

THE CRITERION

Archdiocese of Indianapolis



PATIENT MARCHERS—Somewhat overwhelmed by the activity they took part in, Gerardo Ontiveros and Patricia Medina stand near Gerardo's mother following the outdoor procession before Mass at St. Mary Church, Indianapolis, honoring the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The parish celebrated the Marian feast Dec. 14. Father Mauro Rodas, associate pastor at the parish, celebrates the weekly Mass in Spanish at 2 p.m. on Sundays. An estimated 200-300 attend. (Photo by Father Thomas C. Widner)

Kentucky laws regulating abortions invalid, U.S. court says in ruling

LOUISVILLE—The U.S. District Court in Louisville has ruled unconstitutional a Kentucky law requiring that abortions after the first trimester of pregnancy be performed in hospitals.

The decision, given by Judge Charles M. Allen, also voided the state law and regulations requiring a 24-hour waiting period before an abortion can be performed.

Indiana's abortion law also requires this waiting period as well as hospital facilities for abortion after the first trimester. According to a spokesman in the Indiana attorney general's office, the Kentucky decision does not immediately affect the Indiana law. However, such statutes would in effect be nullified if the U.S. Supreme Court eventually upheld the Kentucky ruling.

No decision has yet been made whether the ruling will be appealed.

Three doctors who perform abortions at a Louisville clinic, Surgical Arts Center, Inc., brought suit last May challenging the state laws. The law requiring abortions after the first trimester to be performed in hospitals was passed by the 1980 Kentucky legislature. Surgical Arts Center is the only clinic in the state which performs second-trimester abortions.

In striking down the law, Allen said the dilation and evacuation method used by the clinic "is the safest method of performing second-trimester abortions." He noted that the abortion mortality rate for those using this method is "considerably lower than the mortality rate for women who carry their pregnancies to term."

Allen also said that no hospitals in Kentucky perform second-trimester abortions except for therapeutic reasons. And he said the Louisville clinic serves women

from Kentucky and five surrounding states.

Allen said the Louisville clinic has performed 12,000 abortions during its history and no women have died.

Concerning the required 24-hour waiting period, Allen said in the opinion: "There is . . . convincing evidence to the effect that the women who come to the clinic have already received a diagnosis of pregnancy and have already made up their minds to have an abortion. The weight of the evidence also is to the effect that to require a 24-hour waiting period will impose significant financial burdens, and to some extent, emotional burdens upon women who come to the clinic from areas outside of Louisville."

Allen added that the waiting period "will not alter the previously made decision, nor is there evidence suggesting that it would make the decision less emotionally trying."

The law requiring second-trimester abortions to be performed in hospitals was scheduled to take effect in Kentucky last June 1. However, the law was never implemented since Allen issued a temporary injunction against its enforcement while the case was pending.



Essay contest winners announced

More than 300 children, teens and grownups got into the Christmas spirit early this year—sending their expression of hope and belief to the Criterion Christmas Essay Contest.

Our editorial staff came up with winners in four categories—but it wasn't without a struggle!

In category 1 (Kindergarten—Grades 1, 2, and 3), First Place was won by Bridget Bruen of St. Pius X School, Indianapolis. Category 2 winner (Grades 4-7) was Caryn Stauss of St. Lawrence School, Lawrenceburg. First prize in Category 3 (Grades 8—High School) was awarded to Ann Marie O'Hara of Cathedral High School and St. Lawrence Parish, Indianapolis. The Adult winner, Category 4, was

Thomas W. Clawson of St. Lawrence Parish, Indianapolis.

Checks have been sent to each winner on the following scale: Category 1, \$10; Category 2, \$15; Category 3, \$20, and Category 4, \$25.

Second and third place awards were made to: Category 1: Kathy Jo Hensley of Osgood Elementary School, St. John Parish, Osgood, Second Place; Mike Arnold of St. Malachy School, Brownsburg, Third Place.

Category 2: Monica Schutte, Jac-Cen-Del School, Osgood, St. Maurice Parish, Napoleon, Second Place; David Cleveland, St. Michael School, Indianapolis, Third Place.

Category 3: Regina Glynn, Cathedral High School, St. Matthew Parish, In-

dianapolis, Second Place; John M. Rago, Cathedral High School, St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Indianapolis, Third Place.

Category 4: Among the adults, choosing winners was difficult indeed—we simply couldn't narrow it to only three, so there are four winners: Marianne Tilk Schultz of Ft. Harrison Chapel, Ft. Harrison, Second Place; Dorothy M. Brassie of St. Bernadette Parish, Indianapolis, Third Place; John D. Tarbox of St. Barnabas Parish, Indianapolis, Fourth Place.

All of the winning essays are printed in this week's Christmas Supplement (pages 9 thru 28), as well as a number of other entries awarded Honorable Mention. Thanks to all of you who shared your Christmas beliefs with us. Happy and peace-filled holidays to all!!

THE CRITERION

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Indianapolis, Indiana

Halfway house for women alcoholics set for opening

by Peter Feuerherd

Women, it is estimated, compose at least 20% of all alcoholics. Some experts even say the real total is actually closer to 50%. And the rate is rising, professionals in alcohol rehabilitation agree.

That is why a private, non-sectarian group plans to open a halfway house for women alcoholics in an unused convent adjacent to St. Joseph's Church on Mickley Ave. in Indianapolis. "First Step," supported by private donations, is expected to begin operating by February. It will be the only facility of its kind in the city.

There is a great need for such a home, said Vitus Kern, director of the St. Peter Claver Society's ministry on alcoholism and an advisor for the project. Already, he said, five women have applied for residency; the house has a capacity of 14.

"The disease affects many men, women and children . . . Society isn't willing to accept the woman alcoholic as readily as a man." Women alcoholics, he added, are also more prone to be addicted to other drugs, particularly tranquilizers and other prescription remedies.

Kern explained that the halfway house will serve those women alcoholics who may not feel welcome in their home after completing treatment.

"In many cases the family doesn't want to have anything to do with them because they don't understand the disease."

Although she hasn't touched a drink in 14 years, "First Step" director Mildred

Pitts remembered that in her days as an active alcoholic she could have used a haven like "First Step."

"I really needed an environment like that. It would have been just great to have a place like "First Step" where I could have paid my own way and held my head up in dignity."

According to Ms. Pitts, "First Step" will try to provide love and concern for alcoholic women, some of whom are desperate for basic necessities and have fled unstable family relationships.

"An alcoholic is a person who needs love. They can be the most unlovable of people. A person with a serious drinking problem can alienate the whole world from her," said Ms. Pitts.

A special need of the woman alcoholic is building self-esteem, explained the program director. "Many women have very low self-esteem. It takes a woman longer to get her self-confidence and esteem back."

"Women need to learn to live with other women to learn to love themselves. Our greatest goal is to give them a place where they can live with dignity."

John Merkle, a counselor for alcoholics at Koala Center in Lebanon and a member of the board of "First Step," agreed that there is a need for such a facility.

"I think there are as many women alcoholics as there are men. Women are just more protected than men. They're closet drinkers—they do their drinking at home."

Pontiff addresses priest scholars

VATICAN CITY—Thirty-five U.S. priests from 29 dioceses and five religious congregations met with Pope John Paul II Dec. 11 at the end of a three-month continuing education course in Rome.

(Among the priests participating in the course was Father William Munshower, pastor of Holy Spirit Parish, Indianapolis. Each evening and fall one priest of the archdiocese takes part.)

The pope urged the priest-students from the North American College's Casa Santa Maria Institute to draw from their

studies "a renewed commitment to God's word."

"You are going back, please God, to proclaim with ever greater understanding and zeal the good news of salvation, which was revealed by a merciful and loving Father, and which the church, in fidelity to Christ, communicates from one generation to the next," he said.

Although the institute has been providing continuing theological education for U.S. priests for the past 10 years, it was the first time the study session ended with a papal audience.

Archbishop O'Meara's Schedule

Week of December 21

SUNDAY, December 21—Parish visitation at Holy Family Parish, New Albany; Masses at 10 a.m. and 11:30 a.m.

MONDAY, December 22—Visitation at St. Augustine Home, Indianapolis, Mass at 10:30 a.m.

TUESDAY, December 23—Visitation at St. Paul Hermitage, Beech Grove, Mass at 10 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, December 24—Principal celebrant of the Christmas Midnight Mass, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis

MONDAY, December 29—Admission to candidacy for ordination as deacon and priest at Holy Rosary Church, Indianapolis, Mass at 5:30 p.m.



LEASE SIGNED—A half-way house for women alcoholics came a step closer when a lease was signed between St. Joseph's parish and First Step, Inc., to take over the convent at 1425 South Mickley Avenue, Indianapolis. Left to right are Nancy Leonard, secretary; Frances Eickhoff, president, and Daniel Crowe treasurer.

Sexist language reform cautioned

by Ethel Gintoft

MILWAUKEE, Wis.—While it is true that God is neither male nor female, if a neutral phrase such as "God the Creator" is substituted for "God the Father" the result could be language that is theologically weak and too abstract, according to Archbishop Rember G. Weakland of Milwaukee, chairman of the U.S. Bishops' Committee on Liturgy.

It would be better to search for and use a personal name for God so as to retain the warmth and theology of personal relationship, he suggested. "In trying to avoid titles that are specifically masculine (or feminine), such as king, ruler and the like, one runs the risk of substituting words that are not adequate," Archbishop Weakland said.

"The word 'creator' simply does not convey the personal warmth of the word 'father,'" he said. "If such cold 'Aristotelian' words are substituted, much of value is lost in establishing a close, personal and warm relationship with God. Here I feel a caution is in order, lest we correct one aspect and lose the great richness of our tradition in doing so."

Archbishop Weakland, who as liturgy committee chairman successfully urged the bishops at their recent meeting to approve the removal of some sexist language from the consecratory of the Mass, said his committee has never discussed the topic of changing the terminology for God and probably would not in the near future.

BUT TO THOSE working on the translation of the lectionary (book of scriptural readings for liturgy), he suggested that consideration be given to history and the theological implications of relationship.

(The division of education and ministry of the National Council of Churches recently voted to create a new lectionary eliminating sexist references to God, Jesus, Holy Spirit and human beings.)

(A task force has been appointed to prepare the changes. The Catholic Church is not a member of the National Council of Churches.)

In trying to avoid the concept of God as exclusively male, Archbishop Weakland said, people tend to place God in a category of neuter because there are no other categories.

Cathedral midnight mass



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Murder in El Salvador voted the top story of 1980

WASHINGTON—Catholic editors chose the assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador, El Salvador, as the top story of 1980 in balloting conducted during December by the National Catholic News Service.

