winter night.

Maybe we romanticize the crib scene because it is too much to grasp that God could be so loving in such awkward surroundings. Don't you think God gives us the poetic flourish of singing angels on that cold winter night so that we can believe his grand drama of barnyard simplicity?

God came to earth to tell us that he is always with all of us. We are all there in that barnyard stable. God came into our world for everybody and the greatest message of all is that we are all equal as we kneel before the manger of Christ's first teaching chair. Indeed, let's kneel before the manger of Jesus with hearts full of grateful love.

As I kneel before the crib I pray that you may find peace of mind and heart and soul before Christ's first teaching chair—at Christmas and for the New Year!

Seeking the Face of the Lord

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



Our paper and its editor

In the four years and some months since I have been Archbishop of Indianapolis I have not missed submitting this weekly column, 224 of them to be exact. Needless to say this represents an important commitment of time and energy, but you can probably tell that I enjoy it! I am glad about that because it is great grace to enjoy one's pastoral teaching responsibilities. One time Pope John Paul remarked that a bishop (and a priest) ought first to pray the words he teaches or proclaims. For that reason I write my column immediately after my hour of morning prayer. This says something about the unique purpose of *The Criterion*.

Clearly, I consider *The Criterion* to be a teaching instrument as well as a primary means of communication in the archdiocese. Our Catholic weekly plays a major role in carrying on the mission of our church in central and southern Indiana. Despite the challenge of meeting the expense of Indiana's largest weekly paper, we need this instrument of communication. Personally, I think *The Criterion* is one of the finest Catholic weeklies in the country.

John F. Fink (Jack), who retires as editor-in-chief with this Christmas issue, deserves much of the credit for such excellence. During the past 12+ years of faithful and fine editorial service, he has made an outstanding contribution to the mission and the pastoral ministry of our archdiocese. In his quiet, studious and devout manner Jack has remained faithful to the threefold mission of *The Criterion*: to inform, educate and evangelize. In his words and in the witness of his daily life, he has proclaimed the good news of Christ and he has helped thousands of people throughout central and southern Indiana to be better informed about our mission.

True, like most editors, in an understated manner, Jack sometimes liked "to push the envelope" a bit concerning controversy in the church, but one would be hard put to find a more loyal and prayerful Catholic gentleman. It is not unusual to come upon Jack praying the Liturgy of the Hours in the chapel at the Catholic Center.

As I have already implied, *The Criterion* is not an ordinary newspaper. As a Catholic weekly, we have a distinctive mission among the many instruments of communication and technology that our society is blessed with today. *The Criterion* is a voice of the church speaking as well as possible with the particular

cadence and accents we find in central and southern Indiana. *The Criterion* gives expression to the voice of the church, but it also contributes to the way our faith is lived and expressed in our archdiocese.

In fact, the mission of the archdiocese and that of *The Criterion* are integrally related. By carrying out its mission "to inform, educate and evangelize," our Catholic weekly proclaims the Gospel of Christ in the print medium, which, of course, is the mission of our archdiocese. As Jack Fink says, *The Criterion* "helps its readers live fully as Catholics," which is obviously the purpose of pastoral ministry in the archdiocese.

During the past 12 years, and for many years before, Mr. Fink has also served the larger mission of the church through his contributions to the field of Catholic journalism. Last week, more than a dozen of his colleagues in the Catholic Press traveled to Indianapolis from many different regions of the United States (and Europe) for a special tribute to Jack sponsored by *The Criterion's* board of directors. This is another indication of Mr. Fink's professional stature.

Through his leadership, our weekly has been able to serve the profession of Catholic journalism in special ways during the past 12 years. It is yet another reason our archdiocesan family can be proud of our newspaper's distinguished role in the Catholic press.

For these and many other contributions to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Catholic press, we extend our grateful thanks and appreciation to Jack Fink on the occasion of his retirement. He plans a well-deserved sabbatical in the Holy Land and I am sure we will benefit from his experience there as we welcome Jack in his new role as editor emeritus of *The Criterion*. His column will continue to be a distinctive voice heard in our archdiocesan newspaper each week. We look forward to his continuing participation in giving expression to the mission of *The Criterion*.

I would be remiss as publisher if I did not welcome Mr. William Bruns as executive editor, and Mr. Peter Agostinelli as the managing editor of *The Criterion*. I am confident that, along with the direction of the board of directors, our new editorial leadership will carry on the mission of our Catholic weekly in the fine tradition of its predecessors.

Editorial Commentary/John F. Fink, Editor

Will our archbishop go to Chicago Archdiocese?

Normally I wouldn't editorialize about speculation that Archbishop Buechlein might be appointed the next Archbishop of Chicago, succeeding Cardinal Joseph Bernardin. Of course, it's natural that people have been talking about this possibility ever since Cardinal Bernardin's death, but it seemed like idle conjecture. But the speculation made the front page of the Dec. 11 issue of *The Indianapolis Star*, so it seems that some comment is in order.

Of course Archbishop Buechlein is being considered for this important position. So are Archbishops Daniel Pilarczyk of Cincinnati, Justin Rigali of St. Louis, Thomas Kelly of Louisville and Eldon Curtiss of Omaha, other archbishops in the Midwest.

But who is to say that the next Archbishop of Chicago will necessarily be a Midwest archbishop? The Vatican is good at selecting bishops from all over the United States to fill archdioceses. Cardinal John O'Connor was Bishop of Scranton, Pa., when he was selected for New York. Cardinal Bernard Law and Cardinal William Baum were both Bishops of Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Mo., when they were selected for Boston and Washington, respectively. Cardinal Adam Maida of Detroit came from Green Bay.

As a matter of fact, none of the United States' current cardinals were heads of archdioceses before their appointments. All were heads of dioceses. The last archbishop to be appointed to an archdiocese usually headed by a cardinal was Cardinal Bernardin, in 1982.

Bishops who are expected to be appointed to archdioceses sometime include Donald Wuerl of Pittsburgh and Anthony Pilla of Cleveland, the current president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

You can be sure that the office of the apostolic pro-nuncio to the United States, Archbishop Agostino Cacciavillan, is very busy right now. That office must study all potential prospects before sending a list of three men to the Vatican's Congregation for Bishops. Archbishop Cacciavillan will undoubtedly also consult with most of the present 29 archbishops in the United States (the archdioceses of Chicago and Denver are vacant), especially the cardinals, and with the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. All that is standard procedure.

Both Archbishop Cacciavillan and the Congregation of Bishops also have to take into consideration that the archbishops of New York and Washington are past retirement age and the Archdiocese of Denver must receive a new archbishop. So there are a number of archbishop appointments to be made in the next six to nine months or so.

Archbishop Buechlein may or may not be selected. Only time will tell. In the meantime, his statement on the subject is good advice: "The people who speculate on Cardinal Bernardin's successor are not in a position to make the decision. I think our time is better spent praying for Cardinal Bernardin's successor, whoever he may be."

Edward J. Fillenwarth, first CYO board president, dies at 86

Longtime church and community volunteer Edward J. Fillenwarth, a 61-year member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus, Little Flower Parish in Indianapolis, died on Dec. 12. He was 86. Funeral services were Dec. 14 at Little Flower Church.

A retired attorney, Fillenwarth helped establish the Catholic Youth Organization for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis in 1939 and was the president of its first board of directors.

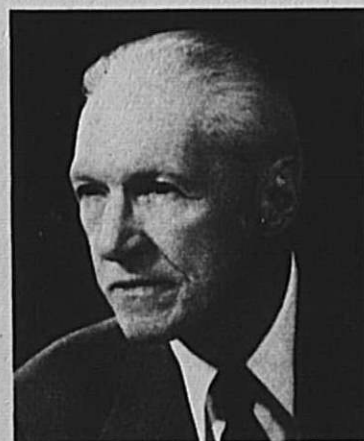
While he served on the CYO board, the archdiocesan youth agency started a summer camping program for children in Brown County and built the old CYO Field on W. 16th St.

During the past 57 years, CYO camping, recreation, and youth ministry programs have touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of children and teen-agers.

In recognition of his dedication to youth and distinguished service to CYO, the organization honored him as one of the first recipients of the St. John Bosco Medal in 1954.

He also was instrumental in raising funds to build Seccina Memorial High School in the early 1950s and was the first president of Seccina's Booster Club.

Seccina later honored him as a Super



Edward J. Fillenwarth

Booster for his efforts on behalf of the Indianapolis East Deanery interparochial high school.

Gov. Evan Bayh named Fillenwarth a Sagamore of the Wabash on the occasion of his 80th birthday in 1990, and in 1985 former Indianapolis Mayor William Hudnut issued a special proclamation honoring Edward and Helen Fillenwarth for 50 years of dedicated service to their parish, community, and CYO in recognition of their 50th wedding anniversary.

Fillenwarth also was a member of the Knights of Columbus, and served as the Grand Knight of Council No. 437 for two years during the 1940s. He held state offices in the Catholic men's organization and was a Fourth Degree member of the Bishop Chatard Assembly.

He is survived by his wife of 61 years, Helen T. Fillenwarth; a son, Edward J. Fillenwarth Jr.; two daughters, Marianne Rhinesmith and Jeanmarie McGowan; two sisters, Lorlene Henry and Florence Spalding; one brother, Leroy Fillenwarth; 12 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren. Memorial contributions may be made to the Catholic Youth Organization.

The Criterion

12/20/96

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No issue next week

In accordance with our usual practice, *The Criterion* will not be published next week, Dec. 27.

All offices in the Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center will be closed from Dec. 24 through Jan. 2, 1997.

Christmas supplement

The Criterion's annual Christmas supplement is included in this week's issue. The 16-page section includes nine pages of Christmas memories submitted by our readers.

Christmas at the cathedral

The staff and parishioners at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral invite the faithful to attend Christmas and New Year liturgies at the archdiocese's principal church.

A family-oriented liturgy will be celebrated at 5 p.m. Dec. 24.

Midnight Mass at the cathedral will be prefaced with music at 11:20 p.m.

Christmas morning liturgy will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Dec. 25.

New Year's Eve Mass will begin at 5 p.m. Dec. 31. The liturgy of the Feast of Mary, Mother of God, will be held on New Year's Day at 10:30 a.m.

Lilly Endowment to aid Catholic, other schools

Catholic schools will share in a \$15 million invitational matching grant program for schools in Marion County

By Peter Agostinelli

Lilly Endowment Inc. has announced that it has reserved up to \$15 million for an "invitational matching grant program" for private elementary and secondary schools in Marion County, including Catholic elementary and high schools. The purpose of this new grant program is to support capital projects related to academic facilities and equipment in schools that are not government supported.

It is estimated that Catholic schools may receive \$5 million.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein said, "We are very excited that Lilly Endowment is making such a significant investment in Catholic and other nongovernmental schools in Marion County. Catholic and other private schools face many challenges today, but making necessary capital improvements without the aid of government funds is certainly one of our greatest difficulties. The Endowment's matching grant program will be an enormous help to us as we reach out to individuals and corporations throughout the Indianapolis area for assistance in meeting our schools' capital needs."

"Lilly Endowment has once again shown itself for the good citizen it is," Archbishop Buechlein said. "Its care for and involvement in the Indianapolis area continues to demonstrate its founders' concern for reinvesting its resources in this community. For our part, we want to assure the Endowment and the community at large that we will be good stewards of

any monies that might come to us in this effort. We will work to ensure that our schools use these gifts to produce graduates who are well-prepared for their future as community leaders and as contributing members of the workforce."

Daniel J. Elsener, executive director for Catholic education for the archdiocese, said that the Endowment's invitational matching grant program requires that all archdiocesan and parish-sponsored Catholic schools in Marion County apply for the grants through the archdiocese's Office of Catholic Education. The archdiocese in turn will submit the applications to Lilly Endowment for approval.

There are 29 parish-sponsored Catholic elementary schools in Marion County. There are also four archdiocesan (inter-parochial) high schools in Marion County—Bishop Chatard, Cardinal Ritter, Roncalli, and Secunia Memorial. (Cathedral High School and Brebeuf Preparatory School are privately owned. They are being invited to apply directly to Lilly Endowment.)

Elsener pointed out that the Endowment's matching-grant program is being set up specifically to help meet capital improvement and technology needs related to education. No monies may be used for operating purposes or endowment.

Archbishop Buechlein said the announcement of the grant "comes at a particularly good time for the archdiocese because plans are now being developed for a major capital campaign to address capital needs in parishes, schools and archdiocesan agencies."

Elsener also noted that:

- Catholic schools in Indianapolis are growing steadily, and most are at capacity, which places great pressure on physical facilities and equipment.

- Schools throughout the Archdiocese of Indianapolis are currently making investments in technology, equipment, and physical facilities and are struggling to fund these necessary capital expenditures.

- For the past two years, the archdiocese has been working to strengthen its commitment to parishes and schools in the center city of Indianapolis. We believe that education is the single most important factor in breaking the cycle of

poverty, and we are very serious about making major improvements in the physical facilities and equipment used by our center city Catholic schools. So, in this regard especially, the timing of this announcement is most providential.

Schools which qualify for this invitational matching gift program must submit a formal application to the archdiocese by March 15. The Office of Catholic Education will provide eligible schools with guidelines and assistance in completing the grant application. Matching funds (gifts and pledges) for these grant projects must be secured by Oct. 31, 1998, but pledges are payable through Dec. 31, 1999.

Archdiocesan pilgrimage on videotape

Documentary, special Mass with Archbishop Buechlein to be broadcast Christmas

"A Journey of Faith, with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein," a one-hour video documentary of the 1996 archdiocesan pilgrimage, will premiere at 9 a.m. Christmas morning on WNDY-TV, Channel 23 in Indianapolis. WNDY-TV is available on air or on various cable systems in 20 of the archdiocese's 39 counties.

The documentary is also now available for purchase for \$29.95, a price that includes shipping and handling.

The video follows Archbishop Buechlein as he leads 90 pilgrims to the shrines of southern Europe. It includes great sites of Catholic thought and devotion—from the towering cathedral of Barcelona to the holy shrines of Lourdes and Assisi to an audience with Pope John Paul II in St. Peter's Square.

Those interested may call 1-800-627-9403 to reserve a copy. VISA and MasterCard orders are accepted.

Before the pilgrimage documentary on WNDY-TV on Christmas, a special Christmas Day Mass will be broadcast at 8:30 a.m. as part of a special Christmas Day package. Archbishop Buechlein will preside at the Mass.

Pro-life Office plans bus trip to Washington for 1997 March for Life

By Mary Ann Wyand

Pro-life supporters are invited to participate in a Jan. 20-23 bus trip to Washington, D.C. for the 1997 March for Life on the 24th anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe vs. Wade* decision which legalized abortion in America.

Sponsored by the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life Activities, the bus for adults will accompany six buses for 250 teenagers who are joining the March for Life Education and Defense Fund's annual rally and march in the nation's capital.

Reservations for the 47-passenger adult bus are \$80 a person, plus the cost of hotel accommodations, food and other

personal expenses. Overnight accommodations for Tuesday, Jan. 21, can be made at a special price of \$99 per room, for up to four persons, at a Holiday Inn in Washington, D.C.

Father Vincent Lampert, director of the pro-life office, said the caravan of archdiocesan buses will depart from the Archbishop O'Meara Catholic Center at 7 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 20, and return at 6 a.m. on Thursday, Jan. 23. Participants will sleep on the buses on Monday night and Wednesday night.

To register for the pro-life bus trip to Washington, send a \$50 deposit to the Office of Pro-Life Activities, 1400 N. Meridian St., P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206, before Jan. 6. For additional trip and hotel information, telephone the pro-life office at 317-236-1548 or 800-382-9836, extension 1548.

"As those who participated in the rally last year will attest," Father Lampert said, "the trip was a pilgrimage of faith that offered an opportunity to affirm their commitment to the Gospel of Life."

A few penance services are still scheduled

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have announced communal penance services for Advent. Several confessors will be present at each location.

Following is a list of the remaining services.

Indianapolis North Deanery
Dec. 23, 7:30 p.m., St. Lawrence.

Indianapolis West Deanery
Dec. 22, 2 p.m., St. Anthony.

Batesville Deanery
Dec. 20, 7 p.m., St. Nicholas, Ripley Co.
Dec. 23, 7 p.m., St. Anthony, Morris.
Dec. 24, 1 p.m., St. Anthony, Morris.



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Journey of Hope 2001

"A Journey of Faith"

with
Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein

A one-hour video documentary of the 1996 archdiocesan pilgrimage to the shrines of southern Europe

9:00 a.m. Christmas Day
Broadcast exclusively on WNDY-TV 23
(available in 20 counties throughout the archdiocese)

WNDY-TV

This special broadcast is made possible by Golden Lyre Records.

From the Editor/John E. Fink

A time for introspection and reminiscing



Will you excuse me if I'm a bit introspective and reminiscence in this column? I guess that happens to people at certain milestones in their lives, and my reaching the age of 65 and my retirement as editor of *The Criterion* are certainly milestones in my life. This is my last column as editor; from now on I'll be writing as editor emeritus.

Back in September, Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee was in a similar mood as he celebrated the 50th anniversary of his first vows as a Benedictine. That stirred him to write in his regular column in *The Catholic Herald*, "At a certain point one begins to ask the question about the usefulness and meaning of one's life. Without doubt one is probably always asking that question as the years pass, but every so often there is an event that forces one to pose the question in earnest." His anniversary was that occasion for him.

Archbishop Weakland went on to examine his life as a monk, a priest and a bishop. He noted that we Americans are very much taken by the search for happiness but that he had learned, "Instead of happiness as the ultimate criterion, one should be able to say that one's life had meaning." That was the criterion he used when looking back at his life.

I think that's an important point. A search for happiness in this life will always be elusive. Our happiness will come in the next life if we have learned to accept and obey God's will in this life. Our lives have meaning if we discern and carry out the purpose for which God created us. Each of us has been given a unique role and purpose in life and it is simply up to us to discover what that is and to do it. That's how our lives will have meaning and how we will then experience happiness.

I discerned early that God wanted me to be a husband and father and I think that my wife, seven children and eight grandchildren believe my life has been meaningful. But here I want to write about my career.

I discovered that God wanted me to work in the Catholic press back in the summer of 1952. It was the summer between my junior and senior years at Notre

Dame and I was on the Notre Dame campus editing the program-yearbook for a convention of the National Federation of Catholic College Students. While I was doing that the Catholic Press Association held its annual convention on the Notre Dame campus, and I attended the meetings.

The first time I started to work full-time for the Catholic press was after I graduated from high school in 1948—more than 48 years ago. Since I had skipped a couple grades and was only 16 at the time, I didn't think I was ready for college socially yet, so I worked for 15 months for *Our Sunday Visitor*, mostly as a proofreader. But I also became the first reader of the 100 or so manuscripts that free-lance writers sent to the paper each week. When I went to Notre Dame, I continued to do that. The manuscripts were sent to me each week, I rejected about 90 percent of them, and returned those that had possibility to OSV. I also worked at OSV during the summers while I was at Notre Dame.

So I had experience in the Catholic press. But it wasn't until that Catholic Press Association convention in 1952 that I decided for sure that I wanted to work for the Catholic press instead of the secular press. I felt then, and ever since, that that was what God was calling me to do. Since my graduation in 1953, I've worked full-time for the Catholic press (except for two years in the Air Force) for the past 43 years.

I think every position I have had has been meaningful, that I've been able to make some contributions to Catholics' spiritual lives. Through the years I've also had extraordinary opportunities to travel (especially during my 12 years as vice president and then president of the International Federation of Catholic Press Associations), and to meet with important people, so it has also been a satisfying career.

Of course, there have also been the problems and frustrations that come with any job. (In particular there is the weekly frustration of not having enough space to publish everything that should be published.) But the ups have been far more frequent than the downs.

I now look forward to seeing what God wants me to do to make the rest of my life meaningful.

Matters Liturgical/Sherie Berg

Kids, Christmas and cryrooms

Chances are the Christmas liturgy you will participate in next week will be held on Christmas Eve. And chances are even better that it will be described as a Family Mass or Children's Liturgy, and filled with choirs of cherubim, little drummer boys, homilies directed at children seated around the altar, and uncouth children festively dressed. And almost certainly no one will complain that little ones fill the sacred space with joyful noise.



We Americans have made Christmas a time for children, and we American Catholics have made our Christmas liturgies welcoming for children.

But are children always welcomed at parish liturgies? When my daughter was 2, we lived in the Czech Republic. One Sunday on the way out of church, a grandmotherly woman told us that church was not the place for children. Libby had been very quiet during the Mass and I was offended by what the woman had said. Later, my neighbor told me that she had not been complaining about Libby's behavior—the Czechs love children—but thought she would have been happier at home.

Which parent among us cannot remember angry stares or unkind words associated with our own children's attendance? And who among us has not wanted

Cryrooms are not chapels for children. Children belong in the midst of the assembly surrounded by love. Parents have the responsibility to see that their children act respectfully when part of the assembly. But teaching children to pray and to love coming to church is also the responsibility of the whole church.

to tell the parent of an unruly child to take her to the cryroom or leave him at home? Where is a child's place in the assembly of God's people?

Objectively, that question is not difficult to answer. A baptized child is every bit as much a member of the church as her mother, his father, the pope, or Mother Teresa. And all members have a place at the table.

Subjectively, the answer is a bit more complicated. Children are not just small adults. And that fact works both for and against them. Their attention span may be short. They may be unable to control their behavior when tired or hungry. They may be easily distracted. But they also have an innate sense of the spiritual, a love for ritual, music, color, and ceremony, the building blocks of liturgy. The very nature of liturgy works to help children pray.

And so when we search for children's place at liturgy we experience this tension. It is our role as adult members of the community, as people interested in liturgy, to help everyone gathered for Eucharist to celebrate well, and to recognize children's limitations while utilizing the non-verbal ways liturgy teaches. And we should be doing it every week for children, not only on Christmas.

Cryrooms are not chapels for children. Children belong in the midst of the assembly surrounded by love. Parents have the responsibility to see that their children act respectfully when part of the assembly. But teaching children to pray and to love coming to church is also the responsibility of the whole church. Maybe the church of 1972 was not a welcoming place for children, but the church of 1997 should be. And we should make it so.

A View from the Center/Dan Conway

'A Christmas Carol' is a story of stewardship

We all remember the scene from old movies and TV specials. Two "portly gentlemen," as Charles Dickens calls them, enter the offices of Scrooge and Marley hoping to raise money "for the poor and destitute who suffer greatly at the present time of year."

They make their case, pointing out that "hundreds of thousands are in want of common comforts," but Scrooge is not impressed. "Are there no prisons?" the old miser asks. "Aren't the workhouses still in operation?"

"Yes," one of the gentlemen replies. "I wish I could say they were not." Undaunted, the two gentlemen continue. "What shall we put you down for?"

"Nothing!" says Scrooge.

"You wish to be anonymous?" the gentlemen ask.

"I wish to be left alone!" says Scrooge.

How many times have we heard similar versions of this same old story? how many times have we found ourselves playing the part of Scrooge—saying to those who ask for our time or our money, "Please don't bother me. I wish to be left alone?"

Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" is about stewardship. It is about learning to care for (and be responsible for) all of God's creation. And, as Dickens makes very clear, "A Christmas Carol" is about more than just the sentimental (or commercial) "Christmas spirit" which comes and goes each holiday season.

Scrooge is not a good steward. He hoards what he has been given (time, talent and treasure) and he buries his gifts deep within himself. He cannot give or share, and the result is a twisted, self-absorbed misery. Along with his gifts and talents, Scrooge accumulates and hides all the hurts, resentments and disappointments of a lonely lifetime. Nothing makes him happy. Nothing gives him peace.

There is only one thing that can save this miserable man from the hell he has made for himself. Giving. Open, generous, unrestricted giving is the only cure for the likes of Ebenezer Scrooge. As long as he holds back—asking,

"What's in it for me?"—Scrooge is condemned to live the life that he has fashioned for himself through years of lonely self-centeredness.

Fortunately, Dickens believed in a God who is generous and forgiving. Old Scrooge is given one last chance to experience life as it was truly meant to be lived. The spirits who visit Scrooge help him to face painful truths about himself. And by caring enough to confront him with his selfishness, the spirits give Scrooge something far more valuable than all his gold: They give him a glimpse of who he was, who he is now, and who he could become—if only he would let go of his bitter resentment and embrace the joy of giving.

Recall that following this change of heart, as he hurries to join his nephew's family for Christmas dinner, Scrooge encounters one of the two "portly gentlemen" who had asked him for a contribution the day before. After greeting the gentleman so warmly that the man barely recognizes the old miser, Scrooge whispers in his ear the amount of his pledge to help the poor and destitute.

"My dear Mr. Scrooge, are you serious?" cries the gentleman.

Not a farthing less," says Scrooge. "A great many back-payments are included in it, I assure you."

And then the most amazing thing happens. As the astounded solicitor tries to express his gratitude, stammering from both appreciation and disbelief, old Scrooge says it for him. "Thank you," says Scrooge. "I am much obliged to you. I thank you 50 times. Bless you!"

In "A Christmas Carol," Dickens wants each of us to discover what old Scrooge had to learn the hard way. The only way to hold onto something is to give it away. This is the paradox of giving: The one who gives a gift (from substance and without counting the cost) is the one who is most grateful. Besides being a donor, the generous person is also a beneficiary.

Ever afterwards, Dickens says, it was said of Scrooge "that he knew how to keep Christmas well." Like any good steward, Scrooge kept it well by giving it away. And so, as Dickens observes at the conclusion of his story, "May that be truly said of us . . . every one!"