For the third year in a row the editors also chose Pope John Paul II as top newsmaker.

Archbishop Romero was killed by unknown gunmen while he celebrated Mass in San Salvador on March 24. The murder brought renewed pleas that the United States not supply military aid to the Salvadoran government.

Pope John Paul, in the second full year of his papacy, made four major pilgrimages: to Africa, France, Brazil and West Germany.

Archbishop Romero finished second behind the pope as top newsmaker. Likewise, the pope's 1980 travels finished second behind Archbishop Romero's assassination as top story of the year.

Editors of 40 Catholic newspapers participated in the voting.

participated in the voting.

The ballots were submitted to the editors prior to both the murder in El Salvador of four U.S. Catholic women missionaries in early December and the publication Dec. 2 of Pope John Paul's encyclical on mercy. Both nevertheless received one write-in vote each as top stories of the year.

The editors voted for 10 top news stories and five top newsmakers for 1980. For top story, first-place votes were given 10 points, second-place nine, etc. For top newsmaker, first-place votes were given five points, second-place four, etc.

HERE ARE the results of voting for the top 10 stories, followed by total points and first-place votes in parenthesis:

1. Archbishop Romero of El Salvador murdered during Mass; killing of clergy continues in Latin America, 270 (11).

2. Pope John Paul continues his pilgrimages, visiting Africa, France, Brazil and West Germany, 232 (8).

3. Synod of Bishops considers needs of modern family, 188 (2).

4. Proposal to admit married Episcopal priests to Catholic priesthood debated, 175 (3).

5. Polish workers unite; Catholic chosen for government post; church has peace-keeping role, 162 (3).

6. Ronald Reagan elected president; pro-life legislators win, 159 (4).

7. Supreme Court rules in favor of Hyde Amendment restricting abortion funding, 146 (1).

8. Father Kung challenges Vatican revocation of teaching post, 105 (1).

9. Priests' involvement in politics discouraged, 105 (0).

10. New life forms, test-tube babies challenge bioethicists, 97 (3).

Others receiving first-place votes were:

—Earthquake takes large toll in Italy; pope visits victims.

—Vatican document says extraordinary means need not be taken to prolong life.

—Murder of four missionaries in El Salvador.

—Pope issues encyclical on mercy.

Here are the results of voting for the top five newsmakers, followed by total points and first-place votes in parenthesis:

1. Pope John Paul II, 144 (16).

2. Archbishop Oscar Romero, 119 (10).

3. Ronald Reagan, 61 (3).

4. Father Hans Kung, 56 (2).

5. Lech Walesa, 55 (3).

OTHERS receiving first-place votes were the Ayatollah Khomeini (4), Kateri Tekakwitha and Archbishop Hilario Capucci.

Popes traditionally have dominated NC News' annual balloting for top newsmaker. Besides being the third year in a row Pope John Paul II was chosen top newsmaker, this marks the fourth consecutive year that a pope has been selected. Pope Paul VI was named top newsmaker in 1977.

Pope offers solution to Chile-Argentina dispute

by Nancy Frazier

VATICAN CITY—Pope John Paul II presented sealed envelopes containing his proposal for resolution of the Beagle Channel dispute to the foreign ministers of Chile and Argentina Dec. 12.

Details of the plan were not released, but the pope described his proposal as "a just, equitable and honorable solution, in full harmony with the deep desire for peace of the two fraternal peoples."

In a Spanish-language address to the delegations led by Argentina's Foreign Minister Carlos Washington Pastor and his Chilean counterpart, Rene Rojas Gal-dames, the pope stressed the history of

friendly relations between the two Latin American nations.

"If God has guided the development of relations between your two nations with so much favor during this time, how can we fail to do all that is now in our hands in order not to lose this invaluable gift of peace, the privilege of your common history?" he asked.

The audience in the Vatican's Consistory Hall also included the eight-member Argentinian delegation and 10-member Chilean delegation, which have been meeting at the Vatican since May 1979 in an attempt to resolve the Beagle Channel dispute.

The two countries nearly went to war

two years ago over possession of three islands in the channel off the southern tip of South America.

Several months ago, reports in Santiago, Chile, said Pope John Paul had drawn up a proposal requiring Chile to renounce claims to a 200-mile off-shore limit in the Atlantic Ocean. The Vatican refused to confirm the reports.

Pope John Paul met in private audience with Washington before the joint meeting and with Rojas afterwards.

Flanked by Cardinal Agostino Casaroli, papal secretary of state, and Cardinal Antonio Samore, papal mediator in the dispute, the pope closed the joint audience

by leading the delegations in recitation of the Lord's Prayer.

The pope said he hoped that a "complete and definitive solution" to the dispute would be linked with "a solemn accord of perpetual friendship, signed before the international community and including clauses which exclude forever the recourse to force or threats of the use of force in future controversies."

He made clear that the Vatican would continue its mediation work until the issue is fully resolved and said he was encouraged by the fact that the joint meeting took place on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas.

New apostolic delegate described as theologically 'orthodox'

by John Maher

Archbishop Pio Laghi, the new apostolic delegate in the United States, "is a charming, very intelligent priest" who "speaks English fluently" and knows the United States well, said a Chicago priest who served with him on the staff of the apostolic delegation in Washington, D.C.

The 58-year-old Italian-born archbishop, who has been apostolic nuncio to Argentina for the past six years, was secretary at the apostolic delegation in Washington from 1954 to 1961.

"He traveled about the country a good bit and knows it well," said Msgr. Robert J. Hagarty, pastor of St. Norbert parish in Northbrook, Ill., who was on the staff of the delegation from 1956 to 1961.

Expressing dislike for the terms "liberal" and "conservative," Msgr. Hagarty described Archbishop Laghi as theologically "orthodox" and said: "He's open to change where change is possible, but not where it isn't."

This past March Pope John Paul sent Archbishop Laghi as the Vatican's special envoy to Bogota, Colombia, after Marxist

guerrillas there seized about 60 diplomats, including the papal nuncio to Colombia, and Colombian officials and held them hostage in the embassy of the Dominican Republic.

Archbishop Laghi has also held posts in the diplomatic service of the Holy See in Nicaragua, India, Jerusalem and Palestine, and has served at the Vatican in the Council for the Public Affairs of the Church.

In Rome, Jesuit Father Robert Graham, co-editor of the official documentary series on the Vatican's activities in World War II, who called Archbishop Laghi the "godfather" of that research activity, said the new apostolic delegate is "very personable," but "not a hail-fellow-well-met."

"When he's talking to you, you know that you're the only one he's talking to," the Jesuit said.

Describing Archbishop Laghi as "very open" and possessed of a lively sense of humor, Father Graham said "he's not a stick-in-the-mud."

The archbishop speaks at least four



NEW APOSTOLIC DELEGATE—Pope John Paul II talks with Archbishop Pio Laghi on a recent occasion. The pope has named Archbishop Laghi as new apostolic delegate in the United States. (NC photo)

languages—Italian, Spanish, English and French—fluently, he said.

Father Gino Belleri, a Rome priest who has known Archbishop Laghi for 20 years, described him as "dynamic," "open," "cordial" and "deeply religious," but also

"shrewd, astute," very good in economic matters.

Father Belleri said he believes Archbishop Laghi was named apostolic delegate in the United States because he is "open but secure in doctrine."

Editorials

Mrs. Harris comes out of the closet

Patricia Roberts Harris, outgoing Secretary of Health and Human Services, came out of the closet this past week. She thinks the government needs to provide the means for poor young people to have abortions. She also thinks the government needs to do something about providing contraceptive information to teen-agers.

Mrs. Harris is in her final weeks as Secretary. So she feels she can begin to speak her mind. She knew Carter disagreed with her views which explains why she has kept this bottled up till now.

Mrs. Harris represents the kind of majority thinking in our nation which adopts the "Fly Now—Pay Later" plan of morality. It's also found in a school of psychology which suggests that one ought not develop restraints lest they inhibit one's 'freedoms.'

Mrs. Harris like all those with such notions has such little faith in her fellow human beings.

She branded as hypocritical our society which "says we not only will not provide and encourage contraception for those who for whatever reason are not yet prepared to control their sexuality through abstinence and then says that, if there should be the accident of pregnancy, under no circumstances do we intend to abort that pregnancy."

There is indeed hypocrisy in our society. But it is not what Mrs. Harris contends. The hypocrisy is such as Mrs. Harris seeking short term solutions to long range problems.

Mrs. Harris favors better sex education programs. We couldn't agree more. The hypocrisy lies with sex education which amounts to pushing pills because parents are too busy to rear their own children. The hypocrisy lies with individuals who seek laws and regulations to outlaw (or to encourage) certain practices but who fail to spend the time assisting and counseling those who fail to observe them. Everyone, in other words, is concerned but few are willing to really deal with issues. We would rather take a pill or pass a law. O, brave new world!

So the Mrs. Harris's of our country rule. She would encourage abortion rather than teaching young people that maturity is accepting responsibility for one's actions and living with their consequences. On the other hand, there are the Mrs. Harris's who seek to pass laws to prevent abortions but will not show any compassion toward the human being who fails to observe it. Fortunately, these are few.

It is simple to manufacture pills or pass laws. It is not so simple to educate those who are hooked on pills or those who are not observing laws. We have not yet begun to grapple with what is the greatest moral problem of our time—helping people understand themselves as responsible moral entities who need compassion and understanding whether they live by the law or not.

The hypocrisy in morality today is that too often we would seek solutions which are as simplistic as those our society would push. The goal of any sex education program or human life amendment or abortion legislation ought not be the mere written law but the beginning of a change of attitude in the hearts of individuals who have as little regard for themselves as they do for the unborn.—TCW

Thanks and goodbye, Peter

With this issue of The Criterion we bid farewell to reporter Peter Feuerherd.

Peter has been hired as the news reporter in the Dayton office of the Cincinnati Telegraph, the official publication of the archdiocese of Cincinnati, Ohio. His presence at The Criterion will be missed.

In the nearly two years Peter has spent with us, he contributed greatly to broadening the interests and concerns of our Catholic readership. Through stories and features he himself initiated, Peter addressed issues Catholics sometimes ignore or fail to address. His youth and enthusiasm made it possible for his reporting to be always lively and often controversial.

Though his byline will appear in one or two stories in January, Peter will by then have taken up residence with our neighboring state.

We are thankful for the time Peter spent with us. We wish him well.—TCW

Washington Newsletter

Aid to El Salvador poses sticky problems for U.S.

by Jim Lackey

WASHINGTON—The tragic murders of four American Catholic missionaries in El Salvador in the first week of December has again catapulted the debate over U.S. policy toward that troubled Central American nation into the spotlight.

The Carter administration decided in the wake of the latest killings to suspend its controversial Salvadoran aid program until responsibility for the deaths could be cleared up. But that has not stopped the debate or the protests that American dollars helped kill the three nuns and the lay woman.



It has been more than a year now since a centrist coup overturned the repressive rightwing dictatorship of El Salvador and established what U.S. officials hoped would be a new government committed to far-reaching social and economic reforms. Seeing the new government as perhaps the only chance for peace and democracy in a country torn by strife between militants of both the left and right, the Carter administration began advocating economic and military aid aimed at helping the new government retain power.

But it quickly became apparent to church officials in the heavily Catholic country that some elements of the new government were as brutal and repressive toward human rights as was the old regime. The thought of military aid to such a government was viewed as abhorrent since the aid, religious figures felt, might be used to further repress the desire for basic human rights.

The country's leading prelate, Archbishop Oscar Romero of San Salvador, urged President Carter in a letter in February not to send the aid, contending that the centrist government had lost power to the "unscrupulous military, who only know how to repress the people and promote the interests of the Salvadoran oligarchy."

SECRETARY OF State Cyrus Vance, in a letter dated March 11, responded that he shared the Nobel Peace Prize nominee's concern, but added that the military aid was for non-lethal equipment and training to be used for maintaining order rather than for killings and other acts of repression.

Two weeks later Archbishop Romero was assassinated.

Prior to the archbishop's murder, and even more so after, U.S. church officials

were highly critical of the administration's aid program. As late as early November the U.S. bishops' conference was calling for an end to the aid, citing acts of terrorism in El Salvador and the killing of church personnel attributed largely to the rightwing paramilitary groups.

The decision to suspend the aid pending an investigation of the four missionaries' deaths thus was welcomed by U.S. church officials as "a positive step," but one which came too late.

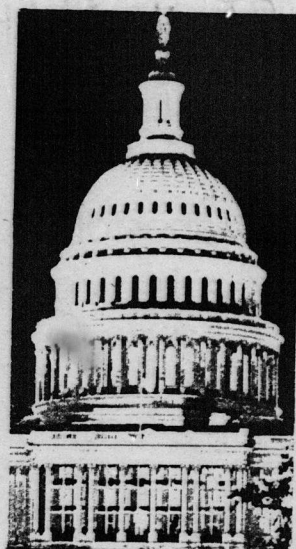
Though the Carter administration might decide that the aid should be resumed, the larger question is over the Reagan administration's plans for the aid package once Reagan takes office on Jan. 20.

The week before the four missionaries were slain Reagan transition officials reportedly were assuring Salvadoran visitors that the new administration would increase its aid to the country's security forces. The new aid package from a Reagan government apparently would include not only the "non-lethal" equipment and training being provided by the Carter administration, but also would include full combat gear.

But Reagan's advisors now appear to be extremely cautious about making public comments on specific areas in which the new administration's plans may depart from current foreign policy.

THOUGH SUCH caution is aimed at preventing foreign governments from negotiating with the new administration before it actually takes office, it also has the effect of concealing whether incidents such as the deaths of the missionaries will bring any change in the way the Reagan team assesses the situation in El Salvador.

Still, there is a strong belief among some U.S. policymakers that however imperfect the current government of El



Salvador might be, the bigger problem is the possibility that its fall might bring a civil war which could spill all across Central America as countries such as Nicaragua come to the aid of the Salvadoran left while others, such as Guatemala, fight for the Salvadoran right.

That leaves the difficult question: Should aid be permanently halted at the risk of a civil war which could change the face of Central America or should it continue despite growing charges that its provision will lead to even more deaths similar to those of Archbishop Romero and the American missionaries?

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Living the Questions

Encyclicals trace the history of church's concern for social justice

by Fr. Thomas C. Widner

Last week I began capsulizing an understanding of papal encyclicals—what they are and what they do. I said an encyclical is basically a letter from the pastor of our Church, the Holy Father. It may or may not contain a teaching of doctrine but it always involves drawing on teachings of the Church and of Scripture.

If an encyclical is directed to specific groups other than the Church, it will say so. For example, Pope John XXII addressed his encyclical "Pacem in Terris" to "all men of good will," as did Pope Paul VI when he wrote "Ecclesiam Suam."

The title of an encyclical comes from the first few words of the document, i.e., "Pacem in Terris"—Peace on earth; "Mater et magistra"—Mother and teacher; "Dives in misericordia"—Rich in mercy. Usually the title gives some idea of the theme of the encyclical although that's not always so. Pope Pius XI issued an encyclical in 1931 called "Quadragesimo Anno" which concerned the social reconstruction of society. The title means "In the 40th year" and refers to the 40th anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's encyclical "Rerum Novarum" ("Of new things") issued in 1891



which dealt with the condition of the working classes.

Since John Paul II has become pope, he has issued two encyclicals. Pope Paul VI issued seven during his reign; John XXIII issued eight; Pius XII issued 41. The numbers vary depending on the subjects a particular pontiff faces and the direction in which he sets the Church.

OF PARTICULAR INTEREST here is the Church's social doctrine—it has received incredible attention through encyclicals since Pope Leo's 1891 work. "These documents," according to the Catholic Almanac, "represent the most serious attempts in modern times to systematize the social implications of the Gospel and the rest of divine revelation as well as the socially relevant writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church. Their contents are theological penetrations into social life, with particular reference to human rights, the needs of the poor and those in underdeveloped countries, and humane conditions of life, freedom, justice and peace."

These documents are of special importance because one can trace the history of the Church's concern for social justice through them. Encyclicals rely heavily on a Scriptural basis as well as the writings of the early Church Fathers and the experience of the Church down through the ages. Many people who feel confused or upset by the Church's present concerns should study the so-called Social Encyclicals with care.

The specific encyclicals which have in modern times advanced the greatest social thinking in the Church are these: "Rerum Novarum" (Pope Leo XIII, 1891); "Quadragesimo Anno" (Pope Pius IX, 1931); "Mater et Magistra" (Pope John XXIII, 1961); "Pacem in Terris" (Pope John XXIII, 1963); "Populorum Progressio" (Pope Paul VI, 1967).

In the 1961 encyclical Pope John said "the cardinal point of (the Church's social teaching) is that individual men are necessarily the foundation, cause, and end of all social institutions . . . insofar as they are social by nature, and raised to an order of existence that transcends and subdues nature."

Together with the "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World" from the Second Vatican Council, these encyclicals form the basis for the Church's contemporary involvement in issues of social justice.

It is important to point out that with respect to any teaching in the Church there may be dissent. So with encyclicals. There are various levels of doctrine in the Church according to belief. A doctrine like the Trinity, for example, is one we call "de fide," that is, one cannot call oneself a Catholic and not accept the Trinity as part of one's faith.

THE SOCIAL TEACHINGS of the popes are likewise doctrine. But they are not "de fide" statements one must accept to be Catholic. At the same time, however, one cannot profess Catholicism without some adherence to the social teachings of the Church.

The teachings of the popes through encyclicals may repeat "de fide" doctrine. The encyclicals may contain developed doctrine which will take shape with the passing of time and devoted study. All doctrine deserves the attention of Catholics but not every doctrine is as crucial to one's faith as say, the Trinity.

In the coming weeks I want to address what Pope John Paul is doing in his encyclicals.

(To be continued)

To the Editor . . .

Letter writers aren't listening

From "Letters to the Editor" (Nov. 21) concerning Right-to-Life, I think I know why they are upset. They are not "listening" to what is said. They "hear" it, but when they respond, they ignore what has been said.

For instance, I had to re-read Fr. Courtney's letter to be sure he hadn't said that the Holy Spirit does not move people to combat racism, only to fight abortions. When I "listened," I could see he was indignant and amazed that fellow priests who are in the forefront of social action would not support the social action of

Right-to-Life. And it does seem inconsistent. I often have trouble reconciling how people who are strongly pro-life could also be strongly for increased defense spending—war is certainly anti-life.

The problem is that many (but by no means all) Right-to-Life people make statements often "heard" as belligerent, holier-than-thou, and intolerant of sinners as well as sin. Whether or not they mean them is hard to tell, because even when someone says, "I 'heard' you say this and it troubles me," they never answer, but repeat the first statements sometimes lumping the questioner in with those who are pro-abortion.

The end has never justified the means. No matter what ministry we are called to we must examine how we are doing in the light of the great commandment—"Love as I have loved." Many people in Right-to-Life would do well to "listen" to those who say "I do not 'hear' love (patience, kindness, courtesy, forbearance, humility) in what you say. Love is what overcomes evil. Sometimes they need to reflect on how much is God and how much is themselves in what they have said.

Passing a law will not end abortions. This is not to say working toward a law prohibiting abortions is not worthwhile, but there is much education, evangelizing, and service to be done also. Which is more heinous: the woman who has an abortion or a society which has not reached out in love to touch that woman who feels so alienated from God?

Betty Henley

Bedford

Fr. Courtney an inspiration

We thank the Lord for Father Paul Courtney. He has been the main figure among the Catholic clergy in this city who has spoken time and again in defense of the unborn children being killed by abortion.

We thank Father Courtney and the many priests who have supported Right to Life throughout the years. They realize that God's children must be protected—the unborn, the elderly, the handicapped, the mentally ill. They also realize the best way to do this is by electing legislators who will vote for the Human Life Amendment.

Single issue voting is most important because over 7 million babies have been killed by abortion! Only God knows the number who have died as a result of Infanticide and Euthanasia.

Yes, this is going on in increasing numbers all over our Country in our hospitals and nursing homes. Do we dare trust legislators on other matters if they are wrong on this one issue involving human life created by God?

A thank you

I would like to compliment The Criterion on Don Kurre's recent articles regarding SDRC.

Two years ago I was divorced. The entire separation/decision-making/divorce was a devastating experience particularly being out of state with no family nearby.

I found a world of support and guidance in SDRC. It's scary to think how my life would've turned out without this group.

Thanks for spreading the word!

Barbara Martin

Indianapolis

We thank Father Courtney for his staunch support of the Pro-Life Movement. He has been an inspiration to the Movement and to us personally. We greatly admire him and are honored to be members of his parish.

Margie and Jim Schmitz

Indianapolis

Abortion issue the prime concern

I submit that the issue of opposition to abortion is of such overpowering importance that it merits the support of all Christians and these pastors were wrong to refuse on the basis of "single issue voting."