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The Criterion



Viewpoints

Does genetic engineering hold hope for the future?

"On the horizon is the promise that genetic engineering may correct defective genes, preventing disabilities in individuals and their future offspring." But this may well result in efforts to create "better humans"—people "with more beauty, more muscle, more brains, more ambition," cautions Richard M. Doerflinger, associate director for policy development at the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities. Doerflinger joins Father Matthew Temple in a discussion of the hope genetic science holds. It is possible to "see God's wisdom as Creator revealed in the complexities of human genetics, and seize opportunities to enhance our knowledge," writes Father Temple. But he also gives reasons for proceeding carefully in the use of genetic technology. Carmelite Father Temple is a professor of biology at Nazareth College in Rochester, N.Y.

Genetics offers great hope

By Fr. Matthew Temple

Genetics—and especially the current Human Genome Project—gives us great reason to hope for the future.



When completed in the next decade, the project will give us a comprehensive vision of our genes: the 100,000 pieces of DNA that contribute to every aspect of our biological nature as human beings. Moreover, this genetic vision of ourselves should sharpen our spiritual and moral vision.

First, we should see ourselves more clearly as gifted creatures:

- Creatures, because it will be obvious that we share most of our genes with other, non-human life through biological evolution.
- Gifted, because it will be all the more wonderful that God singled us out among all creatures and that God's Son took on our nature.

The danger here is an overemphasis on our evolved biological status. This would demean human life and obscure our vision of a God-given human soul.

Second, the project will enable us to see

the human species' entire genetic blueprint, as well as present a diverse array of genetic variations within that species. The project will reveal an unmistakable set of molecular features shared by all the human species' members.

Their membership is not a matter of degree or class: Either one is human or not. Thus, the project could help eliminate prejudice or discrimination based on pseudo-scientific allegations that some humans are genetically inferior or "less human."

Knowledge gained from the Human Genome Project will also identify those more likely to suffer from genetic-based disease, and who thus will need medical care as well as protection from discrimination because of their genetic problems.

Certainly, the Catholic Church, the largest single health-services provider in the United States, can use both its moral voice and economic persuasion to help ensure that health- and life-insurance companies do not discriminate against people found to carry genes predisposing them to disease.

Third, genetic progress eventually will enable us to see thousands of human diseases become treatable—if not entirely curable—through the combination of better diagnosis and new modes of gene therapy.

However, this technology must be developed carefully. In no case should human embryos or fetuses be subjected to genetic research which would imperil their dignity or lives, despite the benefits of such research to others.

We should also beware of a genetic con-

sumerism that would expect genetic technology to guarantee babies free of birth defects. The project promises fruitful, not forbidden, knowledge.

Finally, Catholics see God's self-revelation in material sacraments: Bread, wine, oil and vows disclose God's love. We should also see God's wisdom as Creator revealed in the complexities of human genetics, and seize opportunities to enhance our knowledge.

For example, pre-Cana marriage preparation can encourage couples to share family histories. When it appears a genetic disorder might affect them, these couples should know where to turn for medical and moral guidance within the church.

Increasingly, the church relies upon deacons, religious educators and pastoral counselors to deal with personal, child-bearing and medical issues. Training for these professionals should include the role of genetics in these issues, and information about sources of principled assistance.

Of course, Catholic health-care workers and researchers involved in genetics should be encouraged to gather within the church for reflection and guidance, as well as to offer expert advice about the hope genetics holds for our future.

Progress at what price?

By Richard M. Doerflinger

Technical progress can be dangerous unless it is joined by progress in moral maturity.



Pope John Paul II warned in his first encyclical, "Redemptor Hominis." Today, he said, it is moral maturity that often seems to lag behind.

This is certainly true in genetics, which can give us tools to analyze and even alter life's building blocks. With such knowledge comes enormous power—not just over nature, but power that can be wielded by some human beings over many others, even over future generations.

Earlier this century, genetic information (and misinformation) was used not to help suffering human beings, but to label, isolate and even eliminate them. We recoil with horror at Nazi Germany's eugenics laws; few remember the similar laws enacted in the United States. Planned Parenthood's founder spoke openly of "breeding a race of thoroughbreds."

Today the idea of government controlling

the genetic makeup of citizens seems an implausible nightmare. Yet fear and distaste remain common reactions toward people with serious genetic defects. A widely held prejudice, implemented through thousands of individual choices, can be as oppressive as any government edict.

Consider prenatal diagnosis, which can test for dozens of genetic problems before birth. In Catholic teaching this is not a moral problem if the testing will not harm mother or child and the results are used for their benefit. With such advance knowledge, early treatment may be possible; parents can plan for their child's special needs.

But tragically, prenatal diagnosis often is used for quite different ends. It is in demand for currently untreatable conditions like Down syndrome, which usually causes mild to moderate mental retardation. About 90 percent of parents who receive a positive diagnosis for Down syndrome obtain an abortion.

So strong has the link become between prenatal diagnosis and abortion that recent advances are geared toward diagnosing defects earlier, when abortion will be easier for parents.

Amniocentesis has given way to chorionic villi sampling for this reason, although CVS poses a higher risk of miscarriage. Now defects can be detected even earlier, by joining egg and sperm in the laboratory and testing the human embryo at the four- to eight-cell stage. Embryos with a defect are simply discarded.

Many today are rightly concerned about the use of genetic information obtained after babies are born. As we learn more about some individuals' genetic predispositions to heart disease, breast cancer, depression or schizophrenia, will such data be used by employers, insurance companies and governments to help these people or discriminate against them?

In suggesting that we can eliminate genetic defects by eliminating the children who have them, our society has ill-prepared itself for such questions.

On the horizon is the promise that genetic engineering may correct defective genes, preventing disabilities in individuals and their future offspring. With that ability, however, will come the temptation to go further by making "better" humans.

This poses an enormous problem. A superficial "lowest common denominator" may prevail. What is valued will be more beauty, more muscle, more brains, more ambition.

Before we have such powers, we need more reflection on how to use them wisely—and whether some should not be used at all, out of respect for each human being's uniqueness and dignity. The greatest obstacle to human progress today is not bad genes but lack of love.

Light One Candle/Fr. Thomas J. McSweeney

A Christmas play in Germany

It was Christmas Day in Germany in 1969 that I had the good fortune to witness a play performed in a school gymnasium in a small village just outside of Nuremberg. It became my most profound experience of a Nativity drama.



I didn't expect the haunting episode that unfolded in the first scene. Let me set the stage:

The curtain rises on a tableau of Mary and Joseph snuggled closely against the crib of Jesus in the stable at Bethlehem. It is a bleak scene underscored by wind howling through an eerie silence. There is a faint tapping at the barn door, and a startled Joseph moves haltingly towards it, seemingly uncertain as to who or what might be there. I, and presumably the rest of the audience, expect to see the Shepherds or perhaps the Three Kings make their entrance. But, no. At the threshold appears an ancient-looking couple, bent over with age and exhaustion. As they move into the dimly lit barn, a shaft of light crosses their wrinkled faces, baring looks of indescribable sadness and remorse. They seem weighted down with a terrible secret as they ask Joseph if they might see the Child.

Joseph and Mary step aside and allow the trembling pair to shuffle toward the crib. With their backs to Mary and Joseph, as well as the audience, the old woman reaches under her threadworn shawl to

retrieve something which she quickly places into the crib with the Child Jesus.

Suddenly and briskly, the old couple turn to Joseph and Mary. And there is now a radical change in their demeanor. As if invigorated by what they have just accomplished, their wrinkles and contorted postures are gone. Instead they move sprightly to the door, and in tones of grateful relief and with smiles that radiate absolute joy, they thank Mary and Joseph, and exit solemnly erect.

Mary crosses to the crib to find what the old couple had just placed there. Under the Child's blanket, she discovers a piece of fruit, like an apple, which she hands to Joseph questioning. Studying the fruit closely, Joseph whispers to Mary, "Could it be?" "What?" begs Mary. "That couple—Adam and Eve—at long last returning to God what they had stolen!"

For these German villagers that first Christmas began with an act of forgiveness. For me, this experience was a splendid reminder that God's love is greater than our sins, and his promise of new life is stronger than our mistakes. As the first Christmas, in a little town just a few miles from Jerusalem, God forgave humanity by becoming one of us.

The gift of forgiveness was tendered to the whole world. There is no wound that he cannot heal. No sorrow that he cannot turn into joy.

Make yours a loving Christmas! (For a free copy of the *Christopher News Note* "The Power of Forgiveness," write to The Christophers, 12 E. 48th St., New York, NY 10017.)

Spirituality for Today/Fr. John Catoir

When you're feeling spiritually dry

Have you had the feeling recently that the spirit of Christmas escaped you this year?



The seasonal hoopla was going on all around you, but you felt out of it, maybe even a little sad. Don't be discouraged. It's quite normal.

I have felt a little spiritually dry myself in recent days. Even when I offered the

holy sacrifice of the Mass, there were times when my mind wandered and my devotion flagged. Am I losing my faith? Am I slipping in my piety? Of course not.

I am simply coping with the human condition. I know that feelings are not facts in matters of faith, so I try to keep the truths of faith before me as often as possible. It helps me to laugh at my poor feelings, especially when they get shaky.

I'm going to share some of these ideas with you in the hope that you'll find them useful in your own personal struggle.

• Fact No. 1: God is unchanging love. That means he enjoys sharing his life with his beloved children. He loves ordinary human beings just like you and me. That

includes everybody. This knowledge helps me to remember that God's love is flowing into me whether I feel it or not.

• Fact No. 2: My very desire to be close to God is itself his gift to me. All holy desires are the product of the actual graces which he pours into the hearts of his beloved. Some people know this, but they get so down on themselves that they fail to experience the benefit of it. When that happens to you, try to laugh at yourself more.

• Fact No. 3: When I feel spiritually dry, I know that God is right there with me in the midst of the pain. I know that I am permeated and pervaded by his love even when I don't feel a thing. Faith is a form of knowledge which transcends feelings.

• Fact No. 4: My union with God depends more on his love for me than on my love for him. I never try to force feelings of any kind when it comes to God. I simply relax and accept my inadequate feelings just as they are.

The good news of Christmas is simply this: God is with us now and always. With his help we can learn to live joyfully because of the knowledge of his love. Merry Christmas.

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Cornucopia / Susan Bierman

'Not a creature was praying'

Sometimes the true meaning of Christmas can get lost in the midst of the commercial hype.



Hustling around, shopping, gift wrapping, baking cookies, and attending parties can often push the true meaning of Christmas further away from our minds.

Recently, my sister shared a Christmas poem with me titled " 'Twas the Night Before Jesus Came." My brother had received this poem inside a Christmas card last year and passed it on to my sister. So, I felt the poem was worth passing on to *Criterion* readers. The author of the poem is unknown to me.

The poem made me stop and think about what is important on Christmas Eve, as well as any other day of the year.

And so the poem goes:

'Twas the Night Before Jesus came and all through the house not a creature was praying, not one in the house. Their Bibles were lain on the shelf without care in hopes that Jesus would not come there.

The children were dressing to crawl into bed, not once ever kneeling or bowing a head. And Mom in her rocker with babe on her lap was watching the Late Show while I took a nap.

When out of the East there arose such a clatter, I sprang to my feet to see what was the matter.

Away to the window I flew like a flash, tore open the shutters and threw up the sash! When what to my wondering eyes should appear, but angels proclaiming that Jesus was here.

With a light like the sun sending forth a bright ray, I knew in a moment this must be the day!

The light of his face made me cover my head. It was Jesus! Returning just like he had said. And though I possessed worldly

wisdom and wealth, I cried when I saw him in spite of myself.

In the Book of Life which he held in his hand, was written the name of every saved man.

He spoke not a word as he searched for my name; When he said, "It's not here," my head hung in shame.

The people whose names had been written with love he had gathered to take to his Father above. With those who were ready he rose without sound, while all the rest were left standing around.

I fell to my knees, but it was too late; I had waited too long and thus sealed my fate. I stood and I cried as they rose out of sight; Oh, if only I had been ready tonight.

In the words of this poem the meaning is clear; The coming of Jesus is drawing near.

There's only one life and when comes the last call, we'll find that the Bible was true after all!

Journey of Hope 2001

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File photo by Mary Jo Thomas-Day

St. Monica in Indianapolis religious education and school students use this barrel to collect food, diapers, clothing and toys for homeless babies during an annual Advent "Baby Shower for Jesus" program. Here, they stand in front of a Jesse tree—made by children in all the parish religion classes—with symbols of those waiting for Christ's birth.

Check It Out . . .

"Beyond Senior Retreat: Christian Awakening Follow-up," a program for young adults who have recently graduated from high school, will be offered Jan. 2-4 at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center in southern Indiana. For more information call the center at 812-923-8817.

"Can We Do It All and Do God?" a reflection Monday for men and women, will be offered Jan. 13 at Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis. Kevin DePrey, director of Fatima Retreat House is the presenter. The program begins with registration at 9 a.m. and concludes at 2 p.m. The cost is \$20 per person, which includes presentations, liturgy, and lunch. Child care is available at \$3 per child or \$5 for two or more children. Fee payment deadline is Jan. 3. For more information or to register call the retreat house at 317-545-7681.

St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis announces a time change for the Saturday Anticipation Mass. The 6 p.m. time will change to 5 p.m. effective Jan. 4.

"Dreams, Language of the Soul," a women's retreat, presented by Franciscan Sister Gabriele Uhlein, will be offered Jan. 17-19, at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center in southern Indiana. The retreat will offer participants ways to meditate and study the message of their dreams. For more information call the retreat center at 812-923-8817. Mount St. Francis Retreat Center is located on Hwy. 150 at Paoli Pike in Floyd's Knobs.

The program, "Being a Catholic Today Celebrating Life," will be offered Jan. 6 at the Benedict Inn, 1402 Southern Avenue, in Beech Grove. For more information or to register call the center at 317-788-7581.

An Indianapolis business has pledged to make Christmas brighter for several people who are residents at Holy Family Shelter. Dinner will be served to the adults and children of the shelter on Dec. 21. There will also be a visit from Santa Claus. Indiana Car and Truck, 7848 Pendleton Pike, in Indianapolis is asking people to bring unwrapped toys and warm winter-wear to this location so the children will receive gifts at the dinner. Those donating items will have the chance to win a \$1,000 prize.

A Christmas Season Design Tour for all those involved in seasonal decoration of churches will be offered 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon Jan. 4. The tour will begin at SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral. Other Indianapolis churches on the tour are Good Shepherd and St. Matthew. Sherie Berg, Associate Director for Liturgical Formation, will lead the tour. The event is sponsored by the Office of Worship. Participants will be asked to carpool. The tour will be cancelled if there is inclement weather. For more information call Christina Blake in the Office of Worship at 236-1493 or 800-383-9836 ext. 1483.

The archdiocesan Office of Worship, will sponsor a Lent/Easter Seasonal Design Workshop for those who are involved in seasonal decoration in parishes from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon Jan. 11 at St. Paul Catholic Center Library, 1413 E. 17th St., in Bloomington. The cost is \$5 per parish group. The registration deadline is Jan. 8. The workshop will be cancelled if there is inclement weather. For more information call Christina Blake at the Office of Worship at 236-1483 or 800-382-9836 ext. 1483.

Ministry to refugees relies on volunteers, donations

By Mary Ann Wyand
Second of two parts

When the Vietnamese refugee family arrived at Indianapolis International Airport in November, they carried a few bags of clothing and personal belongings.

The man also brought along several packages of coffee from the store he had owned in Vietnam. In gratitude for his family's safety, he offered some of his small supply of coffee to a Catholic Social Services Refugee Resettlement staff member. The gift was, in essence, a modern-day tale of the widow's mite, a present from a family who had given up everything for a chance to begin life again in a place where they can live without fear.

Refugees resettled in central and southern Indiana by the U.S. government and the United States Catholic Conference Division of Migration and Refugee Services are welcomed by a CSS staff member at the airport and driven to an apartment furnished for them. Within days, they begin English classes and job interviews with the help of CSS staff members.

"The Migration and Refugee Services Division of the United States Catholic Conference is one of 11 voluntary agencies that resettle refugees across the country," Joyce Overton, program director for the Indianapolis archdiocesan affiliate, explained. "During 1996, we resettled 51 people in central Indiana."

The local CSS refugee resettlement staff has helped Vietnamese, Haitians, Bosnians, and Ukrainians whose lives were endangered in their homelands.

"We've been told to expect the arrival of several groups of Kurds in coming months," Overton said. "We're looking at housing, working with translators, and networking for donations, so when they do arrive here we will have a foundation in place for them."

CSS resettlement specialist Michelle Gundrum is pleased that students from Cathedral and Roncalli high schools in Indianapolis have volunteered to help move furniture and housewares into apartments for refugees. She said volunteer help is appreciated throughout the year.

ICC board targets five issues as its 1997 legislative priorities

By Brigid Curtis

The Indiana Catholic Conference (ICC) board of directors targeted five legislative priorities for the 1997 Indiana General Assembly during a meeting Dec. 7.

The board stressed fairness in education, noting the current inequalities between accredited non-public schools and public schools; block grant implementation from a Catholic Charities' perspective; opposition to legalizing surrogate parenting contracts, banning partial-birth abortions; and extending funding for farm counseling.

The ICC will join the Indiana Non-Public Education Association to address issues of fairness in education by introducing legislation on mentor teachers and advanced placement testing. The ICC will also support the free textbook program for students attending accredited non-public schools.

The ICC has a long history of supporting welfare reform. It will propose a welfare reform plan to the new head of the state's Family & Social Services Administration and to the legislature. It will call for innovative programs of assistance to the poor that guarantee protection for vulnerable children and others in need. According to ICC's executive director, M. Desmond Ryan, the charities directors in Indiana hope to



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

These donated household supplies will be used by Catholic Social Services Refugee Resettlement Program director Joyce Overton, other staff members, and volunteers to furnish apartments for refugees. Donations of furniture, housewares, and clothing are needed for refugee families.

Donations of all types of household supplies and clothing come from people, parishes, and schools, she said, and supplement furniture, housewares, towels, and clothes received from the St. Vincent de Paul Society and CSS Crisis Center.

Coats and apparel for men, women and children are always needed, she said, and may be donated by calling the CSS Refugee Resettlement Program at 317-236-1551 or 800-382-9836, extension 1551.

"Refugees are in transition for quite a while," Gundrum said. "Most refugees arrive with very little, just a bag and the clothes on their back. There is a definite culture shock, but I've found that the Vietnamese community, for example, really sticks together and has their own support system for new refugees. When we resettle a Vietnamese family, I call a volunteer, who calls several families we have helped in previous years. We usually end up having 10 to 15 people at the airport to greet the new family and help with language difficulties. They want to offer their friendship and support because a year or two ago they were the ones who got off the airplane. They do a lot for each other."

Helping refugees adjust to the many challenges of daily life in a new country and culture is an important part of the CSS refugee resettlement ministry, she said. "I worry about my clients when it's cold. We teach them how to use the bus system, but 30 degrees is very cold for people who come from a climate that is hot and humid all year round."

Most refugees find employment doing manual labor jobs in restaurants, hotels and factories, Gundrum said, and work hard in these entry-level service positions.

Overton has worked for the archdiocesan CSS Refugee Resettlement Program for 18 years, and sees this ministry as "a great opportunity to watch people who arrived here with little or nothing learn to provide for themselves."

National Migration Week is Jan. 6-12, she said. "We are a nation of immigrants, and it's important that we help refugees."

CSS Refugee Resettlement Program volunteer coordinator Kelly Ellington invites parish representatives and individuals to call the office for information about tutoring opportunities that supplement English classes and other assistance.

"We need help with tutoring," Ellington said. "We're looking for people who are willing to welcome these foreigners to our country, show them the American culture, and be interested in their culture."

Hospitality is a major component of the refugee resettlement ministry, Gundrum said. "The refugees come here to live because they have been persecuted overseas for various reasons and forced to leave their homeland. I think if they had a choice, they wouldn't leave the home they have always known."

Refugee resettlement is a challenging and emotional ministry, she said. "The refugees have traveled a long way and don't know anyone. They just know that someone from the United States Catholic Conference will help them."



The vultures weren't swooping at the Saturn retailer.

— Mark Stankovich

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STATEWIDE LENDING

Creating a life-like nativity is a family affair

By Susan Bierman

It's a family affair.

"They all get in on it," Shirley Hentrup said, referring to the life-like nativity scene which sits on her son's property in southern Indiana.

Since 1990, the Hentrup family has gathered each year on Thanksgiving weekend at Betty and Paul Hentrup's barn in Elizabeth to prepare the nativity scene for display.

"We call it a labor of love," said Shirley, who is a parishioner at St. Mary in New Albany.

Her sons, daughters, and grandchildren show up at the barn to clean, repair, and add to the nativity figures. One of the granddaughters, Cheryl Foster, 11, who is a parishioner at St. Mary of the Knobs Church in Floyds Knobs, has a special job each year.

"Every year, one of her jobs is to wash the baby Jesus doll," said Betty Hentrup, a parishioner at St. Mary in New Albany.

Cheryl had given this doll to be used in the nativity seven years ago. At that time, Cheryl was only 4 years old.

"She willingly sacrificed it," Shirley said.

The nativity—which started out seven years ago with Joseph, Mary, Baby Jesus, two shepherds, and a drummer boy—has grown. Among the life-size figures that are now in the nativity are: Mary, Joseph, Baby Jesus, an angel, Three Kings, shepherds, goats, a camel, a mule, and sheep.

The figures are hand-made by the Hentrup family. Paul Hentrup, a parishioner at St. Mary in New Albany, has carved many of the figures himself from styrofoam blocks. The styrofoam figures are covered with various other materials such as fiberglass, papier-mache, chicken wire, and paint. The faces of Mary, Joseph, the Three kings, shepherds and angel are blank Halloween masks on which the Hentrups have handpainted the faces.

The angel is a new figure in the crib this year. It soars from the ceiling inside the barn hovering over the scene. Shirley said the angel's body is made of women's pantyhose stuffed with polyester. Its wings are made of real feathers covered with glitter. The white flowing angel hair material around the bottom of the angel's body "makes her look like she is on a cloud," Shirley said.

Betty said the angel was added to the nativity scene this year in memory of her sister Marilyn Reynolds, who passed away last September.

"She (Marilyn) told us she would watch over us," Betty said.

Each year, the Hentrups have new ideas of what to add to their nativity. Next year, Paul already has his mind on rebuilding the shepherds and adding more animals.

Besides the angel, the nativity has

another new addition this year. Music has been piped in so people can hear it while standing in front of the nativity. Paul said there are 250 feet of wire running from their house to the barn. He took the speakers from his truck to install in the barn. The music is controlled from the house.

Betty, who made the tape, said she chose various versions of "Silent Night" to be played over and over. There is a pause between each version to allow quiet time.

After dark, the background of the crib becomes a shadow of the Town of Bethlehem.

The scene obviously is quite an inspiration to passersby who travel along Hwy. 111, located parallel to the Ohio River. Betty said people driving by apply their brakes right in front of the scene.

"It kind of shocks you if you have never seen it before," she said.

Betty said there are others who stop and pull in her drive-way and stare at the nativity from their cars. Some park their cars and come up to the nativity on foot. She recalled one year there was a bus-load of young adults who had come from a church in New Albany. Some 30 people got off the bus and stood around the nativity singing Christmas carols. She said it was around 10 o'clock in the evening and it was freezing outside. After singing several songs around the nativity, the group came up to the house and sang carols to Betty and her husband, Paul.

"I couldn't believe it. I never saw my husband grin so much in his life," Betty said.

Last Friday night, a lady knocked on the Hentrup's door bringing a white poinsettia. She told Betty she appreciated the scene and said, "This is to say thank you for reminding me of what Christmas is all about."

"That's the whole point of us doing this. When people start thanking you, you know you are getting the point across," Betty said.

About three years ago, Betty recalls it had snowed on Christmas morning, so she went out to take a photo of the snow on the nativity. To her surprise, she found three large long-stem red roses lying upon Baby Jesus.

"I just wanted to cry, it was so beautiful," Betty said.

Since that first time, three red roses have been mysteriously laid upon Baby Jesus each year. No one in the Hentrup family is aware of the person who is bringing the roses to the site. Roses have also been brought to the scene on other occasions. On Dec. 8 of this year, a yellow rose was found lying across the Baby Jesus.

Mike Hentrup, a parishioner at St. Mary in New Albany, said when people get together as a family it shows what you can do and how much effect you can have on other people.

"I know it gives other people a lot, but it gives us that much more, knowing that it affects them," Betty said.



Photos by Susan Bierman

The nativity above was created by the Hentrup family who are parishioners at St. Mary Church in New Albany. The life-like figures are made of various materials such as: chicken wire, styrofoam, papier-mache, and fiberglass. The nativity scene, which has been a family tradition for seven years, is located on Hwy. 111 in Elizabeth.

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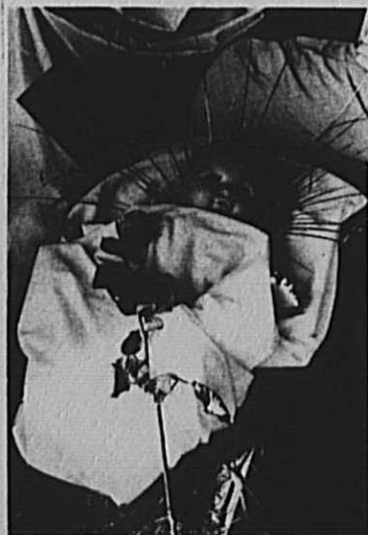
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At left, a yellow rose is placed upon Baby Jesus. At right, the angel, which is a new addition to the nativity, is dedicated in memory of Marilyn Reynolds, who passed away last September.