Let us consider the hypothetical case which might well have taken place after World War II if Hitler had won instead of lost. Imagine a victorious Hitler running for reelection. Having executed over 6 million Jews in the Nazi death camps, he is vigorously opposed by a group of "right to lifers" who seek permission from pastors of Catholic churches to pass out information to voters. However, the pastors refuse on the grounds that genocide is a "single issue." Hitler's complete record must be considered in any literature passed out. I am sure we would consider such a denial of permission to be foolish, short sighted and unwise.

Abortion has already taken many more lives than even Hitler and it is suggested that the refusing pastors should reexamine their stand on this "single issue."

William F. Wagner

Indianapolis

The Criterion commended

As a newcomer to Indianapolis (after twelve years of absence) let me commend The Criterion for its continued contribution to Roman Catholicism and the broader Christian community across Indiana.

Father Raymond Bosler, former editor, was and continues to be a beloved friend. I find it extremely heartening to see The Criterion continue its courageous posture in pleading for racial justice, human rights, and the dignity of all of life. There will be areas in which we do not agree. Nonetheless, I rejoice in the continued faithfulness of your witness.

Bishop James Armstrong
United Methodist Church
Indiana Area

Indianapolis

Question Box

Was there a star over Bethlehem?

by Msgr. R. T. Bosler

Q Every year around Christmas the newspapers print stories about some astronomer who finds a new explanation for the star that led the wise men to Bethlehem. Which of these is correct? Was there a star at all? Are the foundations of our faith weakened if the story of the star is not true?

A The story could be loaded with truth even though the star were a fiction. The star in Matthew's Gospel disappeared as the wise men reached Jerusalem, appeared again as they took the road to Bethlehem and "went forward and halted over the place where the child was" (Matthew 2:9). As a footnote in the Jerusalem Bible comments: "Obviously the evangelist is thinking of a miraculous star; it is futile to look for a natural explanation."

Attempts to support the story of the star with astronomical discoveries spring from the long-held conviction that the Gospels are historical biographies of Jesus. Apart from the fundamentalists, however, scripture scholars today agree that the four evangelists used the collected sayings of



Jesus and the traditions about what he did, and what happened to him not to write his biography but to proclaim what the first Christians believed about him. This was a belief that gradually developed after the Resurrection. Imitating Jesus' own way of teaching through stories and parables, the evangelists each gave his own theological explanation of who Jesus is and what he means for the human race.

How much is factual and how much is made up in the nativity stories is impossible for us today to decide. Other than the facts that Jesus was born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judea and grew up in Nazareth of Galilee, there is no agreement between Luke and Matthew, the only New Testament authors who know anything at all about the birth and first days of Jesus.

Matthew describes Mary and Joseph as inhabitants of Judea who return from exile in Egypt to settle in Galilee to escape the successor of Herod. Luke has them as natives of Galilee who go to Bethlehem because of a census and return to their home in Nazareth without any sojourn in Egypt. Luke knows nothing about the slaughter of the male infants of Bethlehem.

Some scholars believe that Matthew tells the story the way he does as his manner of showing that Jesus is the new and

greater Moses. The slaughter of the innocents recalls the killing of the male infants at the birth of Moses. Jesus is called out of Egypt as was Moses. Matthew gathers together the many teachings of Jesus into one long sermon on the mountain to recall how Moses received the law on a mountain. These authors point out that not only is Luke silent about the slaughter of the innocents but that no other historical

records exist of such an unusual event and they make much of the fact that Josephus, a first-century historian, in his "Antiquities" has no reference to such an atrocious deed in his attempt to point out how villainous a king Herod was.

Our faith does not depend upon whether the infancy stories are strict history with theological overtones or theological compositions based upon a broad historical basis—as a footnote in the St. Joseph Edition of the New American Bible observes.

(Msgr. Bosler welcomes questions from readers. Those of general interest will be answered here. Write to him at 600 North Alabama, Indianapolis, Ind., 46204.)

DePauw offers continuing education

GREENCASTLE—DePauw University is now offering continuing education programs for pastors and lay people on a variety of topics, including personal finances for pastors, world hunger, nuclear energy, family life and genetic engineering. The experts for the seminars are drawn from the Methodist college's faculty.

Dr. Robert Eccles, emeritus professor of philosophy and religion at DePauw, helped to develop the program which has

been active in local Protestant congregations for four years.

"We want to be a resource for continuing education programs for both pastors and laypersons," said Eccles. "We are ready and willing to work with other church denominations."

To arrange interchurch seminars or lectures, write Dr. Eccles at DePauw University, 30 Faculty Office Building, Greencastle, Ind. 46135 or call 317-653-9721.

More letters

Reflections on the life of Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day's last major address was the Eucharistic Congress in Philadelphia in 1976, but it was almost the Indiana Catholic Education Institute at the Indianapolis Convention Center in October 1976.

I called her at Maryhouse. She asked me what I wanted her to talk about. I told her the theme was "Justice in the Name of God" and that her message of working with the poor and speaking up for the oppressed workers would be gladly accepted. She said "was I sure people really wanted to hear her message" . . . she told me how she spoke in Ohio for educators . . . one bishop walked out and at a press conference the reporters ridiculed her. She said "no press conferences." Also, no taping and cameras . . . gets in the way of her seeing the people.

After some discussion, she said "yes,

but don't advertise until close to the date" . . . didn't want requests from New York to Indianapolis; also, didn't want to alarm her doctor. She then asked me if I knew how old she was. I said yes. She asked me how old I was and did I have a cold! She said to remind her closer to the time; don't waste paper and postage.

Two months before that time a priest called and said that Dorothy Day expresses her regrets, but she will not be able to make it. Sister Francesca Thompson, OSF, filled in the keynote with a dynamic speech.

Thanks for circulating her message in "A remembrance" in our own Criterion.

Sister Mary Margaret Funk, O.S.B.

Director

Dept. of Religious Education

Indianapolis

Abortion issue unlike any other

When are we going to wake up and realize that the abortion issue is unlike any other? It is dealing directly with the existence of human life which is so precious to our Lord who created it for His own honor and glory. He Himself said, "Whoever in My name welcomes this child, welcomes Me; and whoever welcomes Me, welcomes the One who sent Me. For he who is least among you all is the greatest." (Luke 9:46-48)

Today and every day millions of dollars are the profit of this murder. Our precious vote is one of the tools by which we hope to control what goes on in our country. Do

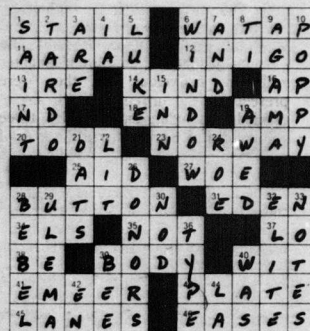
we love our freedom, our democracy enough to care about what is going on and if it is pleasing to God?

If our Creator confronted us with this on our Judgement Day, how would we answer? "Well, I did help the poor, and the minorities, the hungry etc., but I didn't help do anything about those who weren't already on the earth." Will our feeble excuses suffice to exonerate us? The voices of the millions of little angels surrounding the One whose love created them may decide our fate.

Stephanie Paquette

Indianapolis

Double-Take



AN INVITATION TO CELEBRATE

A Charismatic Mass

The Word of the Lord
stands forever; it is the
Word given to you, the Good News.
(1 Peter 1:24-25)

I solemnly tell you:
Those who have left everything
and followed me will be
repaid a hundredfold, and will
gain eternal life.



THE MONTHLY CHARISMATIC MASS
WILL BE HELD ON THE FIRST FRIDAY OF JANUARY 1981 AT:

Immaculate Heart of Mary
5692 Central Avenue
Indianapolis, Indiana 46220

DATE: January 2, 1981
Soup and Bread Supper — 6:00 p.m.
Prayer and Praise — 7:30 p.m.
Mass — 8:00 p.m.
Celebrant — Rev. Herman Lutz

For further information call:

Catholic Charismatic Community Center
Phone: 255-6561

"May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace." (1 Cor. 1:3)

KNOW YOUR FAITH

A little girl's gift becomes a symbolic turning point

by Don Kurre

The Christmas Jessica received her swing set was not really unlike many of the other Christmases that had come and gone. However, that swing set was to become a symbol of a major turning point in my life.

A swing set in its shipping crate is particularly unidentifiable to a three-year-old. So it was not until the spring of the following year that Jessica realized what pleasure she would receive from the large crate sitting in the garage.



On that spring day, the crate was sacramentally removed from the garage. Since Grandma and Grandpa had blessed their granddaughter with this marvelous gift, they were present for the unveiling. With single-mindedness and great festivity three generations of Kurre began the task of framing metal bars, chains, and bolts into a swing set.

The erection of the swing set was one of those events that makes you feel good about being part of a family. As an event, it was not particularly earth-shaking.

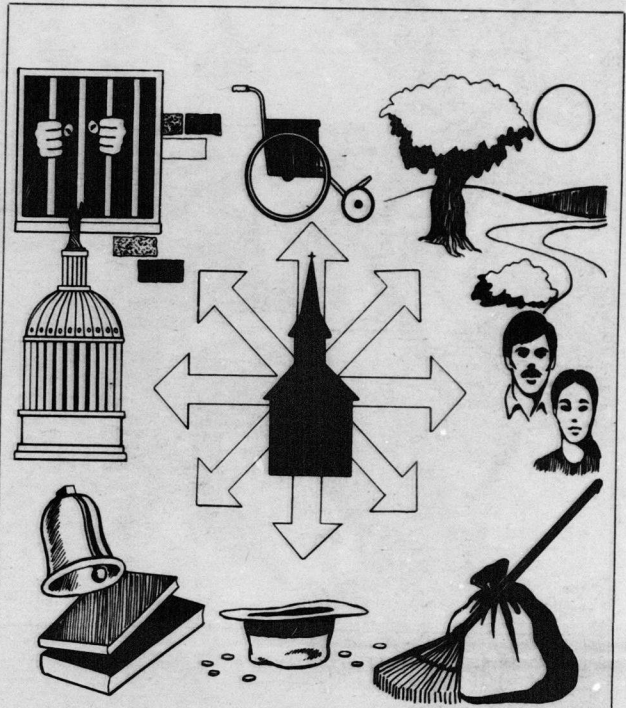
However, it was an event that will be remembered as part of this family's history.

The sun had almost set, and three generations returned to their own separate lives. Like a king surveying his kingdom, I sauntered into the back yard to scrutinize the day's work. Suddenly time froze for me. I realized as I gazed to the left and to the right that every house on our long block had a swing set in its backyard. I felt as though the weight of one hundred swings had crashed upon my heart.

To the eye of the casual observer, that house on Thornecroft existed now as a mirror reflection of the "typical" middle class family home.

AT THAT MOMENT I recalled those endless conversations I had had around pizza just a few short years ago. I remember saying time after time, "I will never be a typical middle class person." Firmly convinced that I, unlike so many who had gone before me, would be able to resist the hypnotizing effect of middle class life.

Standing in the vestibule, which my suburban backyard had become, before the embodiment of my "god," I worshipped with the values that a few years (See GIRL'S GIFT on page 8)



CHRISTIAN WAY—Caring for one another is central to the Christian way of life. When parishes discover the needs of their people and respond to those needs they often find that people do amazing things. (NC sketch by Christopher McDonough)

Parishes discover new ways to exercise old concerns

by Fr. Philip Murnion

The Parable of the Good Samaritan contains the basic lesson given by Jesus on caring for others. The point of the story often is missed.

After describing the two negligent passers-by and the Samaritan who helped a man who had been beaten and robbed, Jesus asked, "Who was the neighbor?"

The Samaritan became the neighbor by getting involved in the victim's situation, by finding out what the victim needed. This is what more and more parishes are doing as they reach out to their own members and to others in their communities.

Once, during a discussion among members of a parish staff, the group was asked to list all known obstacles to fostering a sense of community among parishioners. Here is one obstacle cited: "People do not understand what Christian charity means."

Prodded to explain further, someone in



the group suggested that this implied the staff should work on teaching what charity means. Another staff member said, "People simply will not reach out to help neighbors who are having troubles."

"Why not?" the group was asked.

"Because they are afraid," a priest responded. "People do not know what they are getting into or whether they will get in over their heads. They also fear their offer to help may be resented."

I find this exchange quite illuminating. For it seems that fear, rather than a failure to understand the meaning of charity, can be a major obstacle for almost anyone, almost anywhere. To overcome fear, then, perhaps parishes and their people will want to think about ways to provide support so that people will not feel they are alone when they reach out to their neighbors.

IT SEEMS TO me that people do want to help one another. They want to be generous and to help take care of each other. But fear often restrains them from following their best intentions. Fear can even keep family members from reaching out to help each other.

Another obstacle to caring for others can be lack of information. People often

do not know what needs other people actually have. People may need help, then, to learn about various needs—first-hand, whenever possible. What a difference it can make when people see for themselves the needs that exist.

A third obstacle can sometimes be found in the growth of professional and governmental agencies. Sometimes people feel that they are already helping meet society's needs through the taxes they pay. They may also feel that professional agencies are better equipped to handle people's needs.

On the other hand, anyone familiar with agencies knows how limited their help can be in some cases. Nothing can replace personal care; there is such a great need to relate to others in their own terms.

There is a great need for parishes and their people to counteract the idea that all the charity that is needed in society is available because of the IRS or because of professional agencies. I think many people fear being taken advantage of and hold off from helping others. Yet once they do get involved, they see quite quickly how much they have to offer.

Many parishes nowadays are providing service within their local communities by monitoring agencies to make sure the in-

tended services are provided. And they are helping to make people aware of the specific kinds of help that are available through public agencies.

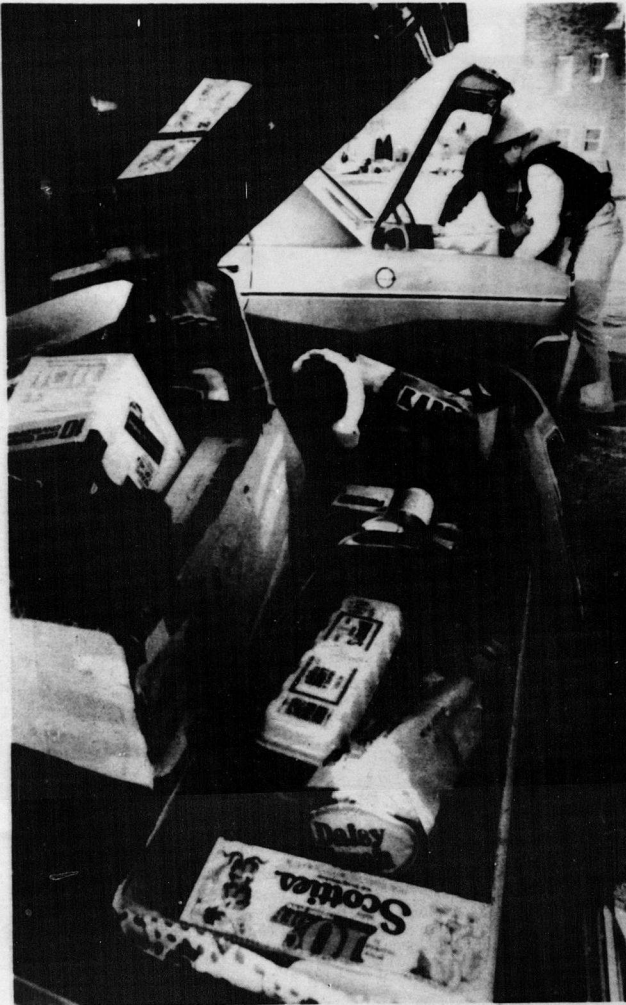
CARING FOR each other is central to the Christian way of life. Furthermore, this is the responsibility of all Christians who sometimes do amazing things. Consider a few examples:

1. A suburban Minnesota parish is involved in bail hearings in city courts.
2. An urban parish has set up a program in which the elderly call and visit other elderly shut-ins.
3. A Texas parish helps whole families to actively care for other families.
4. In Little Rock, Ark., teen-agers are involved in peer ministry to other teen-agers in jail.
5. A Louisiana parish has numerous couples who help younger engaged people prepare for marriage.

The list could be endless. People today are discovering new ways to exercise old concerns and are reaching out to neighbors in need and to the hungry and impoverished around the world.

Parishes are offering people the opportunity to become neighbors to others, in the manner of the Good Samaritan.

© 1980 by NC News Service



CHRISTMAS CHEER!—"When I was hungry you gave me to eat." High school students in Racine, Wis., load Christmas baskets with goods and toys for delivery to needy families.

Girl's gift (from 7)

ago I so radically condemned. Values that had undeniably become part of my life.

To rationalize away the intense pain that invaded me, I sneered, "but, my TV is only black and white—surely that vindicates me from this judgment." Washing my hands, much like Pilate, I returned to the house.

As a husband and father, I want so desperately to provide a good life for my family; a quality life that allows each of us to become the best person possible. But somehow, the good life is too easily identified with having things and status.

In a letter Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote from a Nazi prison camp, he defined a quality life as "... a return from the newspaper and the radio to the book, from feverish activity to unhurried leisure, from dispersion to concentration, from sensationalism to reflection, from virtuosity to art, from snobbery to modesty, from extravagance to moderation."

For me, family life makes it too easy to live in a very complicated and non-reflective way. It's become very easy for me to judge myself, and assign my worth and success in the world's terms. Who among

us would blame me for that? Surely, we need a nice place to live. Surely we need to cloth our bodies. Is it too much for me to want to be comfortable? If I die it cannot be considered selfish for me to want to insure the survival of my family.

To these questions the answer comes back; NO, you're not expected to do without, but you are expected to live in a simple way.

CHRISTMAS IS a time for me of much growth producing pain. Selecting gifts for my wife, my daughter and the other members of my family becomes a real battle between the values that are mine and the values that I would like to be mine.

"Our minds" wrote Thomas Merton, "are like crows. They pick up everything that glitters, no matter how uncomfortable our nests get with all that metal in them."

Watching that swing set in the back yard, my nest felt very full.

I pray that during this Christmas season, I will not clutter my nest with everything that glitters.

The Story Hour

St. Paul suffers a brutal

by Janaan Manternach

Some Jewish enemies of Paul followed him from Antioch and Iconium to Lystra. They arrived shortly after Paul cured the crippled man. They could hardly believe that the people of Lystra actually wanted to worship Paul and Barnabas as gods.

"This man Paul is not the god Hermes," they told their friends in Lystra. "And that fellow Barnabas is certainly not your god Zeus."

"How can you be so sure of that?" the Lystrans asked them. "We saw them cure a crippled man before our own eyes."

"They are tricksters, troublemakers," the hostile visitors answered. "People in Antioch and Iconium became so angry with Paul and Barnabas that the two were driven out of the cities. In fact, at Iconium they escaped just in time. The leaders of both the Jewish and Gentile communities were ready to stone them."

The whispering campaign against Paul and Barnabas was successful. Gradually the people of Lystra turned against the two missionaries. The visitors from Antioch and Iconium led the attack on Paul.

One day a mob surprised Paul and his disciples in a city street. They blocked every possible escape. Then they picked up rocks from the street and began to throw them at Paul.

Stone after stone struck Paul. His disciples could do nothing to protect him. Finally Paul fell to the ground. He lay motionless. People shouted angrily at him and continued to throw rocks at his still body.

When they were convinced that Paul

was dead, they dragged him down the street. They pulled him through the city gates and left him lying outside the city walls. Then they returned to their homes in the city.

Paul's disciples gathered around him. For some time Paul did not move at all. He was unconscious. His friends noticed that Paul was still breathing. Some women washed and bandaged his wounds. They all prayed to God for Paul's life.

After a while, Paul regained consciousness. He was in great pain. His friends helped him to his feet. Barely able to stand at first, he slowly recovered some strength. He did not seem to be seriously hurt.

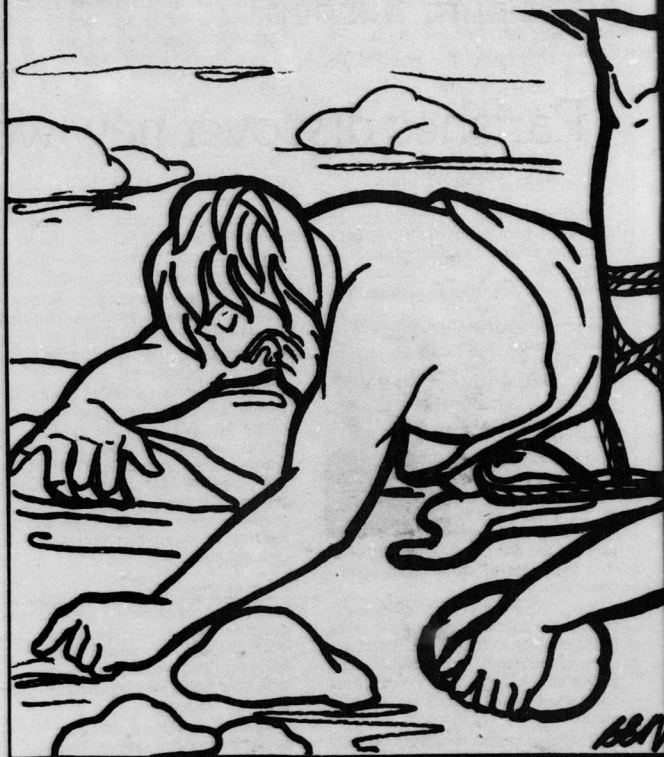
His friends praised God for sparing Paul's life. They led him back into the city, moving through deserted streets and back alleys so no one would see that Paul was alive. They took Paul to one of their homes and locked all the doors.