The Year In Review:

Physician-assisted suicide is key issue in 1996

By Jerry Filteau, Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON—Whatever the U.S. Supreme Court decides in 1997 about physician-assisted suicide, 1996 will go down in history as the year that set the stage for the high court's most momentous life-and-death policy decision since it legalized abortion in 1973.

In March and April two federal appeals courts—the 9th Circuit Court in San Francisco and the 2nd in New York—declared, each on different grounds, that terminally ill Americans have a constitutional right to kill themselves and have a doctor help them do it.

The Supreme Court agreed Oct. 1 to review both cases. In November the U.S. Catholic Conference and numerous other

religious bodies filed friend-of-the-court briefs urging the nation's highest judicial body not to enshrine a so-called "right to die" in the U.S. Constitution.

In Michigan Dr. Jack Kevorkian—assisted suicide's most widely recognized advocate because of his frequent defiance of the law to help patients die and publicize his cause—played a role in more than a dozen new suicides in 1996 after a jury acquitted him of criminal charges in two of the suicides at which he assisted.

1996 was also a year of U.S. presidential elections and bitter debate over partial-birth abortion, new troubles in the Middle East, Africa, the Balkans and Northern Ireland, further ecumenical advances and difficulties, and new Catholic intramural conflicts.

It was a year when Congress passed a two-step increase in the minimum wage, a move long urged by the U.S. bishops and many Catholic social service agencies.

But Congress also enacted welfare reform legislation that imposed strict time limits on welfare eligibility, excluded legal immigrants from most public assistance including Medicaid, and sharply reduced future food stamp expenditures.

The U.S. bishops called the new welfare law "deeply flawed" and the head of Catholic Charities USA called it a "national disgrace."

New federal legislation on health care insurance made it easier for people to retain coverage despite job changes or pre-existing conditions.

It was on partial-birth abortion, however, that the U.S. hierarchy tried hardest to make its voice heard. In April President Clinton vetoed the legislation to ban such abortions, which involve suctioning the brain of the fetus, allowing for easier delivery of the collapsed head.

In a joint letter to Clinton, the nation's eight cardinals and Bishop Anthony M. Pilla of Cleveland, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, vowed to fight his veto, saying the procedure the legislation sought to ban bordered on infanticide.

In a series of high-profile actions—including national days of prayer, a grass-roots mailing campaign that brought millions of postcards to Congress, and an unprecedented prayer vigil of all U.S. cardinals and dozens of bishops on the steps of the Capitol—the bishops waged a public campaign of extraordinary proportions to get Congress to override the veto. The override vote succeeded in the House but failed in the Senate.

Despite the clear, ongoing conflict between the bishops and Clinton on abortion, in his November re-election the president had a stronger showing among Catholics than among the general populace. He got slightly under 50 percent of the total vote but 53 percent of the Catholic vote.

For Catholics 1996 was a time when the death or illness of leading church figures was often in the news.

Millions mourned Chicago Cardinal Joseph Bernardin's death Nov. 14 at the age of 68. His serenity in facing terminal cancer capped a long career as one of the most notable U.S. Catholic leaders in the 20th century.

Only months before his death he launched the Catholic Common Ground Project, an effort to overcome divisions among U.S. Catholics through dialogue, reconciliation, and a restored sense of common ground centered on Jesus Christ.

Only a week before his death, he wrote to the Supreme Court urging it to reject legalization of physician-assisted suicide.

Other leading church figures who died in 1996 included Belgian Cardinal Leo

Jozef Suenens, 91, a leader at the Second Vatican Council and in the postconciliar Catholic charismatic renewal; and Philadelphia's Cardinal John J. Krol, 85, one of Vatican II's undersecretaries and the second president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the Nobel Peace laureate who is world-renowned for her work with the poor and dying, spent her 86th birthday Aug. 26 in a Calcutta hospital recovering from a combination of malaria, heart problems and pneumonia that nearly killed her.

It was one of two severe health crises during the year for the nun who has headed the Missionaries of Charity since she founded the order in 1950.

In October Mother Teresa became the fifth person in history to be named an honorary U.S. citizen and only the second, after Sir Winston Churchill in 1963, to be so honored while still living. The following month she was hospitalized again in critical condition and had angioplasty to open restricted arteries.

Pope John Paul II, 76, faced several bouts with fever during the year and in October was hospitalized to remove his appendix, which his doctors called a source of recurring infections.

In November some 1,600 cardinals, bishops and priests ordained in 1946 joined the pope in Rome to celebrate his and their 50th anniversary of priestly ordination. The pope took the occasion to write a book of personal reflections on his own priesthood, published in English in the United States under the title "Gift and Mystery."

Despite his age and health problems, as the pontiff completed his 18th year in the papacy he continued to be an active international traveler. He visited Guatemala, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Venezuela in February. He went to Tunisia in April, Slovenia in May, Germany in June, and Hungary and France in separate trips in September.

In his annual address to the world's Vatican diplomats in January he urged a total ban on nuclear testing. When the test ban treaty was approved in September, the Vatican was among the first to sign.

In February he issued new rules for future conclaves of cardinals to elect a new pope. In March he published an apostolic exhortation on consecrated life in which he called for greater decision-making roles in the church for women religious.

In April, as a conference in Geneva prepared to discuss updating an international conventional weapons convention, he called for a global ban on anti-personnel land mines. In June, on the eve of a new international conference on housing, Habitat II, he decried the economic inequities fostering rapid growth of urban slums around the world. In July he condemned the massacre of 300 Tutsis in a Burundi refugee camp.

ATLAS

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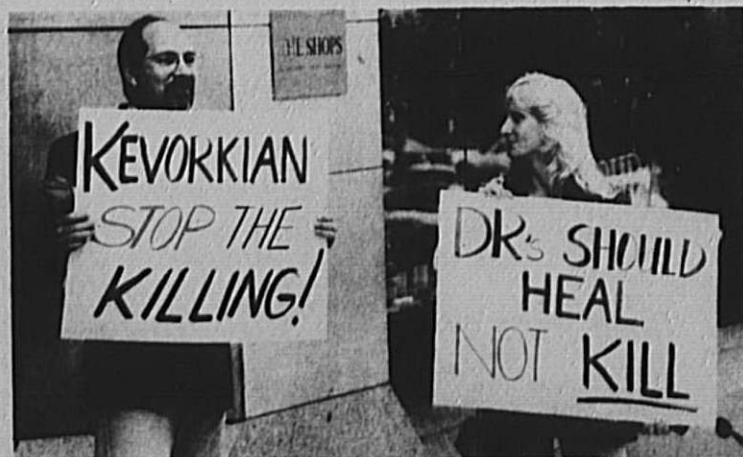
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CNS file photo by Bob Roller

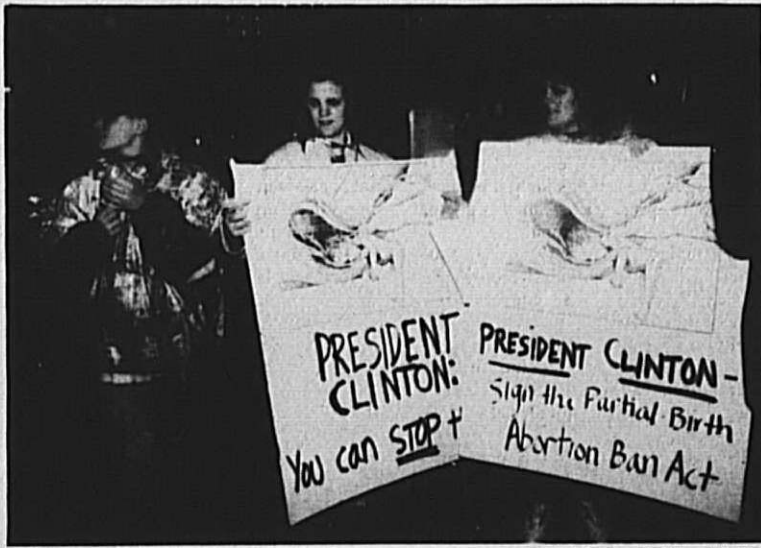
Two people protest a speaking engagement by Dr. Jack Kevorkian, the nation's most visible advocate of assisted suicide, at the National Press Club in Washington. Physician-assisted suicide was one of the top newstories of 1996.

In October Pope John Paul said in a message to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences that the theory of evolution must be recognized as "more than a hypothesis." The message was part of a series of papal efforts in recent years to promote closer dialogue and cooperation between the worlds of science and faith, but it drew strong opposition from those who view divine revelation in Scripture and evolutionary theory as fundamentally opposed to each other.

In a radio broadcast to China in December he urged Chinese Catholics in the government-approved church, which is not united with Rome, to reunite with those loyal to Rome. Several reports from China during the year indicated that government authorities were waging a new campaign to force underground Catholics, who remain loyal to Rome, into the government-approved church.

In early December the pope met with the primate of the Anglican Communion, Archbishop George R. Carey of Canterbury. The two expressed a continuing commitment to advancing ecumenical relations but called the opposite stands of their churches on ordination of women an obstacle to Catholic-Anglican reconciliation. Earlier in the year the Catholic Theological Society of America asked its members to embark on a year-long study of the status of Catholic teaching on women's ordination, based on a paper that expressed strong skepticism about the claims of authority in the latest Vatican document on the issue.

The pontiff set off a wide range of church activities all over the world with his initiatives to prepare for the start of the third millennium of Christianity through a series of regional bishops' synods in Rome, a three-year spiritual preparation focusing on the persons of the Trinity, and a declaration that the year 2000 will be celebrated as a special year of jubilee.



CNS file photo by Nancy Wiechec

Graphic depictions of a late-term abortion procedure called partial-birth abortion were a feature in unsuccessful efforts to pass legislation banning the method, one of the top news stories of the year. These protesters outside the White House were at one of several prayer vigils organized by the U.S. bishops' pro-life committee.

In a long series of Wednesday audience talks on Mary throughout the year, he called attention to Catholic Marian beliefs.

He devoted many of his Sunday Angelus talks to the spiritual riches of the East in an effort to deepen Catholic-Orthodox dialogue and understanding.

Catholic-Orthodox tensions in Eastern Europe and Russia continued, however, as Orthodox officials objected to Catholic activities in the region.

The pope's own 1995 call for ecumenical discussion of how his ministry, as bishop of Rome and successor of Peter, can serve Christian unity drew numerous responses in 1996.

Several U.S. and international bilateral dialogue commissions agreed to address the issue of Petrine ministry as a service of unity in the near future.

The world's top two non-Catholic ecumenical leaders said in July, in response to questions from a leading Polish Catholic weekly, *Tygodnik Powszechny*, that the current exercise of the pope's office within the Catholic Church poses a "decisive obstacle" to Christian unity.

The two—the Rev. Konrad Raiser, secretary general of the World Council of Churches, and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I of Constantinople, first among all the Orthodox patriarchs—said there is a desire among the churches for a

universal office of unity and leadership, but not in the form that the papacy is currently understood and exercised.

The pope, in a message to a December conference on papal primacy convened by the Vatican, described the issue as a critical one for ecumenical discussion.

Several in-church controversies occupied the attention of U.S. Catholics in 1996. Those controversies served to highlight the debate in the church over what is destructive dissent and what is constructive dialogue and appropriate, loyal expression of legitimate Christian freedom.

In March Bishop Fabian W. Bruskewitz of Lincoln, Neb., attracted national media attention when he enacted a special law in his diocese interdicting and later excommunicating Catholics for joining organizations such as Call to Action, a group which at the national level counts numerous priests and full-time church workers and at least three bishops among its members.

In May, when a coalition of groups launched a yearlong "We Are Church" petition campaign—seeking, among other things, more lay voice in church decisions, changes in moral teachings and married and women priests—Bishop Pilla called the campaign divisive and not conducive to real dialogue in the church. Later in the year some Canadian Catholics launched a similar drive and met a similar cool response from their bishops.

Retired San Francisco Archbishop John R. Quinn, in a June 29 address at Oxford University, called for reform of the Roman Curia, a new ecumenical council and more direct and substantive involvement of the world's bishops in the manner in which the pope exercises his teaching and governing office. He said such changes are needed to bring the Catholic Church and other Christian churches closer to full unity.

See YEAR, page 12

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YEAR

continued from page 11

New York's Cardinal John J. O'Connor publicly took issue with Archbishop Quinn's views, devoting three pages of his archdiocesan newspaper to a detailed critique of the Oxford lecture.

In mid-August Cardinal Bernardin, joined by a committee of prominent Catholics from diverse backgrounds, announced the Catholic Common Ground Project. The goal of the initiative was to open a new dialogue to overcome U.S. Catholic polarizations, repudiating ideological extremes and revitalizing those in the Catholic center, united and grounded in their shared commitment to Christ and church teaching.

Cardinals Bernard F. Law of Boston, James A. Hickey of Washington, Anthony J. Bevilacqua of Philadelphia and Adam J. Maida of Detroit publicly criticized "Called to Be Catholic," the framework statement of Cardinal Bernardin's initiative, saying its call for dialogue and toleration of differences appeared to place authentic Catholic teaching and dissent on the same level.

Shortly before Cardinal Bernardin died, at a first meeting of the project's advisory committee, Archbishop Oscar H. Lipscomb of Mobile, Ala., was named to succeed Cardinal Bernardin as chairman of the project.

At national meetings in June and November the U.S. bishops continued work on the first completely new English sacramentary in a quarter-century, a project that has occupied them for the past several years and is expected to be completed in 1997.

At their June meeting in Portland, Ore., they endorsed the ecumenically sponsored Burned Churches Fund, and many subsequently took up collections in their dioceses to help rebuild black churches, mainly

in the South, that had recently been destroyed or damaged by arsonists.

Bishop Pilla, with the backing of the other bishops, issued a statement sharply objecting to the secret taping by Oregon prison authorities of a prisoner's sacramental confession to a priest and the continued existence and use of the tape despite church demands that it be destroyed to protect the sacramental seal of confession.

At their November meeting in Washington the bishops approved, after several years' work, a document on Catholic colleges and universities, implementing for the United States the pope's 1990 worldwide norms for Catholic higher education.

They also issued a new pastoral plan for ministry with young adults and approved a brief statement of 10 ethical principles to guide every Catholic's economic life.

The church's stand of nonviolence as a Gospel response to violence found witness in numerous ways in 1996, especially in relation to capital punishment.

The movie "Dead Man Walking," dramatizing the real-life death row ministry of St. Joseph Sister Helen Prejean, earned Susan Sarandon a "best actress" Oscar at the Academy Awards.

Sister Prejean spoke on nonviolence and described her work in numerous speeches and interviews around the country and received Notre Dame University's Laetare Medal for her work.

At the state and local level many bishops stated their opposition to the use of capital punishment and appealed for clemency when a prisoner in their area was about to be executed. Shortly before his own death Cardinal Bernardin visited a man facing execution for multiple murders. He told the victims' families that his compassion for the killer did not mean he condoned the man's crimes.

Pope John Paul was among religious leaders who pleaded in vain for the life of

two men executed by firing squad in Guatemala in September.

The Middle East peace process, dramatically altered since the November 1995 assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, came almost to a standstill in 1996 as numerous new obstacles arose.

The year opened with a sweeping victory for Yasser Arafat and the peace process as Palestinian voters conducted their first-ever democratic elections for a president and legislative council. But in late February and early March suicide bomb attacks by Palestinian extremists killed more than 50 people. In April, artillery attacks on northern Israeli settlements by Hezbollah militants in southern Lebanon brought Israeli counterattacks, including one which

accidentally killed more than 100 refugees at a camp in Lebanon.

In June Israelis narrowly elected Benjamin Netanyahu as their new prime minister. Negotiations on the status of Jerusalem were delayed and negotiations over issues of Palestinian self-rule came to a virtual halt amid new tensions. In September Netanyahu and Arafat met and agreed to renew negotiations. In December the pope met with Arafat after Israel gave new support to Israeli settlers.

In December the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to two East Timorese human rights leaders, Bishop Carlos Filipe Ximenes Belo of Dili and Jose Ramos Horta, highlighted the long human rights struggle in East Timor since Indonesia annexed the predominantly Catholic former Portuguese colony in 1976.

Notable quotes in 1996

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON—Here are notable quotes by religious figures in 1996.

"We can look at death as an enemy or a friend. As a person of faith, I see death as a friend."—Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin (announcing Aug. 29 that he would soon die from cancer).

"Didn't he teach us? Didn't he show us the way?"—Msgr. Kenneth Velo (in funeral homily Nov. 20, on Cardinal Bernardin's witness in life).

"Let me die like those that I serve."—Mother Teresa of Calcutta (hospitalized Nov. 22 for acute heart failure, before her doctor persuaded her to undergo life-saving angioplasty).

"Today . . . new knowledge leads to the recognition of the theory of evolution as more than a hypothesis."—Pope John Paul II (in a message on Christian faith and

evolution Oct. 22 to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences).

"Relativism has thus become the central problem for the faith at the present time."—Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger (prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, in a speech Sept. 16 to bishops from mission territories).

"There is no more slope left. We have now hit rock bottom in our care and concern for the value of human life in our country."—Cardinal Roger M. Mahony (after court ruling that physician-assisted suicide is a constitutional right).

"Mr. President, you and you alone had the choice of whether or not to allow children, almost completely born, to be killed brutally in partial-birth abortions."—Eight U.S. cardinals and the head of the bishops' conference (to President Clinton following his claim that he "had no choice but to veto" the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act.)

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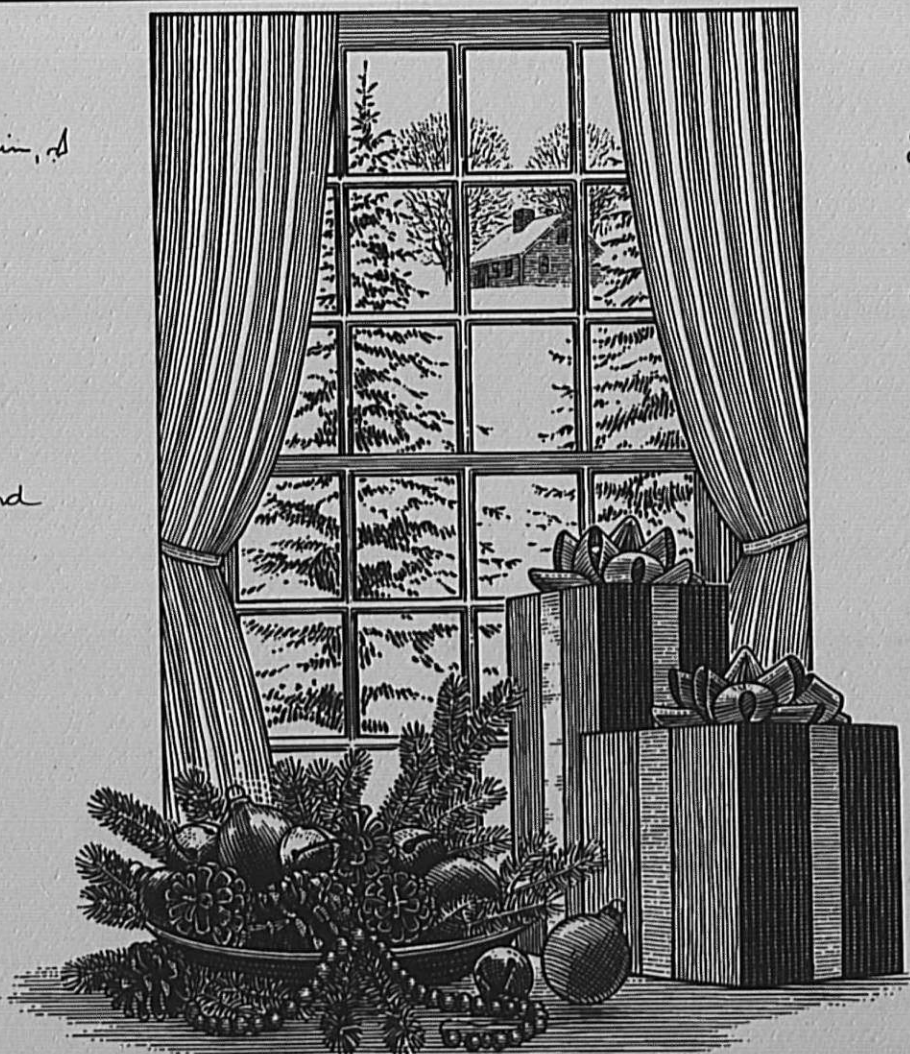
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The Criterion staff wishes you all the blessings of this holiday season!

Mary's Lullaby

O my Jesus, little lambkin,
smallest, softest, sweetest one,
listen to your mother calling—
the song I sing is for my son.

At my breast take your delight,
then rest against my beating heart.
You come to me from heaven's height,
never, never shall we part.

While I rock you gently slowly,
the dear beasts warin us with their breath.
Little one, so great, so holy,
I will love you beyond death.

Though a mighty star exploding
frightens shepherds, summons kings,
we are safe in Joseph's keeping,
circled round by angels' wings.

O my darling little Jesus,
Joachim and Anna's daughter,
kisses you as they would long to,
sings the lullaby they taught her.

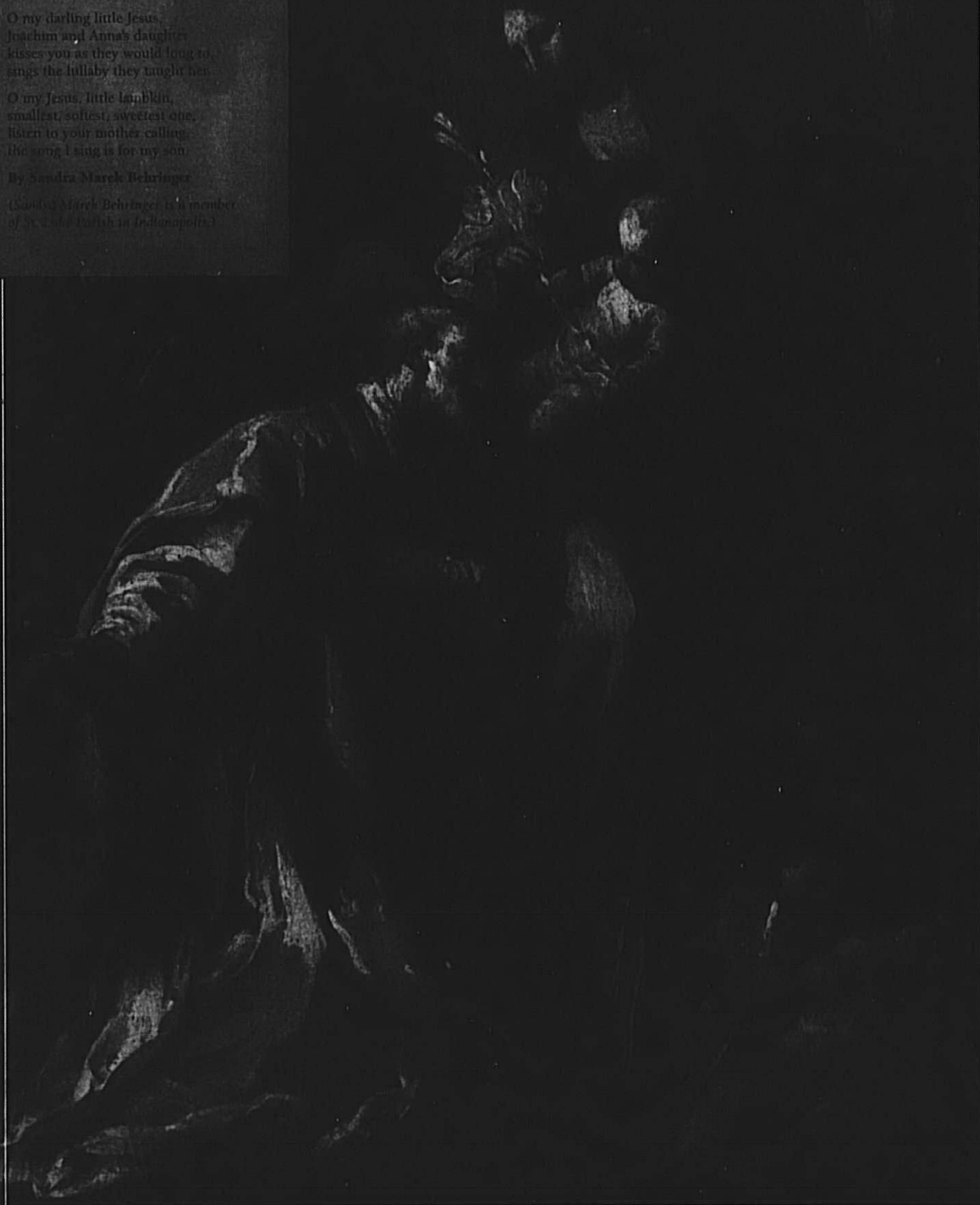
O my Jesus, little lambkin,
smallest, softest, sweetest one,
listen to your mother calling—
the song I sing is for my son.

By Sandra Marek Behringer

(Sandra Marek Behringer is a member
of St. Luke Parish in Indianapolis.)