Paul slept well. By the next morning he felt strong enough to travel.

Barnabas joined him. The two said goodbye to the new Christians of Lystra. They set out for Derbe, a city some 60 miles to the east.

Some time later Paul looked back at how much he suffered in Lystra, Iconium and Antioch. Writing to his friend, Timothy, he recalled these painful days.

"Timothy," he wrote, "you saw how strong and patient I was, how faithful and loving, when people persecuted me at Antioch, Iconium and Lystra. You know how the Lord saved me from them all. Anyone who follows Jesus can expect to suffer. But God is always with us to save us."



Joy to the World

Pilgrim Maiden,

you knew the pain of leaving home to walk the long, dark road to Bethlehem. Gather to your mother's heart the sorrowing ones uprooted from family and native land, seeking again the Child of their hopes and dreams.

Teach us the faith and trust to hear the call of the Father in every trial, and to see the starlight in every night of darkness.

Mother maiden, you are pilgrim again in those whose arms, like yours, once held a child and lost him. Be now strong courage for those in danger, warm compassion for the homeless, and radiant light for those lost in uncertainty.

Bring to the vast global city of the Bethlehem that is our modern world, the Father's love, made Flesh. And help us, O Mother, through love and hope, to make the whole wide world his creche.

Text by Sister Joseph McKenzie, O.C.D.
Sketch by Sister Mary Joseph Triska, O.C.D.
Carmel of St. Joseph, Terre Haute



The Magi: mysterious figures who visited baby Jesus

by Sean Freyne

The Magi are the most obscure, most mysterious characters appearing on stage for the drama surrounding the birth of the Savior. They also are among the most celebrated actors in the Gospel narratives. Their name, Magi or Wise Men, and their homeland in the East, only add to their mystique.

Since we know so little about them, it is little wonder that popular thinking has tended to fill in the details which Matthew left so tantalizingly vague in the second chapter of his Gospel.

►Thus Christmas cards and cribs assume there were three, even though the Evangelist says simply "Wise Men."

►Popular tradition has given them names, differing in Eastern and Western Christendom, even though nothing in the Gospel account supports either version.

►Relics are on display in the famous Gothic cathedral at Cologne, West Germany, even though we are in the dark about their return to the homeland or their subsequent lives.

It is as though the popular mind could not allow such advantaged witnesses to walk away from the pages of this most momentous event in history leaving behind only the merest suggestion of their having passed this way.

PERHAPS, however, the very absence of details in Matthew can serve as a challenge to a further search for the story's significance. For instance, one approach of contemporary biblical scholars is highly enlightening. This approach compares Matthew's story of the birth of Jesus with certain events in the Old Testament.

First, the story in many ways resembles popular stories about the birth of Moses. In both stories, a hostile leader rules the land: Herod at the time of Jesus; Pharaoh when Moses was born. In both stories, wise men report the unusual baby's birth to the ruler. Furthermore, both Jesus and Moses were threatened, even in their infancy.

Second, the Slaughter of the Innocents, which the visit of the Wise Men prompted, led to the precipitous flight of Jesus and his family to Egypt. This jogs Jewish memories of Israel's exile in the land of Egypt, as well.

Finally, like the Queen of Sheba who visited Solomon to hear his wisdom, the visit of the Wise Men to Jesus introduces him to us as the Wise One par excellence. To him all human wisdom must submit.

In addition, much has been written about the star in the East which the Magi follow. Some have identified this star with Haley's Comet or with a very rare configuration of the planets Jupiter and Saturn. All such speculation, however, may be of greater interest to the antiquarian and astrologer than to Matthew.



OF GREATER interest to Matthew, many of his readers would have believed the stars guided the affairs of people's lives. Hearing that Jesus' star was seen and recognized by people in countries where astrology was an important science, but who had no ties to Judaism, was significant to them. This gave the birth of Jesus a universal dimension.

It was this universal aspect of the event that the Christian liturgy, with its very sure touch, fastened onto in the feast of the Wise Men. Epiphany, as the feast is called in the Greek church, became and remains the fitting climax of the Christmas Gospel:

To us a Son is born; to us a Savior is given, irrespective of our ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

A Jew gives Christians the day off

MILWAUKEE—For the 11th Christmas Eve in a row Albert Rosen, a Jew, will fill in for a Christian on the job so that the Christian can spend the holiday with his family or attend Mass.

Rosen will replace Linda Kibinski as a host at Denny's Restaurant in Milwaukee from 4 p.m. to midnight. He receives no payment for the chore, but does it "to serve the cause of brotherhood by bridg-

ing the gap between Christians and Jews."

In past years Rosen has substituted as a bartender, radio disc jockey, information desk clerk in a hospital, security guard, police clerk and post office mail handler.

Rosen's example has led other Jews to perform similar acts on Christmas Eve across the country in hospitals and nursing homes.

Christmas lighting set

NEW ALBANY—A highlight of the Christmas season here is the annual "Christmas Lights at Heritage Court." Hosting the community event this year will be The Second Baptist Church, starting at 3 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 21.

Heritage Court is the memorial espla-

nade developed on the site of the former Holy Trinity Church which was destroyed by fire Dec. 29, 1975.

The program will be opened by the Swiss Bell Ringers, the musical group from the New Albany Public Schools. Following will include prayers, music and readings led by the choir and members of The Second Baptist Church. During the readings a representative from each of the neighboring denominations will light the large candles embracing the outdoor Nativity scene. These candles will burn continuously through the Christmas season to Jan. 4, the feast of the Epiphany.

The ten participants are: The Second Baptist Church, St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Central Christian Church, St. John United Church of Christ, The First Baptist Church, St. Mark's United Church of Christ, Bethel A.M.E. Church, St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Interfaith Community Council, St. Mary's Catholic Church.

The "Christmas Lights" program is under the sponsorship of the St. Mary's Liturgy Committee.





Christmas began in 4th century

Yule celebration first observed in North Africa, Italy and Syria

by Rev. Robert L. Wilken

The first Christians did not celebrate Christmas at all, strange as that may seem today. No Christmas tree, no exchanging of gifts, no carols, no yule log, not even midnight Mass.

They not only didn't commemorate the anniversary of Christ's birth; they didn't even remember the day. When the ancient Christians began to wonder about the date of Jesus' birth, it was already too late to find out for sure. No one had taken the trouble to write the date down.

When did Christians first begin to celebrate Christmas?

The first mention of a Christian Christmas celebration comes early in the fourth century, more than 300 years after Christ's birth. But it was not until the end of the fourth century that the Christmas festival began to be observed widely.

The first Christmas sermon that we still possess was preached by Optatus, a bishop in Numidia (now Algeria) in North Africa in the year 383.

About the same time, records indicate that St. Ambrose, the bishop of Milan in Italy, St. John Chrysostom of Antioch in Syria and St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo in North Africa, (Tunisia today), were celebrating the festival of the nativity.

How did earlier Christians celebrate Christmas?

In Jerusalem the nativity celebration began the afternoon before the day itself, in Bethlehem, at a church called "At the Shepherds." This was followed by a service at the Cave of the Nativity and a long

vigil which culminated in a midnight Mass.

Then the bishop, monks and the faithful marched in procession to Jerusalem, approximately four miles away, arriving at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre just before dawn.

After a brief service, according to ancient sources, the bishop and people retired for a rest. The monks, however, continued to sing hymns until daybreak. Later they gathered at the church on Mt. Golgotha.

According to a fourth century pilgrim, its decorations were "too marvelous for words." This pilgrim said "the hangings are entirely silk with gold stripes, the curtains the same . . . You simply cannot imagine the number and the sheer weight of the candles and the tapers and lamps and everything else they used for the services."

In Jerusalem the festival continued for eight days. In other parts of the Christian world the celebration was not so elaborate, but the general pattern developed of having three liturgies: a Mass at midnight, another Mass at dawn and later the Mass for the day itself.

What day did Christians celebrate the festival?

Since no one knew for certain when Christ was born, some proposed one day, such as May 20; others preferred a different date. Finally, the festival was fixed on the day of the winter solstice, Dec. 21 in our calendar today.

The Christian fathers reasoned this way: since Christ was the "light of the world and the Sun of justice" (Malachi

4:2), why not fix his birthday celebration on the day when the sun begins to shine more brightly and the days begin to grow longer.

They also hoped the Christian celebration would take the place of the pagan festival held on the winter solstice. This celebrated the pagan god, Sol Invictus (unconquered sun).

In ancient calendars the winter solstice fell on Dec. 25 in the West and on Jan. 6 in the East.

Hence Dec. 25 became the day of celebration for Christians in the Western church, Jan. 6 for Christians in the Eastern church.

What did Christmas mean for the early Christians?

For them, Christmas was the celebration of Christ's birth, the mystery of the Word made flesh. But Christmas also was the occasion to recall the birth of the church to a new life in Christ.

As Leo the bishop of Rome in the fifth century put it in a Christmas sermon: "The birth of Christ is the source of life for Christian folk, and the birthday of the head is the birthday of the body."

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'Christmas Essay Contest' winners

Category 1 (Kindergarten thru Grades 3)

First Place

The night before Christmas the telephone rang. It was Jesus and he said he was coming for dinner on Christmas eve. On Christmas eve the door bell rang. It was Jesus. And he came in and sat down with my family. We blew out our Advent candles. Jesus and my family sat down and opened our gifts. Then Jesus told my family and me stories. Then he called home and told Mary his mother he would be late. We sat by the fireplace and talked about how to be to our friends. My family and I listened to what Jesus told us about his family. We sang "happy Birthday" to Jesus. Then all of a sudden the door bell rang. It was Mary and Joseph. They wanted Jesus their son to come home. We all shook hands and said good bye.

Bridget Bruen, Grade 3
St. Pius X School, Indianapolis

Second Place

Christmas to me is a bunch of things stuffed in a big stocking. First of all, it's my whole family getting together and going to Grandma and Grandpa's house. We all enjoy going for dinner and eating Grandma's turkey. Soon its time to open our many gifts which is always a delight.

Christmas to me is when everyone smiles a lot which they don't do much anymore.

But most of all, Christmas to me is going to church, to thank God, for sending his son Jesus to save the world. Jesus was our redeemer. Christmas day December 25th is Jesus's Birthday and that is what Christmas means to me!

Kathy Jo Hensley, Grade 3
Osgood Elementary School
St. John's Parish, Osgood

Third Place

The S. S. Republic is pushing off shore. The captain, Mike Arnold, hopes that the Christmas costume party is fun. He is dressed up like "Captain Claus." Then he talks over a loud speaker and says, "Ladies and gentlemen, I hope you enjoy this cruise. And at three o'clock we will go to the church. Then we'll sing carols." All afternoon the people had fun then it was three o'clock and everybody went to church. They prayed and sang Silent Night. Then after they said the Homily they heard the petitions. They heard the reading and the gospel. Then they went to communion and sang Noel. The priest talked for minute and then they sang Hark the Herald Angels Sing. Then they left. They sang carols and went home.

Merry Christmas!

Mike Arnold, Grade 3
St. Malachy School, Brownsburg

Category 2 (Grades 4 thru 7)

First Place

It is a cold winter night, Dec. 24. I'm sitting by the fireplace thinking of Christmas and what it means. I am thinking hard and all I can think of is Christmas means getting candy and presents. But I know there is more to it than that.

So I began thinking again. C is for Christ; H for that Holy Night; R might be for the gleaming Rays of light the stars gave; I for Israel; S for the Shepherds that came; T and M for the Tiny Manger; A is for the beautiful Angels; and S for that one Star that led the shepherds to Bethlehem.

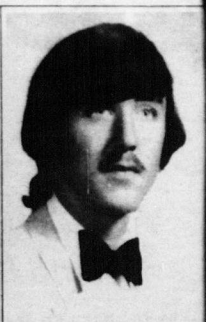
While I was thinking, I realized I'd spelled out Christ and Mass. Then I knew there was more to the meaning of Christmas. I thought "Who died for us so we could get to heaven? Christ!" and, "Where does Christ still give Himself to us? The Mass!" Then I discovered why we gave candy and presents. Christ gave his life for us. So we thank him by giving to each other.

So now I'm happy because I really know what Christmas means to me.

Caryn Stauss, Grade 6
St. Lawrence School, Lawrenceburg

Second Place

Christmas to me is a time to sit down and realize and appreciate what precious gifts we are surrounded and



NOT LOSERS—The four happy people pictured above won prizes in the Criterion Christmas Essay Contest. They are, left to right: Bridget Bruen, Indianapolis, (Category 1, \$10); Caryn Stauss, Lawrenceburg,

(Category 2, \$15); Ann Marie O'Hara, Indianapolis, (Category 3, \$20); Thomas W. Clawson, Indianapolis, (Category 4, \$25).

showered with everyday. Such precious gifts are our families and friends who supply us with lots of love.

Many, many years ago the world was given the best gift anyone could ask for. That gift was Jesus Christ. He was sent here on earth to teach us that we are all loved by God and that God would be there whenever we needed him and he'd never abandon us.

Christmas to me, in another view, is giving and receiving gifts. This too is a sign of love. Each year I look forward to receiving and giving gifts, watching the pleasant smiles of the others as they open their presents, decorating the Christmas tree, getting together with the family, and the many other delightful things that come along with Christmas.

Monica Schutte, Grade 7
Jac-Cen-Del School, Osgood
St. Maurice Parish, Napoleon

Third Place

Christmas is a time I wonder. I wonder how Mary and Joseph felt waiting for Jesus, or how the Three Kings felt on their journey with the big, bright beautiful star! Were the animals unhappy about sharing their stable so the King of kings could be born?

I think of starving people. Do they enjoy Christmas like us? What are the gifts they give and receive? One gift they could afford is love. And one gift they receive is God's love.

I wonder how God feels on Christmas watching people giving presents with love. The angels probably sing "Happy Birthday" to Jesus.

David Cleveland, Grade 6
St. Michael School, Indianapolis

Category 3 (Grades 8 thru High School)

First Place

"Is it Straight?"
"No, I think it needs another book."
"Where is my English book?"
"Ann!"

The tree is finally straight. Well, it leans to the right, well, maybe to the left. The ornaments are carefully placed and the tinsel gently hung. Even the fake snow looks real. It's Christmas. The tree, the gifts, the carols, the cookies Granny made, and of course, the eggnog, are all a part of the season of Christmas. These are symbols, not of December 25th, but of the warm feeling that is Christmas.

Christmas is giving. It is the brief period of time where we stop and realize the gifts we have received all year long. The gifts of family, love, faith, and knowledge. These are not wrapped in neat packages with a bright ribbon and a card attached. These gifts are given to us in the smiles of others or the supporting word of a friend. These wrappings are more Beautiful than any bow or ribbon.

Christmas is sharing. It is the sharing of yourself with others. Sharing not only with the ones you know but with those who are forgotten and neglected. It is sharing your

love and every Christmas feeling you have. Most importantly, Christmas is the sharing of God's only Son with the people God loved.

Ann Marie O'Hara
Cathedral High School
St. Lawrence Parish, Indianapolis

Second Place

In each person's own special heart is held the perfect feeling of Christmas. It may be a feeling of enchantment, excitement, wonder, as a young child anticipates and dreams; or it may be a feeling of thankfulness and awe, as those in the golden days of their lives look back through the years, remembering the joy of Christmases gone by, and the peace which grows deeper with each passing season.

In my secret heart of hearts I cherish Christmas for rekindling the family flame and warmth of togetherness, the tenderness which comes from feeling close to and loved by one another.

Christmas is the season of giving. Generosity is not merely the careful choosing of presents for our family and friends to express our love and appreciation. It is the one who offers himself to others, in the one special way only he can do, who is truly generous. Love radiates from this gift, it is beyond measure.

I have little money to spend on Christmas presents, but my hands are busy, my head is filled with thoughts and ideas, and my heart is glowing like a huge candle. This is the time to surprise, to share, to help, to offer, to do for others what they least expect, but which will give them a moment of joy. I thank Thee, Lord, for this glorious warmth which fills me. It is your gift to me. I cherish your gift, your love, which mingles with the minuteness of my person as I attempt, in my small way, to offer my heart in honor of your birthday.

Regina Glynn
Cathedral High School
St. Matthew Parish, Indianapolis

Third Place

I think Christmas in the future decades will take a turn for the better. The values of family togetherness and traditional yuletide ventures seem to be buried by the immense commercial world. Christmas sales and Christmas billboard signs are everywhere. People are using the birth of Christ to sell a T.V. or advertise a bottle of whiskey. The whole Christmas season is too commercialized. I am hoping that in the years to come we can go back to the good old days when Christmas was simple and the Christmas spirit would come from the joy the day would bring—not from a television advertisement.

I suppose this letter is just a sign of hope wishing that commercialism will tone down before the whole idea of Christmas is lost or forgotten. I'm optimistic. I think people will finally figure out that all the tinsel we use to show the "Christmas Spirit" should not overshadow the true theme of Christmas: love and kindness to our fellow man.

John M. Rago
Cathedral High School
St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Indianapolis

Category 4 (Adults)

First Place

Sitting alone on the back porch of my grandfather's house, I could not hold back the sadness that had enveloped me. Though it was Christmas Eve, I was not feeling very joyous. This was to be my last Christmas with my grandfather; his cancer did not observe holidays, and would not let him celebrate another.

As I sat on the porch, my grandfather came out, sat down beside me, and stared at the snow-filled sky. No words were spoken for quite some time; he knew why I was unhappy. Finally, he said, "Christmas is not a time for sadness, Thomas. It is a time for great joy, as we share the universal happiness of Christ's birth. Though His mortal life was taken away, He lives in both of us. We rejoice in the coming of His presence. We are never truly separated, Thomas, as long as we share the glory of this special time."

Many Christmas Eves have come and gone. My grandfather no longer sits on the porch with me. But I still feel the joy of Christmas that he spoke of—the sharing of man's joy in the coming of Jesus. Sharing such joy, we are never alone.

Thomas W. Clawson

St. Lawrence Parish, Indianapolis

Second Place

The bulging, brown burlap ball at the base of the tree sucks thirstily at the water tenderly offered to the precious roots inside. A new haven for wintering birds will soon be planted!

Brightly-tinted dough ornaments twist in the twinkle of the tree's lights—a mute testimonial to the loving labor of family hands working together, sharing the treasure of time.

Buttery aromas drift from the kitchen where giggling children pull their thumbs triumphantly from the center of carefully measured globs of cookie dough, leaving a hole for sparkling preserves to fill. Other cookies . . . orange wreathe, candy canes, nut-rolls . . . heaped and colorful, patiently await delivery to the homes, and hearts, of loved ones.

A bit of pine bough burns in a saucer, crackling and glowing,—pouring its scent throughout the house where notes of Christmas favorites rise from the family, not the radio, and gifts come from the spirit, not the store.

This then is Christmas Future—born of the move to remove the cold glint of commercialism; a reaching within to touch that greatest of all gifts—the gift of self. It began one day long ago in a stable. It can begin again.

Marianne Tilk Schultz

Ft. Benjamin Harrison Chapel
Ft. Harrison, Indiana

Third Place

Christmas is truly special to me.

Through the years, the story of the First Christmas has taken on deeper meaning. The ancient story is retold through meaningful symbols and traditions: Manger scenes with the Holy family, shepherds, the Magi, and God's animal creatures, the advent wreath with its wealth of symbolism, candles in lovely shapes and colors, luminaria at residences and churches, "Messiah," Midnight Mass, collecting food and gifts for those less fortunate, and so many other memories.

In contrast to this, as the day itself approaches, excitement builds through recollections of Christmases past and anticipation of this year: Red and green and gold and silver dominating the scene, shopping (frilly blouses and electric shavers and toys) for gifting loved ones, snow!, blinking lights, jingle bells—on Fido's collar, over thresholds, on doorknobs and packages; carols—the familiar, heartwarming, beloved ones and the modern versions of old favorites, Scrooge and Tiny Tim, The "Nutcracker," "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas," cakes and cookies, candy canes and stockings, the wassail bowl, Christmas dinner, the tree!, and finally, the jolly old, white-bearded, robust fellow who comes to call only on December 24th.