A Supplement to *The Criterion*

Christmas 1996



The Bible readings for Christmas Midnight Mass

By Fr. Francis T. Gignac, S.J.

Great literature has a certain transcendent quality about it: it can be enjoyed by anyone at first reading, and yet the more deeply a person looks into it, the more it means and the richer it becomes. So it is with the literary collection we call the Bible. I invite you to examine with me the three selections presented for our consideration in the Christmas Midnight Mass.

One step in appreciating a literary work is to situate it in its historical context. In the first reading (Isaiah 9:1-6), the prophet Isaiah speaks of a darkness that has spread over Galilee, the northern part of Israel. The kingdom of

Assyria had deported the people of this region and resettled it with foreigners.

Gentiles were brought in from other parts of the empire. In this time of national disaster, the birth of a royal son inspires the prophet to express the hope that this future king might be an ideal successor to David of old and save those northern provinces by reconquering them for Israel, thus becoming a light to the Gentiles. The exalted names he gives the child are royal titles inherited by kings of Judah on the day of their coronation: wonderful counselor, mighty hero, everlasting father, prince of peace.

Another way to enhance our understanding of a piece of literature is to understand the literary form adopted by



CNS photo from KNA-Bild

God's people, represented by the shepherds in Christmas night's Gospel story according to Luke, are sent to the manger to find the Lord.

the author. In Christmas night's Gospel passage (Luke 2:1-14) we have a theological reflection on the birth of Jesus. Referring to a practice of his own day, this author speaks of a worldwide census during the reign of the Roman Emperor Augustus, who was acknowledged as "savior" and "god" and credited with establishing an era of universal peace. He does this to portray Jesus by contrast as the real savior and ultimate source of peace.

And then, to illustrate the early Christian belief that Jesus was the messianic king of Israel who would bring justice to all the earth, the ideal successor of King David, the author pictures Jesus being born in Bethlehem, David's town. The announcement of good news to the shepherds keeping their night watch in the fields is a proclamation that Jesus is Lord and savior of all people, and that the Gospel would be received by those not considered important by the world's standards.

Now God's people, represented in this story by the shepherds, are sent to the manger to find the Lord. And the scene ends with a heavenly army intoning a rich chorus of praise. With a beautiful canticle, the author invites Christian readers to join in singing of God's glory too, because we too believe that in the birth of this child we have seen God's saving power.

Good literature also often accosts us, challenges us to reevaluate our ways of thinking, to improve our ways of acting. So our second reading, from the late first-

century Pastoral Letter to Titus (2:11-14), tells us that the revelation of God's salvation in Christ demands nothing less of us than a total transformation of our lives. The author of this letter drew his ideas and inspiration from an ancient baptismal liturgy; he makes an urgent appeal to professed Christians to discover the demands of the Christ-life and to strive constantly for moral improvement.

Our consecration with Christ in baptism carries with it a corresponding deputation: as he puts it, we must engage in an interior battle for righteousness and honesty. We are called upon, in his words, to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live temperately, justly and devoutly as we await our blessed hope.

On the feast of Christmas we celebrate in a special way the mystery of God's self-revelation to us in the person of Jesus. For us Christians, it is by following Jesus more closely along his way that we can find God and live out God's will. So let us open our minds and hearts in prayer this Christmas night, that the compassionate God whom we encounter in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus may transform us and deepen our commitment to his teachings, so that we may be more sensitive to their abiding values and be better able to realize these values in our society.

(Jesuit Father Francis T. Gignac is a professor and chairperson of the Department of Biblical Studies at The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C.)

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What was the cave of Bethlehem?

By Fr. John J. Castolot, Catholic News Service

In Luke's story of Jesus' birth, Mary and Joseph had to seek shelter elsewhere because "there was no room for them in the inn" (Luke 2:7). In Christmas pageants nowadays, the innkeeper is usually the "heavy," the one who coldheartedly bars entry to the anxious couple.

Whether Bethlehem, a rustic village, even had an inn is a question. Even if it did, its lodging would not have been of the type we associate today with a decent motel. The word translated "inn" means simply "a place to lie down."

What may be overlooked is that Mary and Joseph did receive hospitality in a village home. But what sort of hospitality was this? Did they receive real lodging?

To grasp what happened, it helps to know something about the structure of the houses in Bethlehem at that time.

In the region where Jesus was born, it was customary to build an extension onto the mouth of a cave for living quarters. This was used for ordinary living purposes, while the cave itself served as a storage area and as shelter for the animals.

So when we read that there was no

"room" for Mary and Joseph, it doesn't mean that all the rooms on three floors, numbered from 100 to 300, were filled. It means there was no room for them in the sleeping area—the area outside the cave.

But Mary had to have her baby someplace. And anyway, a young woman having her first baby needed some privacy. So they lodged in the cave. Here Mary had her baby. More than likely the woman of the house assisted at the delivery.

There was an almost proverbial hospitality among the people. And I strongly suspect it wasn't lacking that night. These people would have been inclined to warmly welcome weary travelers.

This is a good theme to meditate upon at Christmas: what sort of welcome Mary and Joseph might have received. It is the theme of hospitality.

It is in the Spirit of the Gospel to exercise hospitality. In fact, we know it is Godlike, for we read in Matthew:

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

(Father Castolot is a Scripture scholar, author, teacher and lecturer.)

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A word to busy do-it-all women at Christmas

By Anne Hanson, Catholic News Service

"Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house not a creature was stirring..."

Not quite.

In most homes there is one person stirring, the woman of the house. She's stirring and wrapping and putting last-minute touches on everything in anticipation of Christmas Day.

She may be preparing to attend Midnight Mass. Whatever the scenario, she would probably love to "settle down for a long winter's nap."

"The children are nestled all snug in their beds with visions of sugar plums

dancing in their heads." Thank heavens! After keeping up with Advent calendars for 24 days, baking cookies for school parties and figuring out gifts for everyone, there is a sense of relief knowing the hectic schedule will soon be done.

It seems we have put such a story-book spin on Christmas that it's difficult to separate fantasy from reality. Pick up any magazine between the months of October and December and notice the beautiful pictures of handmade gifts and goodies. Every home is decorated to resemble a Victorian village, and cupboards are full of cookies and breads elegantly wrapped.

In the midst of all this sits Mom, dressed in holiday finery she whipped up

at her sewing machine after returning home from work and before starting all this baking and decorating.

Silly, isn't it? But many of us buy into it to some degree.

Women tend to put extraordinary expectations on themselves when it comes to creating the perfect holiday for their families. I count myself right up there with the overachievers in this category.

I have always given what I considered clever and lovely gifts to my children's teachers. This was fine until my three oldest girls were in high school; I still insisted on giving every teacher a gift. My children let me know, as only teen-agers can, that I was being a bit extreme. And they were right! My two younger children are benefiting from a wiser mother, at least when it comes to teacher gifts.

Shopping, cleaning, cooking, decorating, meal planning, participating in church and school activities are all part of life. During the Christmas season they're pushed into high gear. Decorating becomes obsessive as the search for the perfect tree begins.

Meal planning is escalated as a Martha Stewart Christmas dinner is planned. There are parties and activities built around church and work. It often gets so

overwhelming we forget what we are celebrating.

In the midst of the Christmas chaos, it might be very helpful to spend some extra moments each day in prayer. But how?

For the busy do-it-all woman this might be done in the car on the way to the mall or over a cup of coffee at the local Starbucks. It's a simple way of connecting with Jesus and puts things in perspective.

Many of us would do well to change some traditions this year. Make the big family meal a potluck affair, and use pretty paper plates. There will be fewer dishes to wash and more time to visit.

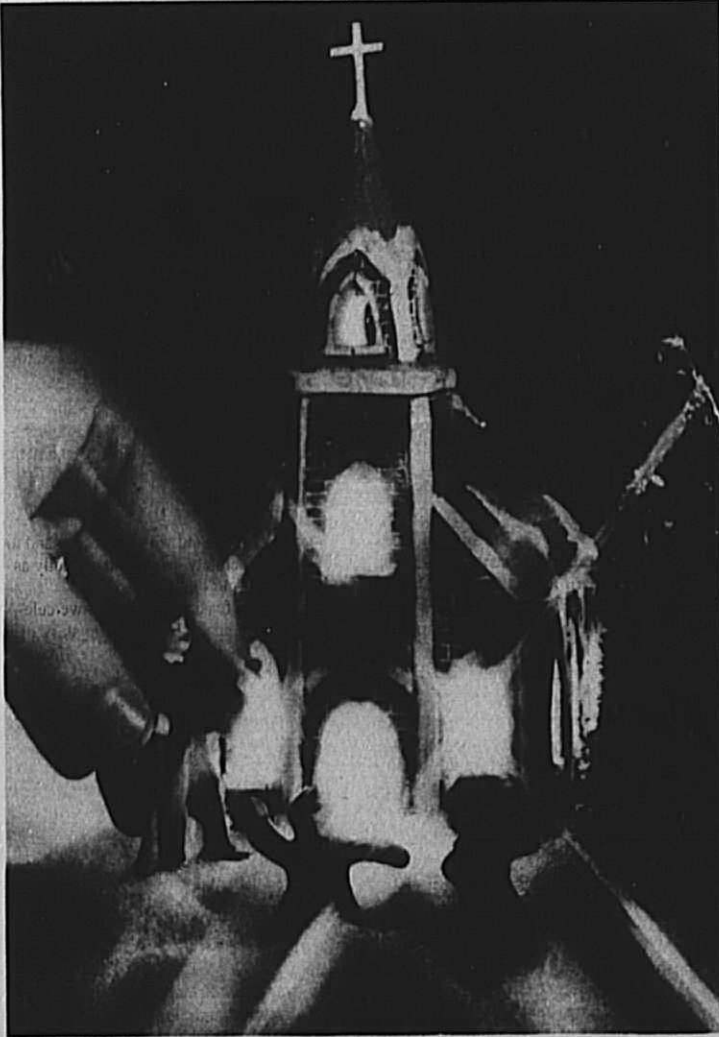
Instead of making or shopping for that one extra gift, take a relaxing bath or snuggle on the couch with your husband or children. Don't give in to the little voice that tells you "just one more thing" will make this a perfect Christmas.

Jesus was born for you, too. The mom, the wife, the woman of the house deserves a bit of that care she so willingly showers on everyone else.

When stopping by the Christmas creche, thank Jesus for allowing you the wisdom to take care of yourself. Believe me, it will be the best gift you receive all year!

(Hansen is a parent education consultant and free-lance writer in Camarillo, Calif.)

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CNS photo by C.A. Blahusch

The night before Christmas in most homes the woman of the house is stirring and wrapping and putting last-minute touches on everything in anticipation of Christmas Day.

What to do with old Christmas cards

By James M. Thunder, Catholic News Service

It was time to prepare for our first Christmas in our new home. We located the boxes with our Christmas decorations and unpacked them. Then we saw the Christmas cards we had received the previous year. We hadn't meant to save them, but we were glad we did.

January came and it was time to throw out the two-years worth of greeting cards. Or was it? As I looked over the cards, I noticed how few had religious themes. I decided then and there that we ought to save the cards with sacred art.

I went to the attic and pulled out a large, sturdy, three-ring binder. I bought some heavy-duty paper, cut the cards and pasted them onto the paper. I arranged them chronologically: Annunciation, Visitation, Nativity—remembering at the same time how my mother used to staple cards to ribbons and hang them. They served as bright holiday decorations.

In the next few years I added sacred art

to my binder from calendars, magazines and even newspapers, thereby including some Old Testament scenes, the passion, death and resurrection, and the saints. And each Christmas I add more.

Although I have arranged the artwork in the sequences of salvation history, other arrangements could be selected—by artist, by period or by school.

Use your imagination. With the multitude of colors and with pictures of saints, you can design a scrapbook that includes miniature stained-glass windows or create a collage of nativity scenes from your Christmas cards!

This Christmas, like the past few, I will share my binder with my children, relatives, friends and visitors. It is our own sacred art gallery. We walk through it slowly and study all the detail. Christ-mases past have become part of our Christmas present.

(Thunder, an attorney in Arlington, Va., and his wife have been foster parents to 11 handicapped boys and have worked with abused and neglected children.)

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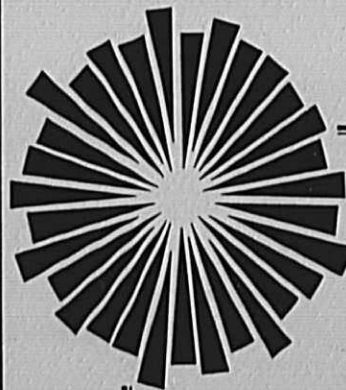
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Naomi Rose has a framed note on her kitchen wall from a man who had dinner with them back in about 1960.

CNS illustration by Robert F. McGovern

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A Jewish family's Christmas dinner tradition

By Fr. W. Thomas Faucher, Catholic News Service

(In this true story I've changed the people's names because they feel strongly about their privacy.)

It was a cold but clear day in 1953, about Dec. 14 or 15, when John Rose went to see Ed O'Connell.

Rose was a jeweler, an eastern European who had come to America after the war. He and his wife Naomi were among the few Jewish families in the area.

O'Connell was a Catholic, a former seminarian, who was one of a new breed of peace officer with some new ideas about how justice should be served.

Rose wasn't sure how Sheriff O'Connell would understand what he wanted. Rose had thought of having someone come with him who spoke better English. But his Jewish friends disagreed with him; even the rabbi who came to the area four times a year did not think he was right.

Rose explained to the sheriff that just 10 years before, at the height of the war, he and his family had escaped deportation to the death camps by being taken in by their Christian neighbors. His younger brother and sister were actually posing as the children of one family, Rose's older sister was with another family, and Rose and his parents lived with yet another as distant cousins.

For almost a year, Rose's family had not been together. So plans were made for all the families to join together for Christmas dinner. They felt the Germans would never expect Jews to be eating Christmas dinner with Christians.

For the Roses, all the Christmas rituals were new and strange. To help make them feel at home, their hosts used a few Jewish prayers and stressed that Mary, Joseph and Jesus were all homeless Jews, taken in by someone else that first Christmas.

Now 10 years later Rose had come up with an idea to return the kindness of that Christmas dinner. He wanted to invite five prisoners who would be in jail on Christmas Day to come to his home for dinner.

Sheriff O'Connell decided to allow it as long as a guard went along. Thus began a continuing tradition of having several prisoners come to Christmas dinner.

With each new sheriff, Rose went down and asked again. Even after Rose died in 1979, Naomi and then her son Matt continued the tradition most years.

In the early days most who came were in jail for petty theft or drunkenness. Over time the Roses noticed that the prisoners were gradually getting younger. Most of their offenses were drug related.

In the early years, too, all the men who came had experienced Christmas dinner when growing up. But later, most who came had never had any kind of Christmas dinner before.

Rose insisted from the beginning that the dinner never be publicized. His first Christmas dinner had to be secret, and he felt that if the prisoners' dinner became famous it would distract from their enjoyment of it.

Matt Rose's son did a little project on the dinner as part of a college assignment. He noted that none of the prisoners invited to dinner ever was arrested for a crime after his release.

Naomi Rose has a framed note on her kitchen wall from a man who had dinner with them about 1960. It says:

"It was the only time in my life I had ever been invited anywhere. Thank you for dinner. You people are what God wants all of us to be."

(Father Faucher is a priest of the Diocese of Boise, Idaho, on assignment in the Diocese of Baker, Ore.)

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To be, or not to be, hospitable

By Carole Morris Greene, Catholic News Service

Christmas is my favorite time of year. My way to express how deeply I feel about the birth of my Lord is to celebrate over a grand buffet meal.

I clean and decorate and line up my 15 or so guests. I bring out the crystal dishes on gold charger plates, gold-plated flatware, my finest stemware.

I was never able to buy this servingware all at once. In fact, it took me years to collect each item. But ever since I was a child I always loved things that sparkle and shine. And I bring them out during the holidays because so many people have gotten away from elegance. They see it as too much work—and it is!

So, making the setting of a meal extra special is as much a part of my gift to others as any present under a tree.

But in recent years I've had a nagging doubt from time to time about this Christmas regimen I've adopted. Do others truly appreciate all the fuss? Is it really too much to put myself through?

Whenever I do it, certain scenarios are familiar. If I set the time for 11 a.m., some arrive right on time—an hour or so later. The same folks who don't make prior arrangements for transportation always call to impose on someone who's already settled in. The same ones who get depressed once again will have to be begged to join us.

Some older relatives never recognize that I am nearly 50 and am prone to tiredness just like them. I am still the child who runs for the glass of ice, more punch, another helping of glazed ham or yams candied in applesauce, paper plates and foil for take-home leftovers.

Lord! I've prayed: What do I do?

The answer didn't come right away. It came many headaches later following a conversation with a friend who said: "Carole, if you host a meal to please your guests, you may end up being disappointed. Look beyond simply giving them an elaborate spread that entails a lot of work. Find your deeper motivation for extending your hospitality."

Back to the drawing board I went. What was my motivation for being hospitable?

Then it hit me: I extend my hospitality because it is my way of telling my family and friends that I love them—warts and all! I treasure the fact that we are still alive and together.

The world is changing so fast! These constants in my life offer me stability. Those strong vibrant women and men who nurtured my sisters and brothers and me when we were growing up are weaker now. Who will celebrate them in the same way?

Here I was avoiding something that I should not only continue but embrace. And it doesn't have to be elaborate, just welcoming.

My friend seemed pleased when I explained this to him. He added: "By extending your hospitality, you are enabling God to speak to your guests through each other. You are providing the context in which this exchange takes place, whatever it may be."

Looking at it this way heightens my enthusiasm.

The way I see it now, my pre-eminent Christmas Guest will be magnified when doors, and hearts, are opened.

(Greene is the associate editor of Faith Alive!)

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Readers share their special Christmas memories

Child's concern for the poor motivates her to give away her new, fluffy white dream-coat

By Hank Niec

At 4 years old, Sarah Niec knew clearly and precisely what she wanted her mother to buy for her. In this regard, Sarah was like thousands of other young girls. Typically, these desires focused on dolls and other playthings.

But as Christmas approached that year, Sarah's heart was yearning for a coat—a very specific white fluffy coat she had seen in a store. It was just what she needed to match her white fluffy muff and hat set.

However, Sarah's mother, Julie, did not encourage her. The coat was not a necessity, and coming up with money for it would be a problem.

It was difficult to refuse Sarah, who had a sweet disposition, sparkling brown eyes, curly brown hair, and an elfish smile. Sarah was her mother's constant companion while her older sisters were in school.

After much deliberation and several trips to the store, Julie finally splurged and bought the fluffy white dream-coat. Sarah was thrilled. At home it was stored in her closet, awaiting the first special occasion for its use, along with the muff and hat.

Two weeks later, just two days before Christmas, the pastor of our church

received an urgent request for food. Mrs. C could think of nowhere else to turn for help for her family of six. Father Coffin graciously agreed to arrange for some food for them. He gave \$50 to Julie, a member of the parish staff, to buy groceries for the needy family.

Sarah accompanied Julie as they selected groceries and bought more than \$50 worth. Julie knew the family's needs were real.

When Julie and Sarah delivered the bags of groceries, Sarah was shocked by the sight of an empty refrigerator and equally empty cabinets. At the Niec home, "nothing to eat" meant the supply of favorite goodies was running low. There was literally "nothing" to eat in the C family's kitchen.

The youngest member of the C family was 3-year-old Amy. Sarah and Amy struck up a friendship immediately. Sarah asked Amy to play outside while their mothers were talking. Amy told Sarah that she did not have a coat to wear for playing outside.

"Can you wear your good coat, then?" Sarah suggested.

"I don't have a good coat," Amy replied.

Sarah was shocked again, and disappointed by the lost opportunity to play outdoors.

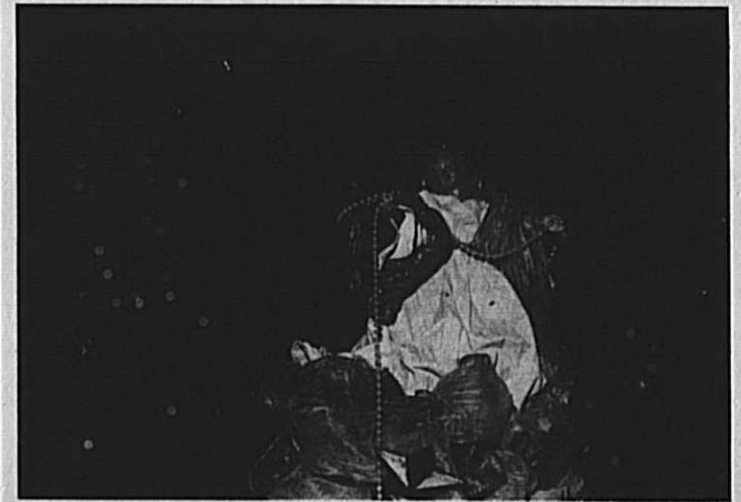


Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

An angel graces the top of an ornately decorated Christmas tree at the St. Francis Health-care Foundation's "Star of Hope: A Festival of Trees" fund raiser Nov. 24 in Indianapolis.

As soon as Sarah arrived home, she brought her new fluffy white dream-coat to her mother.

"I want Amy to have this," she said. Julie couldn't believe it.

Then Sarah looked through the family's older coats and also found a play coat for Amy.

Julie and Sarah returned to the C home the same day, and Sarah carried the two

coats. When Amy saw the white coat, she shrieked with delight and put it on immediately. Then she hugged Sarah, and they both danced around and around until they fell down laughing.

Julie and Mrs. C said nothing as their eyes filled with tears and their hearts basked in the warm love of the moment.

(Hank Niec is a member of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Indianapolis.)



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Readers recall holiday visits from Santa Claus

Personal letter convinces skeptical child to begin believing in the legend of jolly old St. Nicholas

By Darlene Davis

When I was 9 years old, a time when most children begin to start doubting the Santa myth, I began to believe.

Of my previous nine Christmases, only one had been remarkable as an event worthy of note. That year I was living at the Kentucky Children's Home in St. Matthew's, Ky.

KCH, as we fondly referred to the home, was a wonderful respite for a neglected 6-year-old for whom Santa Claus had already become a bitter disappointment.

At Christmas the KCH children were treated to lots of goodwill from the community, which included a trip to nearby Louisville and the Brown Hotel for lunch.

A small, red, starched, net stocking of candy and a brand-new coloring book with crayons which had never been used were precious treasures from that event. I clutched them tightly as I climbed into my bed in the girl's dorm that night, not even knowing whom to thank for my good fortune.

To a little girl who had never received any Christmas gifts in past years, these were cherished presents.

But a bigger surprise was in store as I arose on Christmas morning to find that a gift with my name on it had appeared under the tree in the parlor. I remembered that we had been allowed to request one item which we wanted more than anything else, but I had not dared to expect the roller skates that I had prayed would appear on Christmas Day. Yet that was what I found inside the box!

I spent many happy hours rolling up and down the sidewalks in front of the girl's residence that spring, and I have often said that the skates were my all-time favorite Christmas gift. However, I knew that they were not from the man with the long, white beard wearing a red suit. I rather suspected the Sunday school teacher as my benefactor, though that was never confirmed.

The security of KCH had filled only one short year of my childhood up to the year that I turned 9. Life prior to



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

While waiting for Santa Claus to call him into service, this reindeer munches on hay at the Indianapolis Zoo. Visitors can see the zoo's three reindeer during "Christmas at the Zoo" festivities through Dec. 30, except on Christmas Day. The reindeer might be gone then anyway.

that had been a blur of family trouble, including alcoholism, illness, neglect and poverty.

However, January of 1952 became the last year that I would have nothing to report the first day back to school when the prevailing question was, "What did you get for Christmas?"

Exactly three weeks before Christmas Day in 1953, I was adopted along with my younger brother and two younger sisters.

"I know all about Santa Claus, and that he's not real," I told my new mother as she began trying to generate some excitement for the coming holiday.

"Oh, my!" she exclaimed, fearing that I might ruin Christmas for the younger children. Because I had often functioned as their surrogate mother in the past, they tended to trust me more than they did her.

"I certainly hope that you don't tell the others that," she said, "because I know for a fact that there really is a Santa Claus, and I've heard that he will be stopping by here on Christmas Eve if everyone is asleep when he peeps in the window!"

I could hardly believe what I was hearing. I was pretty sure that I was right about the Santa thing, but I went to bed early on Dec. 24 just in case.

The next morning I hardly dared to hope when I awoke to the excited chatter of my younger siblings. In 21 short days I had not given up the instinct to protect them in case they might be as disappointed as I had been on many previous Christmas mornings. But I was remembering the year at the Kentucky Children's Home as I very warily followed them down the stairs.

Words cannot describe the sight that met my unbelieving eyes that Christmas Day so long ago! It appeared that a store's entire toy department had been moved into our living room!

Shrieks and squeals of laughter and joy accompanied the discovery of one after another treasure that had mysteriously appeared bearing my name and the names of my brother and sisters.

Most remarkable of all was a note to me in a penmanship which I had never seen before, nor seen since, which read:

"Dear Jill Darlene,
Never stop believing.
Love, Santa"

(L. J. Darlene Davis is a member of St. Michael Parish in Greenfield.)



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Curious child peeks out bedroom window and receives a smile and wave from Santa Claus

By Joan Gutzwiller

It was Christmas Eve in 1956, just like any other Christmas Eve I had experienced in eight years of life.

My family was preparing to go to my grandparents' house to celebrate Christmas. It was a family tradition to get our presents from them on Christmas Eve.

I remember dressing up in our very best Christmas outfits and piling in the car to ride a few blocks to their house. It always seemed to be snowing on Christmas Eves back then.

My grandparents' house was like a castle to me, and there was always enough room for 14 aunts and uncles and 30-some grandchildren.

As we pulled up in the driveway, I could sense the excitement about to take place. We would all go in the house and hug and kiss everyone. Gradually, the children would all gravitate to the basement to play.

Amidst all this excitement, there was always one room, "the presents room," closed off to everyone. Up until this particular year, I guess I just thought that our gifts magically appeared. This year I was to help give out the presents.

As I was allowed the privilege of entering "the presents room," I was in awe! My grandmother would buy all the girls the same present, and all the boys received a similar gift too. That year all the girls received "Madame Alexander" dolls. They looked like the "Rockettes" in line ready to dance. All the big metal trucks for the boys were lined up like they were heading out in a convoy.

Looking back, it was probably very wise of my grandparents to give their gifts in this way. It eliminated hard feelings, favoritism, and was an easy way to buy for so many people.

When our gift exchange was over, we would pile back into the car and go home to get in bed and fall fast asleep so Santa Claus would come to our house.

Well, on the night before my eighth Christmas, I got out of bed and looked out the window. I saw a car with its interior light on.

"No, it couldn't be!" I remember thinking. It looked like Santa Claus! All of a sudden, he looked up at the window and saw me looking at him. He waved!

Needless to say, I ran and covered my head under my blankets and went right to sleep!

I didn't know if I had ruined my Christmas, but I did have presents under the tree on that Christmas morning and also on every Christmas morning since then.

As Christmas comes around each year, there's a part of me that would like to recapture some of the magic of those memories. However, I realize that I'm in the midst of making new family memories in 1996.

Since 1956, our family has established our own Christmas traditions, which have been greatly influenced by the wonderful memories of many Christmases past.

Maybe someday our grandchildren will remember our traditions as fondly as I remember mine.

(Joan Fitzgerald Gutzwiller is a member of St. Barnabas Parish in Indianapolis.)

Readers treasure gifts of faith, family, friends

Child discovers the timeless gift of faith during a Christmas Eve visit to an art museum

By Louise Davis

On Dec. 24, 1950, I experienced—in a unique way—the magic of Christmas.

It happened at the John Herron Art Museum in downtown Indianapolis, where I had gone with my mother that snowy Christmas Eve afternoon to see a special exhibit of Hans Holbein and his contemporaries.

As we entered the museum gallery, I don't remember anyone else being in the room, which was as large and as quiet as a cathedral.

In the gallery were many portraits, temporarily loaned to the museum, from France, Germany, England, and the Netherlands.

Some of the portraits were painted by Albrecht Durer, whose "praying hands" sculpture is still popular.

All of the paintings were at least 400 years old. There were knights and ladies, kings and queens, old people, and child-

ren. Their clothes looked like those in fairy-tale books, but their faces were real. Some appeared to be looking at me, while others, with somber expressions, gazed into the distance.

A picture of the Nativity scene was on display there too, as well as a life-size wooden statue of the Virgin Mary.

As I stood in front of the beautiful Marian statue, momentarily transported in time, I felt a spiritual kinship with the people who had knelt before her so long ago, and I was awed by the sensation of spending Christmas Eve in their world, where everybody everywhere reverently awaited the birth of Christ with joy and devotion.

I am now 69 years old. Over the years, especially at Christmas, I have often thought of all of those people whose faith in Christ was handed down to me from generation to generation, and I am grateful to them for sharing their priceless gift.

(Louise Davis is a member of St. Gabriel Parish in Indianapolis.)

Sisters decide that the perfect Christmas gift can be found up in the family's giant oak tree

By Gina Crooks

My most joyous Christmas was 20 years ago. I remember it vividly. I was 18 years old, and the oldest of four girls. My sisters were then 15, 12 and 8.

Early in November, we came up with a brilliant idea for the perfect Christmas gift for our parents!

At this point in my life, I did not know how it felt to give someone the "perfect" gift—one that would bring tears of joy and be cherished forever.

This "perfect" gift for our parents was a huge portrait of all four of us girls sitting on some of the branches of our giant oak tree, which we had climbed all of our lives.

We asked some family friends to invite our parents over for the afternoon so that a

professional photographer could take the portrait. We pooled our resources, just barely raising enough money to purchase it. (I think the photographer also must have enjoyed the spirit of giving that year, because his price did seem rather low.)

I remember how excited I was on that Christmas morning! For the first time in my life, I wasn't excited about what I was going to receive, but rather what we were going to give. I'll never forget my parents' faces when they opened that gift. I could feel their surprise, pride and happiness. It was a wonderful feeling!

Now that I am a parent, I want to give my children that same "perfect" gift. I want them to know how it feels to give; they already know how to receive. With God's help, I'll accomplish my goal.

(Gina Crooks is a member of Annunciation Parish in Brazil.)

Christmases spent at St. Vincent's Orphanage gave the children memories to last a lifetime

By Kathryn Minton

The other day I was telling a friend about our Christmases at St. Vincent's Orphanage in Vincennes with the Sisters of St. Francis of Oldenburg. Remembering the beauty and magical mystery brought tears to my eyes.

Every year was the same, yet all of us were filled with excitement as the festivities began about 10:30 p.m. on Christmas Eve. Except for the very small children, each child carried a candle as we walked the entire building—all three floors—in single file. Nothing could be heard except for our singing while we carried our glowing candles in the dark.

The procession ended in the main corridor of the orphanage at the manger scene. There, surrounded by what seemed like mountains of angel hair glistening in the dark, lay the Christ child. What beauty! It was now close to midnight.

Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve always began in the dark. In the left corner of the altar was another beautiful sight. The stable was surrounded by Christmas trees with Christmas lights all aglow. There were shepherds, sheep, cattle, and the Three Wise Men, all coming to visit the King.

We had observed the scene for all of Advent. Yet tonight was special. Tonight was different. For right there in the mid-

dle, the manger was no longer empty. The Christ child was born and he was laying in the manger. It was Christmas.

I have many memories of Christmas at St. Vincent's Orphanage. Every year, Vincennes University sponsored a Christmas dinner in their cafeteria for the children with a visit from Santa. We had Christmas plays for our families and the townspeople. Every child had a part in the play, right down to the smallest 2-year-old. There were many hours of practice with musical instruments and rehearsals for the children who would sing or dance.

We always had contests among the different dormitories to see which group could build the largest snowman. The older boys in D-1 would win because they were the tallest! But they deserved it.

How did the boys ever get that big head on the top of their giant snowman in front of the school?

And how did the nuns wrap all those presents for the children?

Thank you Sister Sharon, Sister Jean, Sister Clarissa, Sister Euphrasia, Sister Francis Xavier, Sister Johannes, Father Schroeder, and many others whose names I cannot remember today. You gave us the best Christmases ever with memories to last a lifetime.

(Kathryn Minton is a member of St. Gabriel Parish in Indianapolis.)



CNS photo from the University of Dayton

Italian artist M. Landi created this croche against crumbling ruins to symbolize that the old culture has been destroyed and a new history is originating with the birth of Christ. The croche is part of a 275-set collection at the University of Dayton's Marian Library in Dayton, Ohio.

Surprise gift of jacket for dedicated volunteer has become one of her favorite Christmas presents

By Therese Dailey

A few years back I received an early Christmas surprise.

One evening I attended a monthly meeting of the Athletic Association at Little Flower Parish in Indianapolis. It was formerly known as the Men's Club. My dad had belonged to the organization.

Right before the meeting ended, Mike said, "Tomorrow the kids will be getting their certificates, but there is someone who will not be there. This person is at all of

our activities, does anything we ask, and is just a phone call away. At this time I'd like to present this jacket to Therese Dailey."

What a shock! I was overjoyed to think these people thought enough of me to do this very kind and thoughtful deed. As I claimed my million-dollar gift, I had a smile on my face wide enough to extend from the Pacific to the Atlantic. I was also treated to a standing ovation!

(Therese Dailey is a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus, Little Flower Parish in Indianapolis.)

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Memories of Christmas center on relationships

Woman treasures her holiday opportunity for a belated reconciliation with her father

By Beth Shaffer-Scott

My most poignant Christmas is one I remember involving a gift given from the heart and an unexpected gift given in return.

My parents were divorced when I was 6 years old. My dad was an alcoholic, and his disease made it impossible for him to handle the responsibilities of a wife and four children.

As a result, my dad was never a real presence in my life. Months and sometimes years would pass before I would get a telephone call or a letter from him postmarked at various locations in the country.

I grew up, graduated from college, started my career as a special education teacher, got married, and moved to Tacoma, Wash.

Although my father didn't participate in these milestones in my life, I never stopped loving him unconditionally.

In 1991, my husband and I were finally able to fly back home to Indiana for the holidays.

I had received word from my dad that he had temporarily taken up residence in Indiana and would like to see me. I was able to visit with my dad and express my love for him and reconcile old hurts. My dad also was able to meet my husband for the first time.

After the holidays, my husband and I went back to Tacoma, and my dad continued his nomadic lifestyle. Ten months later, in October of 1992, I received a telephone call from my little brother, who told me that Dad had died in a Veteran's Administration hospital in Denver. He had died alone and was buried alone,



Photo courtesy of St. Francis Healthcare Foundation

A little girl talks with Santa Claus about her Christmas wish list during the St. Francis Healthcare Foundation's annual "Star of Hope: A Festival of Trees" fund raiser on Nov. 23 at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis.

without family members present for his funeral.

Christmas came and went that year. It was filled with the joys of the season, but tinged with a sense of loss as I remembered my father.

A week after Christmas, I received a package in the mail from my dad's sister.

When my dad died, all of his belongings were sent to my aunt. Among his meager possessions was a letter he wrote to me 10 days before he died as well as a gift he bought for me.

The letter expressed his love for me and his hope of being transferred to a domicil-

iary close to where I lived, which would have enabled us to visit more frequently.

The gift was a tin of crayons, because my dad thought his little girl should have crayons that are every bit as good as her students.

This memory is precious to me, especially at Christmas, because it serves as a reminder of the priceless gift that God gave us, his son Jesus Christ, to reconcile the world.

Reconciliation is a priceless gift from the heart that we can all give to one another.

(Beth Shaffer-Scott is a member of St. Monica Parish in Indianapolis.)

Serviceman finds that building bridges with people from other countries results in priceless gifts

By George Zimmer

Just a few weeks ago, I attended Sunday Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church in Midland, Mich. The concluding hymn was unfamiliar to me, and I have forgotten much of its message; however, the final two lines created quite an impression, and I pondered on them during that long drive home.

The words called us to build bridges between nations, as "we are all neighbors of the same world."

I was troubled. I knew that strong bridges begin with strong foundations, and construct to meet at a centerpoint. When might I have had the chance to contribute to such a project?

It was then that my thoughts turned to memories of my year of military service in the Orient, and I began to recognize my exposure to "bridge-builders" who had represented the peoples of various nations. Each made some small contribution to the bridge that brings neighbors closer to each other.

On Dec. 23, 1952, I arrived in Toyko, Japan as part of a military group en route to the battlefields of Korea. We were advised that we would not move to our next location until after the Christmas holidays, and that we would have passes to visit the city until our next departure.

After several days of duty, I received free time and quickly headed for a men's clothing store, hoping to find a replacement for my only wire collar stay that had been lost during my overseas journey.

A dignified, well-dressed Japanese salesman approached me and quickly determined my wants, though he had to resort to hand gestures and pantomime when we discovered that neither spoke the other's language. He sadly indicated that the store did not carry the product I wanted.

When I turned to leave, he stopped me with a hand upon my arm. Carefully he removed the knot from his tie, and from its depths he removed the very model of collar stay that I sought.

He placed it in the palm of his hand and extended it toward me. Awkwardly I reached for my wallet. With this, he gave a negative shake of his head and withdrew his hand. He quickly re-extended it with a smile, but would accept no payment. I gratefully accepted the stay, and carefully seated it into my tie knot.

As I left, I glanced back toward him. With his tie all askew and his unbuttoned coat, you would have thought from his smile that he had just made the biggest sale of his life. In my memory, he is my first bridge-builder.

Others quickly joined the list:

- Turkish Army nurses, assigned to duty in the U.S. Army Hospital at Toyko, who organized and staffed on their off hours a U.S.O.-type facility,

- Canadian Red Cross girls, who stopped en route to an assignment in Kure, Japan, and entertained us with stories of their experiences during the London Blitz, and reminded us that both humor and sadness have a place in the lives of all people,

- Army Chaplain Father Bain, who traveled through some rough country to celebrate Sunday Mass for front-line American and South Korean troops, and gave his entire once-a-year collection to a Korean orphanage,

- the Catholic South Korean nuns, who staffed St. Paul Orphanage for Girls, and showed such love for those unwanted and abandoned children because of their Caucasian and Negroid characteristics,

- 17-year-old Lt. Kim of the South Korean Artillery, who introduced a twilight volleyball competition between Korean and American units, and helped hold off the fears of what nightfall might bring,

- South Korean infantrymen, who shared my outpost hill down in the valley, who worked 14-hour days building bunkers and digging tunnels, and still had the strength and desire to learn, who came to my tent nightly, and asked for my help with their efforts to learn to read, who were such good neighbors, and who made it so easy to become a bridge-builder.

(George A. Zimmer is a member of St. Jude Parish in Indianapolis.)



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Readers share Christmas stories

Dedicated rural mail carrier exemplifies the true spirit of Christmas for mother whose holiday order arrived late

By Rita Eckstein

My Christmas memory happened during the war years, when the status quo could not be relied on.

Every year on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, my mother would sit down with the new Christmas catalog and the large winter catalog. She would do all of her Christmas shopping from these two mail-order sources in Chicago. She didn't drive, and with no shopping areas nearby, this was her only form of shopping for all of the gifts that would come to her family.

There were six of us by this time. Mother and Dad were married at the beginning of the Great Depression. They were just beginning to get on their feet when World War II came along.

It was my mother's practice to do all the seasonal shopping from the big catalogs that came to our house from Chicago. She would send the order out on a Monday, and by that Friday the mail carrier would bring the parcel. This worked quite well.

By ordering on the Sunday after Thanksgiving, she always allowed for some delay because of the Christmas rush. Normally, she would receive several

packages within the allotted time.

However, as Christmas Day drew nearer that year, she still hadn't received any parcels. Mother was beside herself by Christmas Eve. She would have no presents for her family. It was going to be a dismal Christmas!

My dad didn't give her a whole lot of support because he thought Christmas gift-giving was overrated anyway.

It was dark and well after 6 o'clock on Christmas Eve when a car pulled into our driveway. The driver honked the horn, and my mother went out to see who was waiting in our driveway at this time of the day.

It turned out to be our mail carrier. He had returned to the post office at the end of the day on Christmas Eve, and seen the package for our family. He realized it contained what was to be our Christmas gifts, so he made a special delivery to us before going home to his own child.

My mother claimed that she had seen the real spirit of Christmas in the form of that humble mail carrier. Thanks to his unselfishness, a whole family was able to celebrate Christmas in the way they always did every year.

(Rita Eckstein is a member of St. Louis Parish in Batesville.)



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

This crystal angel ornament prepares to blow a trumpet to herald Christmas tidings of peace, joy and love. It was on display at the 1996 "Star of Hope: A Festival of Trees."

Paper angel ornament has special meaning for woman

By Renee Bierman Book

Perhaps you have a paper ornament you cherish like I do my paper angel.

She was given to me 35 years ago by my first grade teacher, Sister Mary Michael Maureen, while I was attending the first grade at Holy Family School in New Albany.

Were you one of my classmates? Or did you have a child, brother, or sister who attended Holy Family School as a first grader in 1961? If so, you may still have your special paper angel.

The angel hung on the bulletin board in the classroom for the purpose of collecting stars. I cannot remember the purpose of the stars.

Today the remnants of two red foil stars still remain on my paper angel along with my name, which the teacher had printed on the back of the ornament.

Only three and a half inches tall and three inches wide, she has adorned many a Christmas tree. She has auburn hair tied up in a red bow, and she wears a green gown. Only her pretty face, tiny hands, and bare feet show. On her shoulders, she has golden wings. She sits gracefully upon a fluffy blue and white cloud, which is decorated with tiny gold stars that used to sparkle.

By her side lies an opened present in a gold box with a red ribbon and bow. The contents of the box, which she holds close to her heart, embraced with love, is an angel doll. The doll is dressed in mint green with blonde hair and tiny gold wings. I guess angels get dolls in their own likeness for Christmas, but that's another story.

It may seem very ordinary to you, but the paper ornament is a treasure to me. My mother gave me the paper Christmas angel after I got married. It was amazing that she managed to save it for me. This was certainly no easy task for a mother of seven children at that time. When I look at my paper Christmas angel, I always think of my mother.

It was with great care that I placed my paper angel on the Christmas tree all the years I lived at home. My paper angel became very fragile as the years passed by, but she never lost her beauty to me.

To preserve my paper angel, and to share her with all who enter my home, I placed the ornament in a custom-made frame enclosed between glass for easy viewing of the front and back. She is surrounded by a shiny gold mat and an antique golden frame with a metal plate attached that has my name and "First Grade" engraved on it. Sitting on a brass easel for the people who visit my house to see, I can continue to share my special paper Christmas angel.

I would imagine that my first grade teacher never could have imagined what a beautiful gift she had given me. It is like being embraced by an angel sent from God. In my eyes, no other Christmas ornament can match the true beauty of my paper Christmas angel.

Do you have a special ornament from your childhood? Are you saving one for someone else? Remember that as a teacher, parent, grandparent, godparent, guardian, or friend of a child, it is within your grasp to create a lasting Christmas memory for that child to cherish all of his or her life. It's never too late to create a memory for someone special in your life!

(Renee Marie Bierman Book is a member of St. Mary of the Knobs Parish in Floyds Knobs.)



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Christmas spirit strengthens families

Nun's story of man's conversion was one of her favorite Christmas memories from 65 years as a Franciscan sister

By Mary Vinci

The late Sister N. Philonilla Weintraut, O.S.F., restorer of St. Joseph Chapel in St. Joseph Cemetery in Indianapolis, had numerous experiences and happenings during her 65 years in the Franciscan Order. She told me this story, which happened during the Christmas season in 1920:

I remember so well a heart-warming experience I had in 1920 when, as a registered nurse, I was assigned to St. Elizabeth's Hospital in Lafayette.

A patient entered the hospital during the Christmas season. He was about 60 years of age, was older in heart, and was bitter and depressed beyond measure. He said he was an atheist, and he was angry with the world, with himself, and with God. This patient had one ambition, which was to die. If he had friends, I never met them. He was feeble, a sick man of body, head and heart.

The doctor told me he had dropsy, a decompensated heart, and would not live long.

"Keep him comfortable with medication and food he wants," the doctor told me. "He may sit in a chair. If he dies, or when he dies, the funeral arrangements have been made. He has no family."

This man rarely spoke. I would place him in the chair and kneel at his side to put his slippers on his feet. Then I would kneel there a few more minutes to say some prayers.

After a few days, the patient gave me his history. He was a prosperous young man living in Canada with a beautiful wife and a little girl who was about 5 when her mother died. He felt her death badly, but he had his little girl to think of. She was the image of her mother.

His little girl played with Catholic children and they grew up to be best friends. To please her, he let her

become a Catholic. Later, when she was past 18, she overcame all her father's objections and entered a convent in Canada. After that, she never heard from him.

He sold everything, left his country, and settled in Lafayette in central Indiana. He was a broken man who shut out the world, his friends, and his daughter. For 20 years he lived like this, and then health problems required him to come to the hospital.

Day after day, we would talk in his room. He always asked a few more questions each day, and I always added a few more prayers. After three or four weeks, I could see that he was failing, and that he was restless and tired.

"Why can't I die?" he asked me.

"You don't want to die unless you want to go where I am going," I replied.

"I want to go where you are going," he told me.

In a few days, he asked what he needed to do to go to heaven, and I told him. Then we called for his daughter to come, and she did the next day. She took my place praying and talking with him. By now he was not able to sit up.

The Catholic chaplain stopped in on one of his rounds, and I felt a deep joyful pang in my heart when he said, "Sister, he is ready for baptism. He knows the prayers and the stories you have told him."

So the man was baptized, and his daughter received Holy Communion with him for two days. Then his soul went to God, after receiving all the rites of the church.

His last few days were spent in constant prayer. Holding up his crucifix, he kept asking, "Why, why, God, didn't I know you sooner?"

And to his daughter, he said, "I'm so glad you came."

His body was placed in our chapel overnight, and the next morning a priest celebrated a Requiem Mass for him. Then his daughter took his remains to Canada, and after



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

This holiday shopper gets a close look at a decorated tree on Nov. 24 during the St. Francis Healthcare Foundation's 1996 "Star of Hope: A Festival of Trees" fund raiser.

another Requiem Mass he was laid to rest next to his wife. The happy sister then returned to her convent in Canada.

After an experience like this—and during my 65 years of sisterhood, I have had many—I always have a wonderful warm feeling in my heart, for it is during these times that I feel I have pleased my God and have grown closer to him.

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

Family celebrates Christmas without mother, grandmother

By Margaret Royse Lawley

Our mother died on Jan. 14, 1923. I was 12 years old, the youngest of five children. My father traveled in his business, and was out of town the week before Christmas that year.

We always enjoyed a large family celebration on Christmas. Aunt Laura and Uncle Alvin, my father's brother, came laden with presents. They did not have children of their own and enjoyed our large family.

Our Grandmother Shea, our mother's mother, had died in November of 1923. We had bought presents, but were saddened by the deaths of our mother and grandmother and did not have much Christmas spirit that year.

Our father cooked all Sunday and holiday meals, so we presumed he would have our dinner planned for Christmas Day. We never thought of getting a Christmas tree.

We had three wonderful aunts, my mother's sisters. Aunt Jule was widowed after a short marriage, and our Aunt Nellie and Aunt Margaret had never married. They were considered "old maids" in their generation.

Our aunts checked on us each night by telephone. On that Christmas Eve, they called about 6 p.m. When they discovered that Dad was not home, they asked if we had a Christmas tree. We had never had this responsibility. I suppose we thought Dad would take care of it because in previous years we had never put up our tree until Christmas Eve.

About half an hour later, Aunt Jule appeared at our side door. She was out of breath. "Which one of you boys wants to go with me to find a Christmas tree?" she asked.

They left our house about 7 p.m. and went to Fountain Square. All of the tree markets were closed there. They went further north up Virginia Avenue, but could find no trees for sale there either.

When they reached South Street, the Southside Market was still open and had a few shaggy trees for sale. They found one tree with three sides that were acceptable.

Since the tree was too large to take on the streetcar, they dragged it back down Virginia Avenue, past Fountain Square, and further south to our home.

While they were tree hunting, we went up to the attic and brought down all of the boxes of decorations and tree trimmings.

By the time Dad arrived home about 10 p.m. on Christmas Eve, we had all the angels and stars in place on top of the tree and all the ancient ornaments decorated the branches. With the bad side turned toward the wall, our Christmas tree looked very festive.

On Christmas Day, we enjoyed a delicious dinner with all of our relatives. We tried hard to be merry on our first Christmas without our mother and our grandmother.

(Margaret Royse Lawley is a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus, Little Flower Parish in Indianapolis.)

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Holiday memories center on family and friends

Christmas carols make the holiday more cheerful as people celebrate the season with joyous music

By Alice Dailey

As Christmas carols resound on crisp winter nights, so many memories and emotions are stirred! How can I choose the most memorable?

Was it the year a group of carolers spread their cheer in a hospital where I and my brand new baby had to spend Christmas?

As the sound of "Silent Night" came softly through the hospital corridors, nostalgia for my family and home vied with thanksgiving for the safe delivery of a tiny, 4 lb. girl.

Or could it have been the evening our close-knit women's choir, in a show of support, brought tidings of comfort and joy to an absent member, who had been listless since the departure of her son for military service?

As we belted out the sprightly, zippy

carol "We Wish You a Merry Christmas," Carrie's door flew open and she tearfully welcomed one and all.

In a return of her usual energy, she commanded, "Sit down and don't dare leave!"

Then she bustled about rounding up 18 matching, spotless cups for hot chocolate.

As we sipped our hot chocolate and brought her up to date on choir doings, she began to talk, at first slowly, then in a torrent of healing words. After that night, Carrie started coming to choir practice again.

Another, quite poignant recollection is of a bitterly cold night when a group of sisters from the parish convent gathered on our snowy porch and favored us with a beautifully harmonized rendition of "O Come, All Ye Faithful."

Snugly booted, capped and scarved, with noses like Rudolph's, the smiling



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

These visitors to the Indianapolis Zoo's annual "Christmas at the Zoo" display on Dec. 6 bundle up their children before visiting the animals. The special zoo exhibits continue through Dec. 30.

group seemed the picture of health. All, however, was not so.

Frail Sister Jeanne, faced with a protracted, painful illness, fought tears as she sensed that this might be her last active Christmas.

To this day, whenever triumphant sounds of that hymn ring out, I see that shivering little nun, bravely singing her

heart out to the Lord she was serving so faithfully.

This Christmas memory has to be the most precious of all, because Sister Jeanne was my daughter.

(Alice Dailey is a member of St. Therese of the Infant Jesus, Little Flower, Parish in Indianapolis.)

Christmas Eve 1983

By Jean Cox

'Twas a bitter cold evening,
Not fit to be out—
But the folks came regardless
With a loud, happy shout!

And after our dinner
We opened our gifts,
Then they started on home,
In spite of the drifts.

So I sat by the window
And uttered a prayer
That they'd get home safely
With God's loving care.

And there on this window,
All covered with ice,
I made out a picture
And ventured to write:

Frosted Window

This house is built just for a while—
It's not for real, you know—
The fence and trees around it
Are all just made at "12 below."

An old rail fence surrounds this house
With lacy pines beyond—
There's hills far in the background,
All made by "fairy's wand."

It's on my kitchen window—
This picture made of ice—
No artist e'er could copy,
For it will not be there twice.

It's like the views at sunrise,
Or the fleecy clouds above,
Or a blend of evening sunset
By the artist we all love.

He never does the same scene twice.
They're there for all to see,
These wondrous works of nature
That He made for you and me!

(Jean Cox is a member of St. Rose of Lima Parish in Franklin.)



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Families discover Christmas joy

Husband's gift of white roses thrills his wife on Christmas

By Mary Jo Keegan

It was Christmas Eve in 1955, and we had been married exactly one month. My husband, Kenny, was a city fireman and would begin his 24-hour duty at 8 a.m. on Christmas Day. On Christmas Eve, he was still working at his part-time job delivering flowers late into the evening.

Possibly I was contemplating the "guilt trip" I would offer him as I nurtured my feelings of loneliness, sentiment, and more than a little resentment at being alone on Christmas Eve.

Was he not the bearer of Christmas joy to so many others as they accepted his delivery of flowers sent as a special symbol of someone's love for them on this most special day?

This must have been my thought when I heard him open the door. When I finally turned in response to the stillness of his presence, I saw my husband holding out a beautiful bouquet of long-stemmed white roses.

After the holidays, he told me that the spirit of Christmas paid for my flowers in the person of the usually less-visible owner of the flower shop. When Mr. Larsen gave my husband a Christmas bonus, he also gave him those beautiful flowers and told him to special deliver them to his new wife as his last Christmas Eve floral delivery.

A few years ago, I happened to read a poem written by John Boyle O'Reilly (1844-1890), which he named "A White Rose." The poet wrote:

"The red rose whispers of passion,
And the white rose breathes of love;
O, the red rose is a falcon,

And the white rose is a dove."

Over the years, the gift of a rose has made special events even more meaningful. But I've never been given a white rose on any other occasion.

In 1955, Kenny and I agreed that we would cherish the memory provided through a white rose to recall our first Christmas together.

An infant wrapped in swaddling clothes, the dove of peace, a flower in bloom, the gift offered so that it may be given: Are these not all symbols of the Christmas spirit? May each remind us of the great love God has for his people!

(Mary Jo Keegan is a member of St. John Parish in Indianapolis.)

Boy is surprised that Santa came during the Depression

By Dick Grayson

Times were tough in the early '30s. Jobs were scarce, and many men were out of work. We couldn't afford to have our shoes resoled, so we cut cardboard to fit the shoe and slid it inside to cover the hole in the bottom.

Our neighbors were "on relief," before food stamps, and occasionally a man would knock on the back door and ask for food. There was always something to share, and Mom would gladly give him whatever she could.

We little ones did not understand the Depression. We went to school and watched Mother write numbers in her budget book. She used one of those stiff composition notebooks like the ones we carried to school.

I remember her saying once that she was able to put supper on the table for the four of us for less than a dollar.



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

Most children know the holiday story of Frosty the Snowman, thanks to a book and song about this imaginary winter friend who loves to play outdoors.

Somewhere there was always enough money to have a quart of milk delivered to the house each morning. The cream would rise to the top, and on a cold day it would start to freeze and come out the top of the bottle in a white cylinder with the bottle cap on top.

Dad plugged away at his Civil Service job. It did not pay much, but it was steady. He had been wounded in World War I, and once a month his "compensation" check would arrive in the mail. He would endorse it, and we knew we'd have some money for a little while.

Christmas was coming. I counted the days. It was always a long, long time to wait.

Finally Christmas came. I was so excited. I got up early and looked outside. There was a light snow on the ground and the front steps—with footprints leading up to the door. I just knew Santa had been here!

I ran to the tree, and there was my gift! I received two big, thick storybooks, with large type for young eyes, and lots of pictures. There was a dent on the edge of one cover, which I knew was made by the rope that Santa used to tie them to his sleigh.

I loved those books. To me they were the spirit of Christmas. He had not forgotten me.

(Dick Grayson is a member of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus.)

Girl discovers her mother's love is the best gift of all

By Margaret Kelly

As the bustle of Christmas engulfs us, thoughts of a past Christmas steal into my thoughts.

I remember that our church was resplendent for the occasion with candles and poinsettias and the Holy Infant in his crèche. The church echoed with the sound of the ageless Christmas songs.

A different scenario played at our house. The walls throbbed with anticipation, and curiosity about the contents of a closet where our gifts were stored consumed me.

In the kitchen, mother wielded the cookie cutter and a parade of horses, bells and Santas fell from the blade.

The shapely spruce stood waiting for its finery of delicate balls and shimmering streamers. Wax candles perched in fish-shaped holders on the branches.

I was left alone in the house one day not long before Christmas, and I wandered about with nothing to do. The rooms seemed spooky without the usual noise.

A shocking thought suddenly struck me: I would try the closet door. My conscience intruded timidly as I considered this idea, but I quickly ignored it.

The door opened easily, and I discovered a box that held the most beautiful doll I had ever seen. She gazed up at me through long-lashed blue eyes, and golden curls framed her face. She wore a pink dress of silk and lace.

I rocked her gently and was unconscious of time or place until a loud noise split the silence. Terror-stricken, I dashed to the closet to put her away. As I laid the dolly in her box, my loving glance turned to horror. Her lovely head was dangling awkwardly from the body.

I felt little joy as I approached the family gathered around the tree that Christmas morning. Mother noticed my mood, and brought the box to me.

"See what Santa has brought you," she said.

I opened the box reluctantly, and couldn't believe my eyes! My dolly lay there in all her beauty, and she wasn't broken at all! It was a miracle!

Mother's look was understanding, and I knew then that the real miracle was a mother's love for her child.

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

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Christmas memories grow more special each year

War saddens the joy of liturgy in Bethlehem

By Dorothy Scheller

During the summer of 1947, the State Department assigned me to duty in Jerusalem.

The British government had already published its decision to give up its Palestinian Mandate. As a result, hostilities between the Jews and Arabs were heating up intensely.

Palestine was partitioned by the United Nations in November, and following that event Jerusalem took on the atmosphere of a war zone.

With Christmas approaching, I began to miss home and family, but warfare aside, I was caught up in the great excitement of being in the Holy Land.

In the days before Christmas, my thoughts were constantly on how I could travel the short distance to Bethlehem to attend Midnight Mass in the Church of the Nativity. I did not have a car of my own, and transportation was not easy to come by in that troubled time.

Two days before Christmas, I received a telephone call from a friend who was a major in the British Troops in Palestine (BTIP). He asked whether he and several of his friends could escort my roommate and me on Christmas Eve on the short trip to Bethlehem for Midnight Mass.

Of course, I accepted eagerly.

When the men came to pick us up, they were riding in a canvas-covered weapons

carrier. We noticed that it was accompanied by an escort jeep and a rear-guard jeep as well. Moreover, there was a heavy windstorm and rainstorm in progress during our drive to Bethlehem that holy night.

We churchgoers sat in the truck's darkness until we arrived at the brilliant light of the Church of the Nativity.

The pageantry during the Christmas Eve Mass was overwhelming.

However, the feeling of joy we experienced during Mass in Bethlehem was lessened by our sadness at seeing the battle-dressed Tommies acting as guards, surrounding the congregation, and standing along the walls of the church's nave with their rifles at the ready throughout the eucharistic liturgy celebrating Christ's birth.

Fighting has continued in the Holy Land ever since.

Dear Lord, grant us peace in our day!
(Dorothy Scheller is a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis.)

Youth see God's hand at work at Christmas

By Cindy Black

Every year Sacred Heart Parish in Jeffersonville undertakes a huge service project for Christmas called the Advent Project.

Each year, the project allows me to get more youth involved, especially those teen-agers who are preparing for confirmation and are in need of "service hours."

Our parish provides food baskets for



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

Two out of three people were posing nicely, but it wasn't the kind of holiday portrait Fran Brower of Greenwood had in mind on Nov. 24 when she introduced her daughters to Mrs. Claus at the "Star of Hope: A Festival of Trees" fund raiser at the Indiana Convention Center in Indianapolis. Maybe Ashleigh (second from left) and Jennifer Brower were saving their smiles for Santa Claus.

140 families. In addition, each child receives clothing and a toy.

While I was helping unload a car filled with Christmas gifts, a woman handed me a size 10 regular pair of boys' jeans. She said they were extra, she had purchased the wrong size, and she hoped we could find a place to use them.

A few minutes later, two of my confirmation candidates were helping me check the tables for gifts that were still needed. Out of the 140 tables, we found

only one with an arrow pointing to a child without any gifts.

Looking at the information sheet, we discovered that the little boy needed jeans. Although we still had to get a shirt, it was no coincidence that the jeans were a perfect fit.

God had provided, and my two confirmation candidates had their eyes opened to the wonder of God.

(Cindy Black is the coordinator of youth ministry at Sacred Heart Parish in Jeffersonville.)

Child's toy proves simple things can bring happiness

By RoseMarie Jackson

It was Christmas morning in 1929. The snow was steadily falling, but our house was warm and filled with the delicious aromas of Mama's baking and of dinner cooking on the wood stove.

Mama had hidden the presents in a closet. When I finally fell asleep on Christmas Eve, Mama and Papa had arranged the presents under the Christmas tree.

When I awoke on Christmas morning, I was allowed to open mine. There I sat among the bows, ribbons and colorful wrapping paper, happily playing with my toys.

There was a knock on the door, and my parents' good friends came inside, stomping their feet to loosen snow from their boots. They came in with their teen-age daughter in a rush of cold air.

Their daughter, Katie, handed me a big box and explained that Santa had left it for me at their house. When Mama and Katie's mom went shopping or visiting together, Mama left me with Katie until they returned.

I quickly tore off the wrapping, and saw the lid and its sides covered with colorful pictures of dolls from foreign lands dressed in native costumes with animals from the different countries.

I was so excited because I thought there were little dolls inside! I anxiously took off the lid, only to find the box contained a set of pretty tin dishes with a sugar bowl and teapot.

Tears of disappointment ran down my cheeks. I never told Mama why I had cried, but I asked her if I could keep the box to put the dishes in.

When she saw how much I loved those dolls, Mama cut out the pictures of each doll and animal. Each doll stood on the name of the country it represented. Mama printed the name of the country on the back of each animal cut-out, and taught me how to match up the letters. She glued a strip of folded cardboard on the back of each paper doll so they would stand up. I pushed the flap flat when I put them back in a box until I wanted to play with them again.

Later, when I learned to read, I knew which country each paper doll came from.

As there were no children my age nearby to play with, I had many happy tea parties with my paper dolls from other countries.

I long ago have forgotten what other presents I received that Christmas because I found more pleasure in the paper dolls from the box lid.

The simplest things can bring happiness.
(RoseMarie Glaub Jackson is a member of St. Rose Parish in Knightstown.)

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Hospitality is treating others like God treats us

By Fr. W. Thomas Faucher

Sitting on a stool at the edge of the crowd, his earthly belongings safely stored in the stolen shopping cart beside

him, the homeless old curmudgeon watched the speaker with a jaundiced eye and listened with a skeptical ear to his words.

The words from the loudspeaker were clear: "And so again I tell you, dear

friends, that I do indeed love each and every one of you, and I know you love me. Let us show that love by casting your vote for . . ."

The elderly man looked at me and said, "Do you know what love feels like, young man? Love is the feeling of being wanted. That politician doesn't love me. He doesn't want me. I'm not welcome in his home."

I've never forgotten his words: "Love is the feeling of being wanted."

Creating the feeling of being wanted is called hospitality. The homeless man could identify those who loved him by those who wanted him in their homes.

Hospitality is the virtue of letting others know they are welcome, that they are wanted. Hospitality is different from charity, which is giving something to another.

Hospitality is one of the most complicated, most difficult, most emotion-filled actions of human life. Not being wanted is arguably the worst thing that can happen to a human being.

We are more conscious of hospitality and charity during the Christmas season because it is the time for love. But unfortunately, Christmas hospitality is terribly difficult.

Christmas is about family, a time to be surrounded by the people we love. It is easy to want those we love to be with us.

But to really "want" those we find difficult, those who are "not really our kind of people," those who are undesirable, those who are poor: Isn't that asking a bit much? It is easier to open our wallets and give them our charity than open our homes and give them our hospitality.

In light of the infancy story of Jesus, there is something fitting about the fact that Christmas is a time for us of great stress and strain on the virtue of hospitality. Joseph and Mary were not wanted, there was "no room for them in the inn."

We have romanticized that into the stable and the animals and the stars and the shepherds, but the bottom line is "there was no room." Joseph, Mary and Jesus were not wanted.

There are people not wanted in our culture. These people fulfill the role of the holy family in our everyday lives.

Of course, so often the reason these people are not wanted is their own fault. But fault has nothing to do with

hospitality. It is easy to be loving and hospitable to the faultless. As Jesus said, "even pagans do that."

What turns being nice into the virtue of hospitality is that we actually want, love and welcome those who are filled with faults. We welcome those who have fouled up their own lives, sinned themselves into sadness and sorrow, and made us victims of their actions.

Would we welcome into our homes the unwed mother if we didn't know she was Mary?

Hospitality is not easy because unlike charity, which can be done from a comfortable distance, hospitality demands our personal involvement. We can only lose money if charity goes awry, but we can be hurt when we practice hospitality.

If we actually open ourselves up to truly "want"—love—someone who is difficult, someone who is "unwanted," we don't know where it might lead. It might get sticky. Christmas hospitality is a great risk.

Because of the risk, we choose charity over hospitality, we give gifts rather than give ourselves, we reward people rather than want them, we make sure there is some kind of buffer between us and them.

Being wanted is basic to human life. Not being wanted can kill. This is true of abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment and other forms of killing. But it is also true when we are inhospitable, when we shut others out and do not want them.

We look for stories of hospitality at Christmastime because something deep within us, something planted there at baptism and nourished every time we receive the Eucharist, says that hospitality is a life-giving virtue we need to know about and need to bring more and more into our lives.

The ultimate example of hospitality is, of course, God, who chose to "want" us, to love us, even though we are difficult. We are not really God's "kind of people." We are undesirable, we have faults, we have sinned ourselves into sadness and sorrow, and we constantly foul up our lives.

Hospitality is treating others like God treats us.

(Father W. Thomas Faucher is a priest of the Diocese of Boise, Idaho, on assignment in the Diocese of Baker, Ore.)



Photo by Mary Ann Wyand

This snow-covered statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the front lawn of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis stands as a silent reminder of the homeless people who must face the harsh winter elements because there is "no room at the inn." Being wanted is basic to human life. God is the ultimate example of hospitality, because God chose to "want" us, to love us, even though we may have sinned ourselves into sadness and sorrow.

It is Christlike to recognize the worth of those around us and to affirm them

By David Gibson

Someone I know felt recently that she was failing in one area of her life, and the feeling was literally sickening for her. It actually caused her to feel ill.

I think this person was blowing her so-called failure way out of proportion in her own mind. In fact, people generally tend to focus on their personal shortcomings.

All around us are people who could benefit if we expressed our confidence in them and shared our belief in them. All around us are people who need to be reminded how great their worth is.

What does this have to do with Christmas?

Christmas isn't just a winter festival or an end-of-the-year holiday celebration. Christmas is about the Son of God becoming one of us, and that's plenty of reason to celebrate the holy day and holiday.

By becoming one of us, Jesus punctuates the worth and meaning of our own, quite-incarnate lives. Actually, I'd say that the incarnation of God's Son heightens our worth.

It follows that it is Christlike to recognize the worth of those around us and to tell them so.

It may help others to recognize the truth about themselves. And, not incidentally, it may help them feel better.

(David Gibson edits "Faith Alive!")

Discussion Point

Spirit of welcome is life-giving

This Week's Question

Tell of a time when the spirit of welcome—someone's hospitality—transformed your Christmas.

"The time I was invited to the home of someone I had just met for her annual Christmas party. She was 80 and I was about 35, and I was touched she would reach out to someone my age." (Sally Steiner, Southold, N.Y.)

"We were invited by our church to participate in a family Advent program. My husband, myself and our three kids met once a week at the church, doing crafts, and talking about the Christ in Christmas, the fun in Christmas, and how our families celebrate the holidays. For the first time in many years, I enjoyed Christmas again, because of the hospitality of my own parish." (Robyn Melkerson, Chardon, Ohio)

"One year the bishop gave me \$100 so I could buy gifts for my grandkids. Now I help distribute food and gifts to families who need help to have a good Christmas, and through that work I'm helped to be in the spirit of Christmas myself." (Marlene Worth, Sioux Falls, S.D.)

"During my divorce, my sons went to their father's for that first Christmas, and I was alone. A co-worker invited me to share Christmas with her family. They welcomed me in, even had a gift for me." (Linda Stemler, Berlin, Wis.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: In your own ever-new and changing "universe," what is the value of faith? Why?

If you would like to respond for possible publication, write to "Faith Alive!" at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.



CNS photo from the Library of Congress of R. Swain Gifford's painting "Hauling in the Christmas Tree"

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'The English Patient' is a romantic mystery

"The English Patient" is a big sprawling combination of mystery, war and love story that recalls the novels of several generations ago.



The structure, in fact, is decidedly "Beau Geste." It's World War II, and a small plane is shot down over the North African desert. Arabs rescue and treat the pilot, but he's badly burned and can't remember who he is. Identified as "the English patient," although his nationality is a mystery, he ends up in a Canadian medical unit moving through Italy.

It quickly becomes even more picturesque. A young nurse, Hana (Juliette Binoche), loses her best friend in a mine explosion and simply detaches herself from the unit. Putting on civilian garb, she decides to care for the "patient" on her own, setting up quarters in a small, abandoned monastery along the road.

Eventually, and in fragments, the "patient's" memory returns. Through a long series of unconventional flashbacks, we learn that he (actor Ralph Fiennes) is Laszlo Almásy, a Hungarian mapmaker helping British archaeologists in Egypt just before the war. We also learn why he

was in the plane, who was with him, and what it all means.

Early on, we realize that he fell intensely in love with the only woman in the expedition, Katherine (Kristin Scott Thomas), who happens to be the new wife of Clifton, the team leader. This is no casual flirtation, but a full-blown life-and-death romantic stew that simmers for months before it erupts in the desert heat.

In the meantime, in the "present" in Italy, Hana's life has been saved by a group of British army sappers clearing mines in the area, who become friendly with Kip (Naveen Andrews), a young Sikh demolition expert. Another major suffering character at Hana's hospice is Caravaggio (Willem Dafoe), a scarred Canadian addicted to morphine. He's searching for someone who betrayed him causing him to be tortured in Africa. He thinks it could be Almásy.

Essentially, "Patient" plays on two tracks at the same time, seamlessly interwoven by director Anthony Minghella ("Truly, Madly, Deeply"). It is adapted from the 1992 Booker Prize novel by Canadian Michael Ondaatje, produced for the movies by the famous Saul Zaentz, now 85. Zaentz specializes in literary works ("Cuckoo's Nest," "Amadeus," "At Play in the Fields of the Lord").

One track is Africa in 1938-39, in which the group of a half-dozen men and Katherine explore the ruins and caves, some containing intriguing primitive wall paintings. Almásy and Katherine try to resist their attraction, but fate traps them one night in a lorry half-buried during a sandstorm. From then on, their quiet affair has a legendary, guilt-ridden passion. While never explicit, it sizzles off the screen, and seems clearly doomed.

In a scene typical of Minghella's foreboding style, Almásy and Katherine manage a few moments together of tender kissing and touching, while outside the British garrison sings Christmas carols in the hot sun and Clifton asks if anyone has seen his wife. Later, she tells Almásy she



CNS photo from Reuters

Star Trek fans can enjoy yet another film in this continuing space saga in "Star Trek: First Contact," starring Patrick Stewart as Capt. Jean-Luc Picard and Brent Spiner as android LL Data. The U.S. Catholic Conference classifies the movie A-II for adults and adolescents.

wants to go home and distant thunder rumbles faintly.

On the second track, at the monastery, Hana learns of the count's past through a well-marked copy of Herodotus that he has salvaged through all his travels. The ancient Greek historian whom Cicero called "the father of history," seems a symbolic literary device if ever there was one. The book will come in handy at the end.

Hana also discovers a nearly ruined piano in the church, and while playing it is stopped by Kip, who warns her it may be boobytrapped. Thus begins another improbable but lighter romance, highlighted by what must be one of the most dazzlingly gorgeous "dates" in movie history. Kip leads Hana through candlelit darkness to a large abandoned chapel, where he hoists her on a rope, equipped with a torch, and she swings gently in the dark amid the light and smoke to see some ancient frescoes of saints high on the chapel wall.

The camera work by John Seale ("Beyond Rangoon") excels, not only in this lovely episode, but throughout the desert and exotic locales. The use of period dance music (Irving Berlin) adds to the mix.

When Kip goes from this to work on an exploded bomb, you figure the worst will happen, but there is really much more to come. It's probably writer Ondaatje's brilliance at story-telling that makes what

seems convoluted, in contemporary movie terms, absolutely gripping.

In any case, Hana's story ends in hope. But the African tale ends tragically, from a moral viewpoint, the only way it could. Even the count's odd nationality has a purpose in the story. But only concrete slabs in the theater seats could not be moved as Almásy rescues the body of his beloved from the cave of hieroglyphs, where she died cradling the copy of Herodotus.

(Unusual tale involving all the great morally complex themes—love, adultery, courage, war, nationality, friendship and betrayal—told in the grand style; satisfactory for adults.)

USCC classification: A-IV, adults, with reservations.

CBS will air 'Timepiece' and 'The Christmas Box'

Sunday, Dec. 22, 9-11 p.m. (CBS) "Timepiece." This holiday drama about love, loyalty and forgiveness is set in the 1940s and is a prequel to the acclaimed story of "The Christmas Box."

Wednesday, Dec. 25, 9-11 p.m. (CBS) "The Christmas Box." Based on the best-selling novel by Richard Paul Evans, this holiday drama tells the story of how a family learns the true meaning of Christmas from an elderly woman.

Film Classifications

Recently reviewed by the USCC

Citizen Ruth O
Everyone Says I Love You A-III
Ghosts of Mississippi A-II
Mars Attacks! A-III
One Fine Day A-III
The Preacher's Wife A-II

A-I — general patronage; A-II — adults and adolescents; A-III — adults; A-IV — adults, with reservations; O — morally offensive

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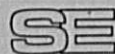
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Fourth Sunday of Advent/Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

Sunday, Dec. 22, 1996

- 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-11, 16
- Romans 16:25-27
- Luke 1:26-38

The Second Book of Samuel provides this Advent weekend with its first scriptural reading. Originally the two books of Samuel were one. In the course of time, as versions were produced, as editing and translation occurred, the book was divided. Now there are two books.

While Samuel's name identifies the book, much of the message is about the first two kings of Israel, Saul and David. This weekend's selection is about David, a special figure in Hebrew history. He was a great hero, and tradition made him an important religious figure. His place as king was as God's representative.

In this weekend's reading, God pledges David that he will found a dynasty which will endure to protect and advance the interests of God's people and the glory of God. This reading must be noted in the context of Advent and Christmas.

Jesus descended from David according to the reckoning of his time. Matthew's Gospel provides the lineage. David was an ancestor of Joseph. While Joseph was not the Lord's biological father, under Jewish law he would have had responsibility for Jesus as if Jesus were his own son. So the social privileges enjoyed by Joseph as a descendant of David would have passed on to Jesus. (Some argue that Mary also descended from David since Jews of the time married within their own circle.)

The reading from Second Samuel reminds us that in Jesus God fulfilled the

covenant. In Jesus, the glory of David was manifested and sublimely enhanced.

St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans soars in its majestic salute to Jesus, the embodiment of God on earth. Because of their knowledge of Jesus, people know God. It is a blessed, refreshing, vivifying knowledge. Paul exclaims his gratitude to God for this revelation through Jesus, and calls upon Christian Romans to give thanks.

The Gospel of Luke supplies the Fourth Sunday of Advent with its Gospel reading. Luke's story of the Annunciation is unique. None of the other Gospels has a similar passage. It is one of several sections of Luke which mention the Mother of God.

This passage is filled with lessons. The angel bears the message from God. In the Old Testament, angels were God's messengers. On this occasion, God speaks to a human again. Mary is betrothed to a descendant of David, the great king of Israel. The angel salutes her as "highly blessed," holy and virtuous. She is a virgin, and her child will be born of God not of her union with a human father. The child will be God's child. The angel bids Mary to "rejoice" for the salvation of God has come.

Reflection

Pope John Paul II has said that the long-established English translation of the text "Hail, Mary!" is inadequate, incomplete, and inexact. Rather, he insists, as do Scripture scholars today, that the text should read, "Rejoice, Mary!"

The angel who visited Mary with the announcement of the birth of the Redeemer called her to rejoice. It was more than the announcement of a forthcoming event. It was the excited proclamation that God was coming into the world with divine forgiveness and salvation.

The church points us towards the birth of Jesus and invites us to rejoice in our salvation and in all that salvation means for us. God is with us! We are redeemed!

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 23

John Kanty, presbyter
Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24
Psalm 25:4-5, 8-10, 14
Luke 1:57-66

Tuesday, Dec. 24

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16
Psalm 89:2-5, 27, 29
Luke 1:67-79
Vigil of Christmas
Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29
Acts 13:16-17, 22-25
Matthew 1:1-25 or
Matthew 1:18-25

Wednesday, Dec. 25

Christmas
Midnight
Isaiah 9:1-6
Psalm 96:1-3, 11-13
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14
Dawn
Isaiah 62:11-12
Psalm 97:1, 6, 11-12
Titus 3:4-7
Luke 2:15-20
Day
Isaiah 52:7-10
Psalm 98:1-6
Hebrews 1:1-8
John 1:1-18
or John 1:1-5, 9-14

Thursday, Dec. 26

Stephen, first martyr
Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59
Psalm 31:3-4, 6-8, 17-21
Matthew 10:17-22

Friday, Dec. 27

John, apostle, evangelist
1 John 1:1-4
Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12
John 20:2-8

Saturday, Dec. 28

The Holy Innocents, martyrs
1 John 1:5 - 2:2
Psalm 124:2-5, 7-8
Matthew 2:13-18

Sunday, Dec. 29

The Holy Family
Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14
Psalm 128:1-5
Colossians 3:12-17
or Colossians 3:12-21
Luke 2:22-40
or Luke 2:22, 39-40

Monday, Dec. 30

1 John 2:12-17
Psalm 96:7-10
Luke 2:36-40

Tuesday, Dec. 31

Sylvester I, pope
1 John 2:18-21
Psalm 96:1-2, 11-13
John 1:1-18

Wednesday, Jan. 1

Mary, Mother of God
Numbers 6:22-27
Psalm 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:16-21

Thursday, Jan. 2

Basil the Great and
Gregory Nazianzen, bishops
and doctors of the church
1 John 2:22-28
Psalm 98:1-4
John 1:19-28

Friday, Jan. 3

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

My Journey to God

Christmas

is

not found

under a tree.

It lies within hearts

of good people who live

lives with love in all seasons.

From the Tree of Life in the First

Garden and from the Biblical family tree

of David, Christmas came with the Christ Child

lying in a manger of wood, a baby coming to manhood

under the care of a carpenter, Joseph, whose love for Mary
and God's son exemplifies the simplicity of God's plan. Christmas

grew from the manger to the cross: Wood that became the symbol of
salvation for centuries of sinners. Let us carry our crosses with the joy of

the first Holy

Christmas.

Come, let us

adore Him!

By Shirley Vogler Meister

(Shirley Vogler Meister is a member of Christ the King Parish in Indianapolis.)

The Tribunal: Why and Wherefore

Tribunal investigation is specialized

By the Tribunal Staff

"I heard about someone whose annulment only took two weeks. . . . Does it matter if my ex-spouse wasn't baptized?"

It is impossible to make many general statements about marriage cases. All cases do not take the same time to complete. There are different types of cases, and each type has different requirements. Also, obtaining the essential evidence may be more difficult in some situations than in others.

Lack of canonical form: Church law requires a Catholic to marry before a Catholic priest to have the marriage recognized in the church. When a Catholic wants to marry a non-Catholic, the couple sometimes prefers to be married by someone other than a Catholic priest. For example, a non-Catholic bride may want to be married in her own church. In such cases, the Catholic can almost always obtain permission of the church beforehand to marry before a minister or civil magistrate.

However, if the Catholic did not have such a permission to marry before a minister or civil magistrate, the marriage is invalid according to Catholic law. The parish priest usually can handle this matter without referring it to the tribunal. The documents needed are a Catholic baptismal certificate, marriage certificate, and the divorce decree.

Documentary cases: In one form or another, all communities have what the Catholic Church calls "impediments." Both the church and state forbid certain marriages based upon conditions or situations involving a person which make him or her either permanently or temporarily "disqualified" for marriage. For example, both the church and the state have required ages for mar-

riage—for the church the man must be at least 16 and the woman 14.

Sometimes marriages which have ended in divorce are found by the Catholic Church to have been invalid because of an impediment which was not recognized at the time of the wedding. The principal proofs in these cases are documents, and the investigation is often relatively simple. The tribunal investigates and makes the decision in these cases. Also, the former spouse must be invited to take part.

Pauline Privilege and Privilege of the Faith dissolutions: Sometimes marriages which have ended in divorce may be dissolved by the church. It is impossible to generalize about what specific personal situations make possible a church dissolution of a marriage. However, the essential basis for dissolution almost always is certain evidence that one of the partners of the failed marriage was unbaptized when they married and remained unbaptized while they lived in the marriage. Determining that someone was not baptized and meeting other requirements for these cases is generally clear-cut. It is often possible to reach a conclusion easily in these cases.

Each marriage case is truly different from any other because the circumstances and the individuals involved are unique. Most tribunals try to take the simplest route to establish freedom to marry while still respecting the sacredness of marriage.

(These articles are general and not exhaustive. Readers are invited to submit comments or other questions they would like to see addressed. The Criterion will publish follow up articles based on readers' suggestions. Please submit comments or questions in writing to Metropolitan Tribunal, P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206, by FAX at 317-236-1401, or by E-Mail: tribunal@archindy.com.)

The Active List

The Criterion welcomes announcements for The Active List of parish and church-related activities open to the public. Please keep them brief, listing event, sponsor, date, time and location. No announcements will be taken by telephone. No pictures, please. Notices must be in our offices by 10 a.m. Monday the week of publication. Hand deliver or mail to: The Criterion, The Active List, 1400 N. Meridian St., P.O. Box 1717, Indianapolis, Ind., 46206.

December 20

A pro-life rosary will be prayed every Friday morning at 10 a.m. in front of Affiliated Women's Services, Inc., 2215 Distributors Dr. Everyone is welcome.

St. Lawrence Church, Indianapolis, will have adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel every Friday from 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mass. Benediction will be before Mass. Everyone is welcome.

St. Susanna Church, Main St., Plainfield, will hold adoration of the Blessed Sacrament from 8 a.m.-7 p.m. every Friday.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal of Central Indiana will hold a Mass, healing service, and teaching at Marian College, 3200 Cold Springs Rd., Indianapolis, beginning at 7 p.m. followed by Mass. For more information, call 317-927-6900.

St. Luke Church, Indianapolis, will hold "Songs of the Nativity" presented by Hosanna Sacred Arts at 7:30 p.m. in the church. All are welcome. A free will offering will be taken. Information: Cathy Wernert 317-843-2981.

December 20-22

Benedict Inn Retreat and Con-

ference Center, Beech Grove, will hold an Advent Silent Retreat from 7 p.m. on Friday through noon on Sunday. Retreat is \$75 with a \$15 non-refundable deposit upon registration. Information and register, 317-788-7581.

December 21

St. Christopher Parish, Indianapolis, Singles and Friends, will meet at 8 a.m. at the church to volunteer at St. Vincent de Paul distribution and client service center. For more information, call Mike at 317-879-8018.

December 22

St. Lawrence Church, 4650 N. Shadeland Ave., Indianapolis, will have adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel every Sunday from 1-5 p.m. Everyone is welcome.

St. Patrick Church, Indianapolis, will have two Masses in Spanish at 11 a.m. and 6:15 p.m.

Sacred Heart Parish, Indianapolis, will have Marian prayer every Sunday from 2-3 p.m. All are welcome.

St. Gabriel Church, Indianapolis, will have a Mass with a sign language interpreter at 11 a.m.

St. Mary Church, 317 N. New Jersey, St., Indianapolis, will have a Mass in Spanish at 1:15 p.m.

St. Athanasius Byzantine Catholic Church (formerly Assumption Church, 1117 Blaine, Indianapolis) will hold a Mass in Spanish at 4 p.m.

St. Anthony Church, Clarks-ville, will hold "Be Not Afraid Holy Hour: Misery and Mercy" from 6-7 p.m. Confession and Benediction.

Sacred Heart Parish, Indianapolis, will hold a Christmas concert presented by the parish choir, conducted by Dr. John Gates, at 4 p.m. All are welcome.

Holy Name Church, Beech Grove, will present "Christmas Concert XXXV" at 3 p.m. and again at 6:30 p.m. in the church. Tickets are \$5 and may be obtained by calling Marcia Cleary at 317-787-1682.

December 25

A one-hour video documentary of the 1996 archdiocesan pilgrimage to the shrines of southern Europe, "Journey of Faith with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein," will be aired at 9 a.m. on WNDY-TV 23.

December 26

St. Lawrence Church, 4650 N. Shadeland Ave., Indianapolis, will hold adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel every Thursday from 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Mass. All are welcome.

December 26-28

CYO Camp Rancho Framasa will hold Winter Adventure Camp for ages 13-15. Cost is \$80. Information and registration: 317-632-9311.

December 27 and 29

Oldenburg Franciscan Motherhouse will hold tours from 6-8 p.m. Friday and from 2-4 p.m. on Sunday. Directions: I-74 E. to Batesville exit, take Highway



"It saves them a lot of trouble."

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229 North three miles to Motherhouse on Main St., Oldenburg.

December 29

St. Anthony Church, Clarks-ville, will hold "Be Not Afraid Holy Hour: Be Merciful" from 6-7 p.m. Confession and Benediction.

Bingos

MONDAY: Our Lady of Lourdes, 6:30 p.m.; St. James, 5:30 p.m. TUESDAY: K of C Council 437, 1305 N. Delaware, 11 a.m.; St. Michael, 6 p.m.; St. Malachy, Brownsburg, 5:30 p.m.; Msgr. Sheridan K of C Council 6138, Johnson Co., 6:15 p.m.; St. Pius X Knights of

Columbus Council 3433, 6 p.m.; Knights of Columbus, 1040 N. Post Rd., 9 a.m.-noon. WEDNESDAY: St. Anthony, 6:30 p.m.; K of C Council 437, 1305 N. Delaware, 5:45 p.m. THURSDAY: Msgr. Downey Knights of Columbus Council 3660, 5:30 p.m.; Holy Family K of C, American Legion Post 500, 1926 Georgetown Rd., 6:30 p.m.; FRIDAY: St. Christopher, Speedway, 6:30 p.m.; Holy Name, Beech Grove, 5:30 p.m. SATURDAY: K of C Council 437, 1305 N. Delaware, 4:30 p.m. SUNDAY: St. Ambrose, Seymour, 4 p.m.; Ritter High School, 6 p.m.; Msgr. Sheridan K of C Council 6138, Johnson Co., first Sunday each of month, 1:15 p.m.

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Question Corner/Fr. John Dietzen

What does the church teach about evolution?



QA few weeks ago we heard that Pope John Paul II said there was enough scientific evidence to believe in evolution. Is this true? I find that hard to believe after what we have been told all our lives. (Iowa)

AIt is true. Furthermore, it should not be all that surprising or hard to believe for anyone who has read, and been open to, what the church has been saying on the subject for the last 50 years.

Evolution is the hypothesis that life evolved very slowly over many millions of years. Even our human body came into existence, not by a divine potter forming it out of the "clay of the ground" (Gn. 2:7), but by developing from pre-existing living beings.

Much opposition to evolution as a scientific theory has come from religious fundamentalists, Catholics and otherwise, who consider evolution irreconcilable with the "clear" biblical teaching of how God created the world in general and human beings in particular.

This opposition, however, does not reflect the teaching of the Catholic Church. As long ago as 1950, Pope Pius XII, in the encyclical *"Humani Generis,"* maintained that the church has no problem with the study of evolution by scientists and theologians.

The research, he said, which "inquires into the origin of the human body as coming from pre-existent and living

matter," creates no difficulty for Catholic belief, as long as we accept that the spiritual "part" of our nature, what we call the soul, is immediately created by God (n. 36).

In his Oct. 22, 1996, address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, to which you refer, Pope John Paul II makes two points particularly important for your question.

First, we must use extreme caution when we attempt to find answers to scientific questions in the Bible. Four years ago he spoke to the same group about the church's condemnation of Galileo.

(All are aware, I hope, that the renowned 17th-century scientist and astronomer was charged with heresy for claiming that the earth revolves around the sun, not the other way around. His theory was said to contradict Scripture, which speaks rather of the sun moving, going up and coming down around the earth. See, for instance Jos. 10:12-13.)

In that 1992 address, the pope attributed Galileo's condemnation to the fact that the majority of theologians did not recognize the "distinction between sacred Scripture and its interpretation," which led them "unduly to transpose" doctrine and scientific investigation.

In his most recent address, on Oct. 22, in relation to evolution, the Holy Father repeats this warning against interpretations of Scripture "that make it say what it does not intend to say."

Scripture scholars and theologians, he says, cannot do their job properly unless they keep informed about

what is happening in the sciences.

Second, the evolution theory, as any hypothesis, needs always to be tested against the facts. As information gathers that fits the theory, its explanation of how life developed on our planet becomes more and more probable.

According to Pope John Paul II, the facts converging from many fields of knowledge (anthropology, geology, psychology, and so on), create a progressively "significant argument in favor of this theory."

Obviously, none of this denies creation by God. It says simply that God apparently did his creating quite differently than those people assume who take Genesis as a scientific explanation of how the universe came to be.

(Questions should be sent to Fr. John Dietzen, Holy Trinity Church, 704 N. Main St., Bloomington, Ill. 61701.)

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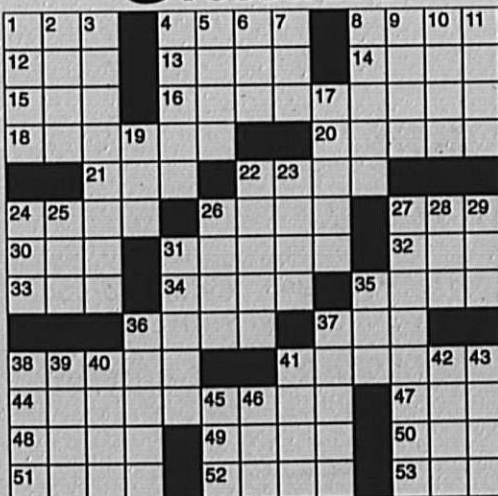
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ACROSS

- 1 Red felt hat
- 4 Military group
- 8 Helper, assistant
- 12 "Thou art my battle" (Jer 51:20)
- 13 Soccer name
- 14 Silmy critter
- 15 Accomplished
- 16 John the Baptist's job (Mat 3:1)
- 18 Sound system
- 20 Stinks
- 21 "One — of the goats" (Num 7:16)
- 22 Abel's killer
- 24 "Where no oxen are, the — is clean" (Prov 14:4)
- 26 Green gemstone
- 27 "— sin, then thou markest me" (Job 10:14)
- 30 Split — soup
- 31 Pierced with a horn
- 32 — Paulo, Brazil
- 33 German interjection
- 34 Papal names
- 35 Beige hue
- 36 "And the stars shall — from heaven" (Mat 24:29)

DOWN

- 37 Actress Thompson
- 38 Mimics
- 41 "Be not a — unto me" (Jer 17:17)
- 44 Follower of Jesus
- 47 "Lord, is — ?" (Mat 26:22)
- 48 Fork prong
- 49 Movie mutt
- 50 Sluggish Mel
- 51 Toboggan
- 52 Christian holiday, for short
- 53 Foot ender
- 1 Crazy
- 2 Leave
- 3 Mattaniah's new name (2 Ki 24:17)
- 4 Increased
- 5 Infamous fiddler
- 6 — de - France
- 7 Coffee alternative
- 8 Pale
- 9 Court star Nastase
- 10 Dip a donut
- 11 The partridge sits on them (Jer 17:11)
- 17 "And they — out for fear" (Mat 14:26)
- 19 Eve, at first (Gen 2:22)
- 22 Christmas song
- 23 Summer drinks
- 24 Number cruncher (Abbr)
- 25 Den; — room
- 26 A minor prophet (Acts 2:16)
- 27 Last name for Judas (Mat 26:14)
- 28 Distant
- 29 Promise to pay (Abbr)
- 31 Drink holder
- 35 Auction ending
- 36 Like some unleavened cakes (Lev 7:12)
- 37 Home and Olin
- 38 Book after John
- 39 Mr. Donahue
- 40 Sea eagle
- 41 Bye-bye, in Britain
- 42 Director Preminger
- 43 Religious ceremony
- 45 Income or sales levy
- 46 Distinctive doctrine

Answers on page 38.

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Almost like home: Poles in Rome enjoy Polish Christmas with the pope

Usually the pope invites between 10 and 20 people for dinner Christmas Eve—friends from Krakow or Rome

By Lynne Well, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY—This time of year, many a household makes a small ceremony out of finding and raising the Christmas tree. But only the papal household had its main tree delivered from Slovenia on a flatbed truck.

It's also common to invite a few people over for holiday festivities before the big day itself. Pope John Paul II will play host to as many as 4,000 at once.

And while the night before Christmas leaves visions of sugarplums dancing in some heads, for his own part the pope will be looking at a lot of fish.

Pope John Paul's list of official events during this season brings new meaning to the phrase, "busy holiday schedule." However, amid the many speeches, Masses and meetings, some events are likely to have a more personal meaning for the Polish pope, according to his compatriots in Rome and Vatican observers.

One of them is the singing of *koledy*, traditional Polish songs about Christmas, Advent and Epiphany. There are said to be more than 300 *koledy*.

"The Holy Father sings very well, and he particularly likes the *koledy*," said Father Konrad Hejmo, director of Corda Cordi, the pastoral center for Polish pilgrims to Rome. "It is amazing how he can recall the lyrics of so many songs,

while the rest of us have to keep the text in front of us."

Father Hejmo is one of the select few who have spent Christmas Eve at the pope's table. Usually Pope John Paul invites between 10 and 20 people—friends from Krakow, prominent Poles in Rome, and a Polish cardinal or two. It is never the same group, and there might be several years' separation between invitations—for those who are invited more than once.

"The Holy Father has a gift for making friends," Father Hejmo explained.

The table is arranged inside the papal apartments, which are decorated with up to a dozen trees that have been brought in fresh from the forests of Poland.

"They have to be brought from Poland," Father Hejmo said. "The mountains of Northern Italy do not provide the right kind of trees. And it makes the Holy Father feel more at home. You know how he likes nature."

The pope's personal nativity scene offers another uniquely Polish touch: Among the almost life-size sheep and other animals are the huddled figures of Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus, all dressed in Polish folk costumes, as is done in many Polish homes.

Christmas Eve in a Polish household usually involves a dinner with 12 courses, up to half of them fish, as no meat is to be eaten on that occasion. Pope John Paul is unlikely to subject himself to all 12 dishes, observers say, but he customarily does have more than one fish course.

Other traditional treats include poppy seed bread, spiced cakes and vodka.

Father Hejmo said these items also grace the Christmas Eve table at his pastoral center, located just outside the Vatican walls. Christmas is an important family holiday in Poland, he noted, so he tries to make it as homey as possible for the staff members, nuns and pilgrims who find themselves so far from home this time of year.

On the afternoon of the 24th, they have the unique opportunity to sing *koledy* with the pope at an audience in the Vatican. The more than 12,000 Poles living in Rome and the surrounding area are all welcome, and as many as one third of them show up.

In addition to the songs, at the audience Pope John Paul performs the Polish Christmas custom of dividing a special wafer called an *oplatek*. Two people grasp the large, rectangular wafer and pull, breaking it together as a sign of friendship.

"We always break the *oplatek* together in my family," said Sister Rita Partyka, a Polish-American nun who has been in Rome for five years. "So it is a real special event to be there when the pope does it."

Sister Partyka, originally from Scranton, Pa., now lives with her order, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. Founded by a Polish woman, the order ran the nursery school that Pope John Paul attended as a child.

Often, the nuns from this order who

are based in Rome are offered front-row seats at the pre-Christmas audience. Sister Partyka says she once gave up her front-row seat to a nun from Poland, "because I knew how much it would mean to her."

The Christmas-time folk customs also are important to the pope, according to Father Adam Boniecki, one of his first biographers and the former editor of the Polish edition of the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*.

"These are sentimental things," Father Boniecki said. "But why not? After all, even the pope can be sentimental sometimes."

Father Hejmo at the Polish pilgrims' center said the pope's devotion to his country's customs is apparent to all visitors to St. Peter's Square this time of year.

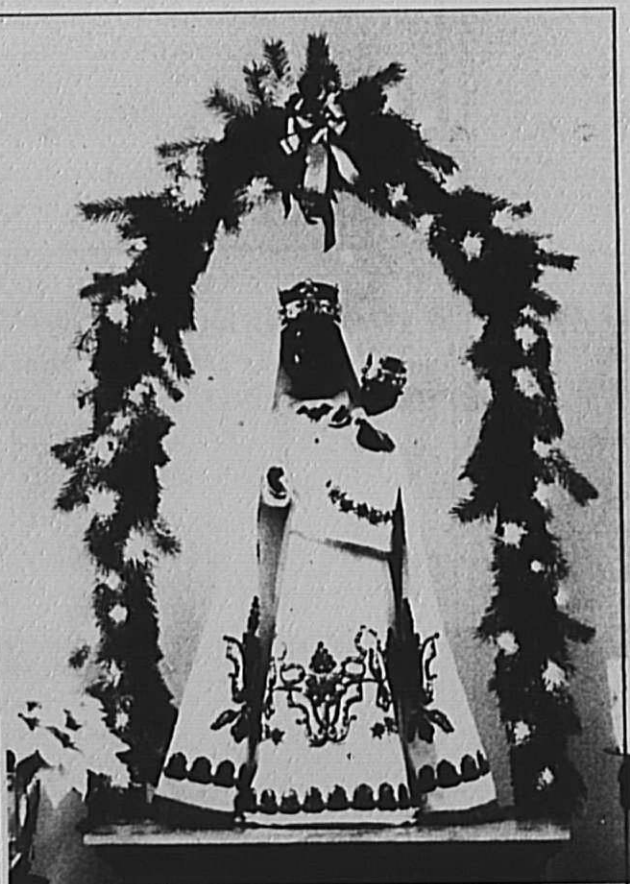
"In Poland, we prolong Christmas as much as possible," Father Hejmo said, adding that celebrations continue until February. "Sometimes on the Holy Father's insistence, the nativity scene has stayed in the square long past when the strict liturgists would like to see it taken down. They get uncomfortable about it, but there's nothing they can do."

"These celebrations also have a patriotic significance," said Jerzy Hurdynski, a writer from the pope's home Diocese of Krakow who has been living in Rome for 32 years. "They represent a life that has survived despite years of oppression, and a people who have survived occupation by other nations."

For this reason, it could be that the Christmas tree that also decorates St. Peter's Square will have additional significance in 1997.

Each year the tree is sent from a different country. This year's came on an extra-long flatbed truck from Slovenia, with a white banner declaring its origin and destination in two languages.

Next year, the tree is to come from Poland.



This statue of Our Lady of Einsiedeln was a wood-carved gift to Saint Meinrad on its Centennial in 1954, from its Mother Abbey Maria Einsiedeln, Switzerland. The gown Our Lady is wearing was made by Saint Meinrad's Br. Kim Malloy, OSB.

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Youth News/Views

'Christmas in Madison' would make a great book

By Mary Ann Wyand

Fifth-grade teacher Terri Guarino asked her students at Pope John XXIII School in Madison to share Christmas memories.

"The best Christmas I ever had was the Christmas my Aunt Barb came to our house," Josh Watterson recalled. "She was here for Christmas morning to watch us open our gifts. She wanted to be helpful, so she told Mom and Dad she would use the camcorder while they watched us open our gifts. My Aunt Barb laughs a lot, and you just can't do that with a camcorder. All of our Christmas tapes that year show us going up and down from her laughing. Next time she comes home for Christmas, I don't think Mom and Dad will let her have the camcorder."

Christmas of 1994 was shocking for Lindsay Zehren's family. After reading a story about decorating a tree in a woods with food for animals, the family decided that would be a good holiday project.

"On Christmas Eve, we left to find the perfect tree, and we did," Lindsay said. "But we had a problem. There was an electric fence blocking our way in. My mom told my uncle to cross first to see if it was on. He crossed over it with no trouble. He told my mom the fence wasn't on. My mom grabbed the fence and held it for my Grandma. The shock came on! The kids were laughing so hard we were falling on the ground. Finally we all managed to climb over the fence alive. We

were about down to the tree when suddenly we heard a sound like a wolf. We ended up running back to the fence and this time jumping right over it."

Lauren Schanding's most memorable Christmas, when she was 8 years old, began when she woke up and discovered it had snowed during the night.

"The ground was covered with a blanket of dazzling white snow," Lauren recalled. "I was amazed! My mother and I built a snowman, and when we finished we sprayed the snowman with water that was colored pink."

Last year was Sarah Sabie's funniest Christmas Eve, thanks to her brother's decision to ask a friend to cut his hair.

"My brother Carey wanted a new haircut for Christmas," Sarah explained. "He let his friend cut his hair. When his friend was done, Carey looked in the mirror. The right side was shorter than the left side. The left side had holes. Carey's bangs were crooked. Carey decided that no hair would be better than his new hairstyle. He told his friend to shave it all off."

When her mother picked up Carey for Midnight Mass, Sarah remembered, "Mom almost had a heart attack. She was shocked! When we got to Mass, Carey wanted to wear his hat inside. Mom said no because it was disrespectful to God. Poor Carey! It just so happened that our gag gift for that year was a Chia Head!"

Trayce Lawson's most memorable Christmas was last year, when her cousin, Andrew James, was born on Christmas Eve.

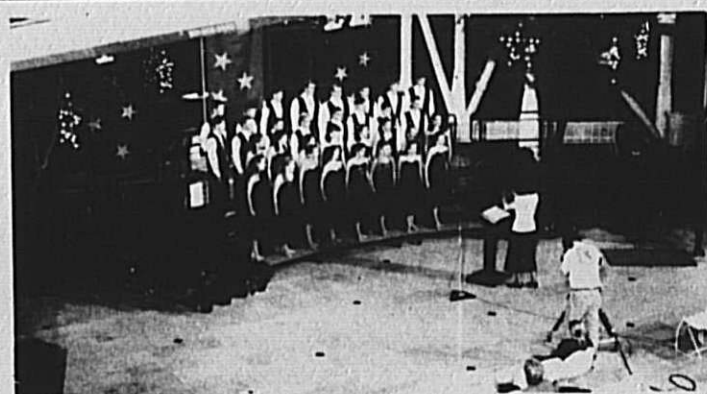


Photo courtesy of Roncalli High School

Roncalli High School's Show Choir tapes their segment of the WTHR Channel 13 holiday special on Dec. 9 at the Artsgarden in Circle Center Mall in downtown Indianapolis. "Voices of Celebration," an uninterrupted one-hour concert, will be broadcast on Channel 13 at 7 p.m. on Dec. 24 and 1 p.m. on Dec. 25, as well as on Channel 27, WTHR's sister station, at 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on Christmas. Also featured in the televised concert are the Catholic Choir of Indianapolis, the Indianapolis Children's Choir, the Indianapolis Symphonic Choirs, the Arts Chorale, and choirs from St. Andrew the Apostle Church and the First Baptist Church of North Indianapolis.

"I finally got my CD player," Trayce wrote, "but I still think baby Jim was the best present."

Philip Berry's most memorable Christmas two years ago wasn't all fun and games.

"My family thought it would be fun to have some relatives and friends over for a party," Philip remembered. "I got to play outside with my friends and cousins. We built a fire and went sledding. That was a lot of fun until I fell in the creek and got really cold. Then I went home to the same old party. There was one thing bad about this party. We had to clean it all up after everybody left."

Doug Ungru's father was in charge of preparing the turkey last Christmas.

"My Dad had injected all these juices, sauces, and dressings into the turkey to make it really good," Doug said. "Then he put it in a smoker and smoked it. It think it smelled better than it tasted, but it was still really good."

Christmas is always the same for Sarah Sutter's family, with all the usual holiday rituals year after year.

"Even though my family does the same thing every year," Sarah wrote, "I think it took me 10 years to realize that it was special. I really appreciated it last year."

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CYO Day offers basketball, pizza

Catholic Youth Organization participants are invited to attend CYO Day at Hinkle Fieldhouse on the Butler University campus at 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 4, for the Butler women's basketball game against Detroit.

Following the collegiate game, the Catholic Youth Organization has planned a pizza party in the west gym for all youth, coaches, and chaperones who have participated in CYO athletic programs and other activities this year.

Admission is free for CYO participants, but reservations are required by calling the CYO Youth Center at 317-632-9311 by noon on Thursday, Jan. 2, or sending a FAX to the CYO office at 317-632-8767 by the deadline. Admission to the game is \$1 for adults.

CYO groups should meet at 3:30 p.m. on Jan. 4 at Gate 1 of Hinkle Fieldhouse. Youth are asked to wear Butler's school colors of blue and white.

After the game, the Butler Bulldog will join team members to greet CYO groups, and players will sign autographs on free team posters. Butler's women's basketball coach also plans to give a short motivational talk.

Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School's Student Council recently sponsored the school's 13th annual "Help for the Holidays" service project to collect clothing, food, toys, and household items for 32 needy families in the Indianapolis area.

Students also volunteered at the Dayspring Shelter and Crooked Creek Multi-Service Center this year as part of the school's community service requirement. Brebeuf Jesuit students attempt to live and practice the Ignatian model of "Men and Women in Service to Others" through a variety of community assistance projects.

Roncalli High School students joined University of Notre Dame students from Farley Hall at Notre Dame, and friends in Chicago, Georgia and Indianapolis to provide Christmas gifts for 25 needy Appalachian families who live in Tennessee.

The presents will be distributed in Tennessee by Franciscan Father Tom Vos, the former pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Indianapolis, who now ministers to the poor in Appalachia.

Young Adult Scene

Two young adults share pilgrimage experience

By Susan Blerman

A 15-day pilgrimage, which covered some 2,000 miles between Barcelona and Rome, was an experience two Indianapolis young adults won't soon forget.

Kevin Smith, a youth ministry coordinator at St. Malachy Parish in Brownsburg, and Jeff Stumpf, archdiocesan director of the Office of Internal Auditing, were among 90 pilgrims from the archdiocese.

The pilgrimage was led by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein who took them to holy sites in Spain, France, Switzerland, and Italy. The pilgrims left Indianapolis Sept. 20 and returned from their spiritual journey Oct. 4.

Smith, 27, a parishioner at St. Malachy, has been telling the youth there about what happened during his travels.

"Sharing my own experiences from the pilgrimage will be more powerful than trying to teach them something from a textbook," Smith said.

"It's a powerful witness," he added.

Smith put together an album featuring the pictures he took while on the pilgrimage. Each time Smith shows this collection to the youth, he himself begins to reminisce.

"With a pilgrimage traveling four countries in 15 days, we traveled a lot, and we saw a lot of things in a short amount of time," Smith said.

Each time he shares his photos, especially when he is working with his students, "more and more (memories about the pilgrimage) come back.

"I can share the enthusiasm of the universal church with my students," Smith said.

He believes that sharing his pilgrimage experience with the youth will let them see what the larger church is like.

"I want to let them know that, in the United States, there aren't as many shrines or holy places as there are in Europe," Smith said.

"It seemed like in Europe, every few miles you would see another church, another shrine, or another basilica," he added.

Seeing the origins of some of the saints Smith had only read about was another highlight of the pilgrimage for him. Smith said the "awesomeness" of seeing and standing in some of the places where saints had stood gave him a real sense of who the saints really were. He found this especially true when visiting the crypt of St. Eulalia.

Smith explained St. Eulalia was a 13-year-old girl

Notre Dame, Villanova earn awards for promoting volunteer service

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The University of Notre Dame in Indiana and Villanova University in Pennsylvania shared the 1996 Father George Mader Award for their outstanding leadership roles in promoting volunteer service by lay students, faculty, staff and alumni.

The award was presented by the Catholic Network of Volunteer Service in Washington Nov. 12, during the U.S. bishops' annual fall meeting.

Holy Cross Father Edward A. Malloy, president of Notre Dame, and Augustinian Father Edmund J. Dobbin, president of Villanova, accepted the awards on behalf of their schools.

Notre Dame was honored for a variety of programs in the nearby South Bend community, including its partnership with the Center for the Homeless, and for promoting service through alumni clubs nationwide.

The award recognized Villanova's wide-ranging volunteer programs for homeless people, children of broken families and persons with physical and mental challenges. The university also was cited for its support of Habitat for Humanity and domestic and foreign missions.

The award is named for Father George Mader of the Archdiocese of Newark, N.J., who, with his sister, Patricia Mader Stalker, founded the International Liaison of Lay Volunteers in Mission in 1963, as a network for Catholic volunteer programs.

The Catholic Network of Volunteer Service is the official U.S. Catholic network of lay mission programs and currently coordinates more than 180 faith-based programs involving 5,000 volunteers.

Its members include the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, the Franciscan Mission Service, the Comboni Lay Missionaries, the Catholic Volunteers in Florida, the Catholic Charities Volunteer Corps, and the Teacher Service Corps.

who was crucified by the Romans for her religious beliefs. He said St. Eulalia's crypt is very ornate and pictures of her story are sculptured in stone.

"Since I work with youth and I know a lot of 13-year-old boys and girls, to see someone so strong in her faith that she died for it . . . I think that struck a cord with me," Smith said.

Jeff Stumpf, 26, who is a parishioner at St. Monica in Indianapolis, said the 2,000 mile journey "was truly a pilgrimage."

This is an idea that he didn't fully grasp beforehand.

"With the nature of what a pilgrimage is and traveling from point to point, and at each point stopping to worship, we understood more about the history of each place," Stumpf said.

Stumpf believes the pilgrimage has provided him with a stronger foundation for his spiritual life.

"I came back with a greater understanding of the past and of the history of the church that I didn't have before," he said.

"A Journey of Faith, with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein," a one-hour documentary of the 1996 archdiocesan pilgrimage will premiere at 9 a.m. Christmas morning on WNDY-TV Channel 23 in Indianapolis. The documentary can be purchased for \$29.95, which includes shipping and handling. Those wishing to reserve a copy may call 800-627-9403.



Photo by Carolyn Noone

Kevin Smith and Jeff Stumpf stand with Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein at the Abbey of Montserrat in Spain, located just outside Barcelona. Ninety pilgrims from the archdiocese visited holy sites in Spain, France, Switzerland, and Italy covering some 2,000 miles.

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Rest in peace

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

ANDERSON, Annette (Dalton), 57, Annunciation, Brazil, Nov. 28. Wife of Jerry Anderson; mother of Dr. Julie Shaw, Dr. Kevin, Dr. Bart, Dr. Trent Anderson; daughter of Anna Kathryn (Doyle) Dalton; sister of Dr. Michael, Thomas Dalton, Patricia Lattimer;

grandmother of one; aunt of several nieces and nephews.

BARTON, Kenneth E., 71, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Nov. 6. Husband of Florence (Gill) Barton; father of Kevin M. Barton; brother of Bobby Barton, Vivian Swick, Garnet Brookshier; grandfather of two.

BOARD, Jack F., 60, St. Rose, Franklin, Dec. 4. Father of Cynthia M. Blackwell, Linda Makela, Christopher Board; brother of William Harris, Jerry Board, Jeri L. Harp; grandfather of eight.

CARR, Frank P., 72, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Brother of Eva M. Rickard; uncle of several nieces and nephews.

CONSTANTINO, Margaret Ann, 68, Holy Rosary, Indianapolis, Dec. 6. Sister of Mary Nancy, Anthony P. Constantino, Santa Bayt; aunt of 19 nieces and nephews; great-aunt of 25 nieces and nephews.

DOLAN, Gladys Jane, 79, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Dec. 9. Wife of James Dolan; mother of Dennis, Gregory, Stephen Dolan, Patricia Klavuhn; sister of Eugene Scharnhorst, Audrey Mitchell; grandmother of six.

ELLIS, Marsha Kay, 32, St. Mary, Richmond, Dec. 9. Wife of Michael J. Ellis; daughter of Nancy Wilmoth, Ronald Pheanis; stepdaughter of Nancy Pheanis; sister of James Pheanis; stepsister of Kenneth Wilmoth, Heidi Vanhoose, April Clark; granddaughter of Harold and Louise Bradley.

FITZGERALD, Donald J., 76, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Father of Theresa

Marie, Joseph Kevin Fitzgerald; brother of Thomas M., James Fitzgerald, Margaret Prout; grandfather of one.

FRIEDEL, Matthew "Matt," 29, St. Pius, Troy, Dec. 2. Father of Michael A., Melissa R. Friedel; son of Victor Friedel, Martha Dawson; stepson of Chester Dawson; brother of Kenny Friedel, Roberta Scherfanberger, Vicki Tolley, Christina Davis; grandson of Paul, Kay Mullen.

GOEDEN, Karen J., 55, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Dec. 1. Daughter of Betty Moffitt.

HAYWORTH, Carol Ann "Rai," 52, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, Dec. 3. Wife of John S. Hayworth; mother of Shelby L. Hayworth; daughter of Martha (Mecce) Rains.

HEDBERG, Donald Carl, 57, St. Luke, Indianapolis, Nov. 18. Husband of Judith Hedberg; father of Sheryl Kellough, Lynda Hedberg-Thies, Julie Hedberg, Pamela Schankerman; grandfather of two.

HUGHES Bessey (Brown), 69, St. Bridget, Indianapolis, Dec. 8. Mother of Rik Hughes; stepmother of Kevin, Faith, Angelique Hughes.

JONAS, Jerome Henry, 86, Holy Family, Oldenburg, Dec. 11. Husband of Frances Jonas; father of Alice Thielking, Ruth Nobbe, Ellen Davis, Suzanne Ward, Charles Jonas; brother of Adelaide Cranet; grandfather of 17; great-grandfather of 21.

KAMER, Mary H., 80, St. Joseph Hill, Sellersburg, Nov. 23. Mother of Robert Jr., Karen Kemer, Barbara Janousek, Carol Sanders; sister of Sid Hardin; grandmother of 10; great-grandmother of four.

KEETAY, Carl R., 77, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 7. Father of Alan I., Victoria M. Keetay, Carolyn Mohr; brother of Frances Georgia Chite; grandfather of one.

LOEW, Oma A., 86, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Dec. 5.

LOVELAND, Mary Katherine, 89, St. Augustine, Jeffersonville, Dec. 8. Wife of Preston W. Loveland; grandmother of two; great-grandmother of four.

MEITZLER, Patricia Anne (Leiter), 69, St. Anthony, Indianapolis, Dec. 5. Wife of William F. Meitzler; mother of William H. Meitzler; sister of Ellen Ohmart.

MAIO, Rose Mary (Vittorie), 80, St. Jude, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Mother of Mary Rose Rode, Antionette Maio, Patricia Dudgeon; sister of Joseph Vittorie; grandmother of six; great-grandmother of three.

MONTANI, Mildred R. (Pope), 85, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, Dec. 3. Aunt of several nieces and nephews.

MROCEK, Stanley "Scotty," 75, Annunciation, Brazil, Dec. 4. Husband of Helen Mroczek; father of Michael Mroczek; stepfather of Bill, Jim Wilkinson, Sherry Curry; brother of Victoria Ceter, Kathrine Filbert, Carol Meyers, Bertha Fietko, Mary Mazarka, Irene Kantor; grandfather of three; step-grandfather of six; great-grandfather of two; uncle of several nieces and nephews.

NAUMANN, Gladys S., 87, St. Pius, Indianapolis, Dec. 5. Sister of Cora S. Curtis.

ROESSLER, George R., 81, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Father of Linda McCann, Roni Kunkel; grandfather of three.

SANDERS, Philip J., 71, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Nov. 23. Husband of Helen (Dillon) Sanders; father of Stephen D., Philip J., Patrick J., Gregory D., John D. "Jack" Sanders; brother of Dean Sanders, Thelma Scanlon; grandfather of three.

SBROCCI, Mary, 76, St. Mary, Richmond, Dec. 6. Wife of John A. Sbrocci; mother of Michael, Nick, John Sbrocci; sister of Philip, Tony Finnelli, Lucy Falcone; grandmother of five.

SCHWERING, Laura M., 77, St. Mary, Greensburg, Dec. 11. Wife of James Schwering; mother of Lynn Ann Mader; sister of Ruth Gauck; grandmother of four.

SEAL, Bernadette M., 95, St. Barnabas, Indianapolis, Dec. 1. Mother of Elizabeth Maher,

JoAnn Bachtel, Jane Gilbert; grandmother of 13; great-grandmother of 24.

SHEPHERD, Joan E. (Stoller), 69, Holy Name, Beech Grove, Dec. 5. Wife of Paul Joseph Shepherd; mother of Roy Patrick, Mary Katherine, Susan Shepherd; sister of Harriet BonDurant; grandmother of two.

SMITH, Thomas A., 79, Holy Cross, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Husband of Clara Smith; father of Thomas E., Carl A. Smith, Glenda Campbell, Jeanette Bryant, Shirley Hill; brother of John, William C. Smith, Ernestine Combs; grandfather of 11; great-grandfather of three.

TRAGESSER, John William, 70, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 8. Brother of Agnes Fout, Kathryn B. Kuhn, Gertrude McGargill, Tom Tragegger.

WHARTON, Phyllis (Gill Hillsamer), 76, Holy Angels, Indianapolis, Dec. 10. Wife of James L. "Step" Wharton; mother of Michael Taylor, Donna Neighbours, Margaret Ann Hauk, Addie Beth Christensen, Melissa Susan Hillsamer; stepmother of Jeffery Wharton; sister of Joyce Warner; grandmother of eight.

WHITE, Grace, 84, St. Andrew, Richmond, Dec. 4. Mother of Charles Boyer; sister of Mary Blemke; grandmother of two; aunt of several nieces and nephews.

Charlene Marks, mother of Father Bill, dies Dec. 7

Charlene Marks, mother of Father William Marks, died on Dec. 7. She was 69.

Father Marks was the presider at the funeral liturgy on Dec. 10 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Lisle, Ill. Eight priests concelebrated.

Father Marks is pastor of St. Gabriel Church in Indianapolis. Mrs. Marks is also survived by a daughter Diane Turner; and sons, Richard, Thomas and James Marks.

Jo Farrell, Father Jim's mother, dies

Johanna "Jo" M. Griffin Farrell died Dec. 14. The mother of Father James M. Farrell, she was 84.

A funeral Mass was celebrated at Little Flower Church on Dec. 18.

The widow of James S. Farrell, she is also survived by a daughter, Maureen T. Sutton; and a son, Kevin P. Farrell; and seven grandchildren. A son, Stephen, died as a youth.

Franciscan Sister Gertrude Schmid dies at age 93

A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at the motherhouse in Oldenburg on Dec. 16 for Franciscan Sister Gertrude Schmid. She died on Dec. 12 at the age of 93.

The former Sister William Marie Schmid entered the Oldenburg Franciscan Community in 1925 and professed her final vows in 1931.

She was a teacher and the first principal at St. Michael School, Indianapolis. She taught at schools in Ohio, Missouri and Illinois, retiring in 1984.

Sister Gertrude is survived by a brother, John Schmid.

Father of Karen Ann Quinlan dies of cancer at age 71

WANTAGE, N.J. (CNS) — Joseph T. Quinlan, whose late daughter Karen Ann Quinlan was the focus of a legal battle and a national debate in the '70s over when to remove artificial life support, died Dec. 7 at his home in Wantage.

Quinlan, who was 71, died of cancer. A funeral Mass was to be celebrated Dec. 11 at St. Jude the Apostle Church in Hamburg, where he was a member.

A shy, retiring man, Quinlan and his wife, Julia, were propelled into the world spotlight in 1975 when they sought legal permission to have their then 21-year-old comatose daughter removed from life support. The Quinlans made the decision after doctors said their daughter would not come out of her coma

and there was no sign of brain activity.

Permission was granted in 1976 by the New Jersey Supreme Court, when it overturned an earlier Superior Court decision and ruled that in New Jersey families may make such a choice for patients incapable of doing so.

After being disconnected from the respirator that was thought to be keeping her alive, Karen survived on her own and was moved to a nursing home, where she received intravenous feeding and ordinary care. Her father visited her almost every day until her death from pneumonia and other complications in 1985.

The landmark ruling—the first so-called right-to-die ruling in legal history—would set the

precedent for "living will statutes" in many states, promote the movements for death with dignity and hospice care, and establish the Quinlans as international spokespersons on the issues.

The court ruling had at its core the position set forth in a statement on the use of extraordinary means to sustain life by the late Bishop Lawrence B. Casey of Paterson, who had supported the Quinlans' position from the start. The bishop cited church teaching that is unnecessary to use extraordinary means.

When Karen Ann died the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, praised her parents for treating their daughter as a person although she was considered medically vegetative.

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Positions Available

Custodial Help Needed!

The Archdiocese of Indianapolis is seeking custodial help for a parish and school.

Assistant Custodian: This position is available at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish. It is a full-time position requiring evening and weekend availability. Responsibilities include cleaning, light maintenance, and other duties as necessary. Please send resume to Raymond Nahlen, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, 5692 Central Ave., Indpls., IN 46220.

Part-Time Custodian: This position is available at Holy Cross School. It is a 10-15 hour/wk. position that involves floor work in the gymnasium, cleaning of the kitchen, stage, area, and restrooms, and setup for events. Please send resume or letter stating interest to Sr. Paulette Schroeder, Holy Cross Parish, 125 N. Oriental St., Indpls., IN 46202.

If you do not have a resume and would like to request an application, please contact Tammy Perry, Office of Human Resources, The Catholic Center, 317-236-1594.

Minister of Music

Holy Angels Catholic Church is looking for a Minister of Music. They must have the ability to play/teach gospel music and knowledge of the Catholic worship service is a plus. Salary is negotiable based on experience. For more information or to set an interview, please contact Fr. Clarence Waldon at 317-926-3324. Deadline December 31, 1996.

Office Manager/School Secretary

St. Roch Catholic School is seeking an Office Manager/School Secretary to provide clerical and medical services to the school. Responsibilities include keeping records of tuition payments, attendance records, assist with registration, distribute medication as requested, attend to ill children, and answer phones. Requirements for this position include strong organizational skills, knowledge of computers and office equipment, ability to handle multiple priorities, and desire to work with children. At least 1-2 years of office experience is preferred.

This is a full-time position 10 1/2 months a year. Please send resume and salary requirements, in confidence, to: Tammy Perry, Office of Human Resources, The Archdiocese of Indianapolis, P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206.

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Requirements for this position include knowledge of effective sales and marketing techniques, ability to supervise and motivate staff, strong communication and organizational abilities, and the ability to effectively represent the Archdiocese to customers and various groups. All candidates must have a bachelor's degree in marketing, business administration, or a related field and at least five years of experience, preferably in the newspaper industry. Previous supervisory experience is preferred.

Please send resume and salary history, in confidence, to: Ed Isakson, Director, Human Resources, The Archdiocese of Indianapolis, P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206. An Equal Opportunity Employer

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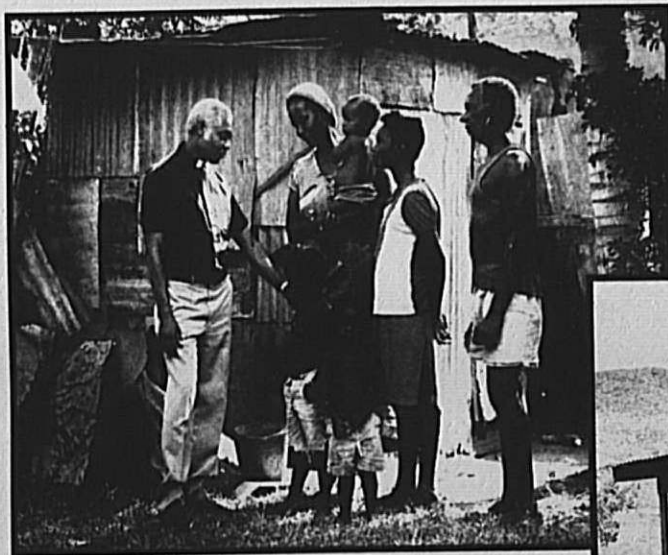
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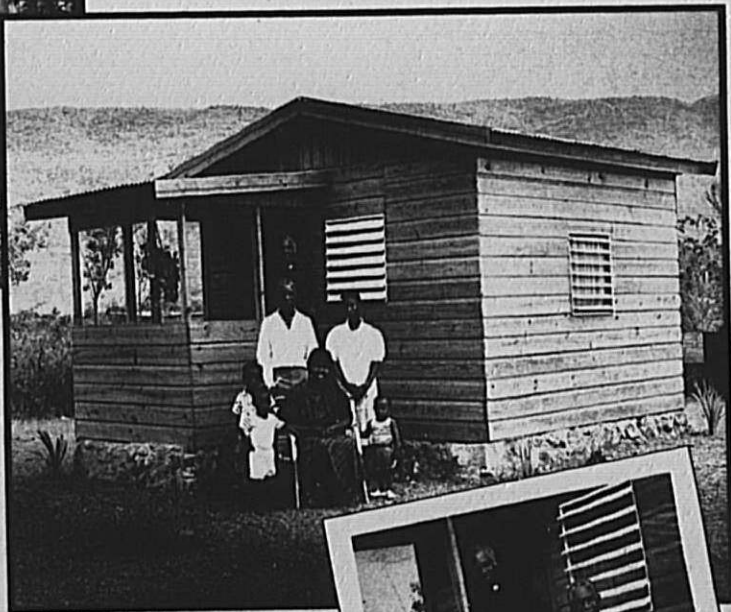
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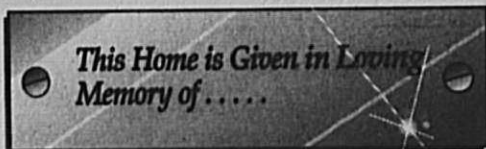
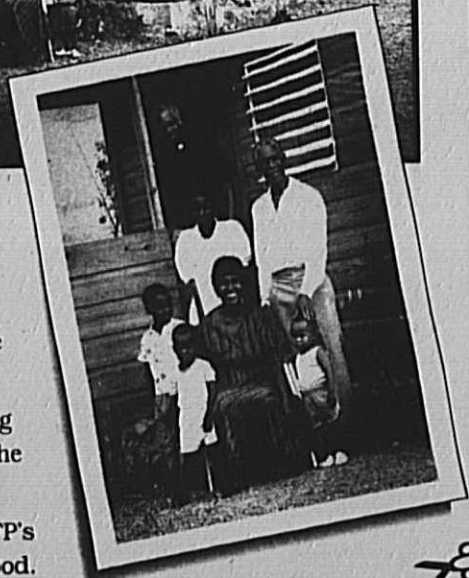
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