When I hear that all this commercialism replaces the true meaning of the season, I want to argue this. It is because of the profound event 2,000 years ago that we experience love and peace and warmth through these material expressions. In the right spirit, they serve to emphasize the birth of Baby Jesus rather than detract from it.

What a joy to celebrate the Birthday with humans all over the world!

Dorothy M. Brassie

St. Bernadette Parish, Indianapolis

Fourth Place

As I'm sure you can well imagine, Christmas is a busy time for me. The holiday rush brings innumerable problems with elves, reindeer, gift allocation, character analysis, manufacturing, and delivery schedules.

Millions of gift lists have to be reviewed. Believe me, it's not easy to determine who's been good and who's been bad, especially when the meaning of the words keeps



changing. Once I have determined all the gifts needed, I have to build them. What a mess! Outmoded equipment, bad weather, labor problems.

Although more manageable than humans, my elves are indifferent workers. The good ones leave, searching for jobs in a better climate. The ones that remain are more interested in smushing (a game played with snowballs and reindeer antlers) than working. Fortunately, there's very little light up there at this time of year, and I have refused to install floodlights on the athletic fields.

I am happy with all the justly deserved praise and honor my work brings me. Of course, I couldn't do it without help from people everywhere. To show how pleased I am by your support all the stockholders of Claus & Claus will get a big dividend check in their Christmas stockings.

I find it annoying and terribly unfair that some attention is still paid to one of my competitors. You know (at least some of you do) who I mean. That frivolous carpenter from Nazareth. He's been dead for 2000 years, so why worry about him? From all accounts, he was an indifferent carpenter. What gifts did he ever create for anyone?

I suggest with all the humility I can summon up a modest monument to me. Let's change the holiday's name from Christmas to Clausmas.

It's only fair.

John D. Tarbox

St. Barnabas Parish, Indianapolis

(More essays can be found on pages 18, 19, 20 and 24)

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Cathedral High School students remember the mentally ill

by Peter Feuerherd

Christmas is the season to compile gift lists. For most people, such a list usually includes relatives, close friends, co-workers, even the local newspaper boy (or girl).

But for many Cathedral High School students, their Christmas gift list this year also has included the most spiritually poor during this holiday season—namely, the institutionalized mentally ill.

The students' project offered patients at Central State Hospital a chance to do something that many such patients just cannot do on their own—give something of value to a child in their family.

For the third consecutive year the Indianapolis school, along with other area high schools and the Mental Health Association, sponsored the Central State Hospital toy fair.

This year's event, held Dec. 1, was the culmination of months of work put in by the Cathedral student body, who donated toys and money for the benefit of patients of Central State. On the day of the toy fair, 12 Cathedral students, along with other students, helped patients select and gift-wrap toys to send to relatives.

Jim Obergfell, Cathedral religion teacher, helped to direct the project. "We had the whole school participate

in getting the gifts and money," he explained.

Why would students get involved in such an effort? Sue Matthews, who has been active in the project for three years, gave her answer while wrapping a present for a woman patient.

"I just like to come. It's nice to know that you can help them. There's no way they can go shopping and get their own gifts."

Bob Newman, another Cathedral student added, "I originally got interested in it because I wanted to see where the money and the toys we collected went to . . . I was a bit apprehensive when I came, but I learned to enjoy it."

Lori Butler echoed Sue's sentiments. "It something we can do for Christmas to help other people besides our own family."



SHARING THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT—Cathedral High School students wrap presents for the patients of Central State Hospital in conjunction with a volunteer program directed by the Marion County Mental Health Association. In the top right photo Susan Miller brings out some wrapping paper while Lori Butler and Karrie West (bottom left) apply the finishing touches to some Christmas goodies. (Photos by Peter Feuerherd)



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'Befana,' the story of 'The Good Witch,' who brings gifts to Italian children

By Jerry Filleau

(Here is a story to read aloud.)

Many, many years ago—nearly 2,000 in fact—an old woman lived in a faraway land called Judea. Her name was Befana.

She lived alone in a small country cottage. Once, years before, Befana had a husband and a small son. But her husband and son became ill and died.

Befana had one treasure. In her small, bare home was a chest of toys and other items that once belonged to her little boy. Befana often opened the chest and pulled the toys out, one by one. They reminded her of the delightful days when her small son filled the house with laughter.

One day three magnificent men dressed in brilliant gold, red and purple robes came riding along on large brown camels. They rode down the road right past Befana's house.

"Who are you?" she asked as they reached the little path to her home.

"We are Wise Men from the East," said the first.

"Oh you look hungry and thirsty," said Befana. "Please stop and share my dinner with me."

"Oh, no, we can't stop," the second Wise Man said.

"We're in a terrible hurry," the third Wise Man said, "looking for the new King of the Jews, who has just been born. We have royal presents for him."

Befana watched the Wise Men ride away until the jangling of the bells on their camels' harnesses faded and they looked like specks of dust on the horizon.

She went into her kitchen, had her small supper, cleaned the dishes and got ready for bed.

THEN SHE TOOK a last look in the direction the Wise Men had gone. There, in the clear night sky, she saw a brilliant star she had never seen before.

"What a marvelous star!" thought Befana. "The king who has been born must be great and holy if such a sign shines for him."

The lonely woman went to bed then. But all night she tossed and turned, thinking about the Wise Men, their gifts, the

new baby who would be king and the beautiful silvery star.

By morning Befana had made up her mind. She knew she must see this extraordinary baby and bring him a gift. "But what do I have in my poor house that a king would want?" she asked.

The answer came from her heart. "Children are children, kings or not—the newborn child will love my son's toys," she told herself.

Befana loaded her little boy's toys in a large basket and filled another big basket with fruit and candy. She strapped the baskets to her little donkey. Then Befana set off to catch up with the Wise Men.

Poor old Befana and her little donkey couldn't keep up with the Wise Men on their noble, fleet-footed camels. Soon she lost them.

Yet Befana went on. At every new town she asked the people, "Have you seen three Wise Men? Do you know where the new King of the Jews has been born?"

Everywhere she went, the answer was the same: "No!"

One day Befana reached a city on the sea. She met a ship's captain and asked, "Do you know where I can find the new King of the Jews?"

"I'VE HEARD OF no such king," the captain responded. "But if there is one, he must be in Rome. That is where the kings in this world live." In those days, the Roman Empire covered what many thought was practically the whole world.

So, Befana and her faithful donkey traveled to Rome. Some say the kindly sea captain took them on his ship. Others say they flew through the sky.

In any case, eventually they arrived in Rome. There Befana asked the wisest men in the empire if they had ever heard of the new King of the Jews. The men ridiculed her. "Of course, the Jews have no new king," they told her. "Besides, such a person would be a traitor and Caesar would have him killed. There is no king but Caesar."

Poor Befana was discouraged. For years she had been searching everywhere for the good child-king that the Wise Men

and the star announced. She realized that even if she found this wonderful king, by now he would be too old to enjoy the toys her poor faithful donkey had carried so long.

The old woman was about to despair when suddenly the thought occurred: "Maybe I can give my presents to other children. If this king is as wonderful as the Wise Men suggested, nothing would make him happier than to see other boys and girls enjoy the toys and fruits and candies meant for him."

The very next night, Befana and her donkey began to go from house to house through Rome, then through all of Italy. She gave presents to the children in every home. Befana began distributing her presents exactly 12 years and 12 nights after the Wise Men and the star announced the King of the Jews was born.

Marvelously, every time she pulled a toy or piece of candy or fruit from her large baskets, another appeared to take its place. Wherever Befana went, the children were asleep. But she didn't miss a single house or a single child.

In some places, where a child had mis-



behaved very badly, Befana left a stick or a lump of coal to let the boy or girl know she had been there. This would remind the child to act better during the next year.

Every Christmas from that time on, Befana makes her visits to children in Italy. Even today, on the 12th night of Christmas, Befana visits every home in Italy and gives beautiful presents of toys, fruits and candies to all the good children.

Italians call Befana, affectionately, "The Good Witch."

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Christmas Eve, 1938, on Orange Street

by Donald W. Kuehr, Sr.

It was Christmas Eve 1938. A brisk cold night had quietly greeted the new fallen snow. The ground was reflecting the moonlight with a soft glow like sparkling jewels.

My brothers and I had just left Mary Haags where it had been a custom in our family each year for the younger children to spend the afternoon with "Ol Aunt Mary" while Christmas was being prepared at home. With all of the anxiety and excitement of that day it seemed that each moment lasted an hour.

Finally we reached our house. The blind in the front window was pulled yet the glow of lights from the hidden Christmas tree cast a dazzling display of beauty across our front yard. Hurriedly we ran around the house to the kitchen door. There, as we dashed into the kitchen sat Mom, Dad, and Aunt Margaret dunking Springlees into their coffee.

Even if life proves me to be unworthy of seeing heaven I must admit that the glow on Mom and Dad's face is **all the reward** that I could ever desire.

To those materialistic people who doubt the existence of God I can only wish that they could experience just one of those Christmas Eve's on Orange Street for truly the warmth of His Love was ever present and so perfectly displayed in my parents' love for their children.

"Oh" the excitement when we eight were lined up

by age; the oldest first and so on. All the lights were out except the magnificent glow of the Christmas tree in the front room. There beneath the tree lay the treasures that Santa had left, and as captured in a snapshot, I remember so clearly leaning back and just for a brief instant I was able to see this night as being just a

memory. And now 42 years later I can in just a flash see all these things as they were. It almost seems that I can reach back in time and relive that wonderful night all over again.

I remember watching my older sisters leave for Midnight Mass. Then it was time for my brothers and younger sister to say good-

night, but with all that excitement who could sleep. I will never forget that while I was laying in bed I looked up into the stars beaming so bright and I asked why must such a beautiful night end. I knew then that someday Mom and Dad would not be

with us, but in this year one of the eight will be spending Christmas Eve with Mom and Dad again.

I am sure that somehow their reunion will be something like that Christmas Eve of 1938.

Merry Christmas, Mom, Dad, and Margie.

(Kuehr is a member of St. Matthew Parish, Indianapolis.)



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'Christmas Essay Contest' honorable mentions

Christmas always brings back memories of the year I was 12 and found the true meaning of Christmas. It had been a difficult year that had brought the divorce of my parents due to my father's incessant drinking. Now, as Christmas neared we knew there would be no presents under the tree. Christmas as I had known it was not coming.

Christmas eve came and a friend of my mother's came by and took my brother with him to run errands. They returned several hours later with a very large tree, candy, nuts, and fruit. Could Christmas be coming after all?

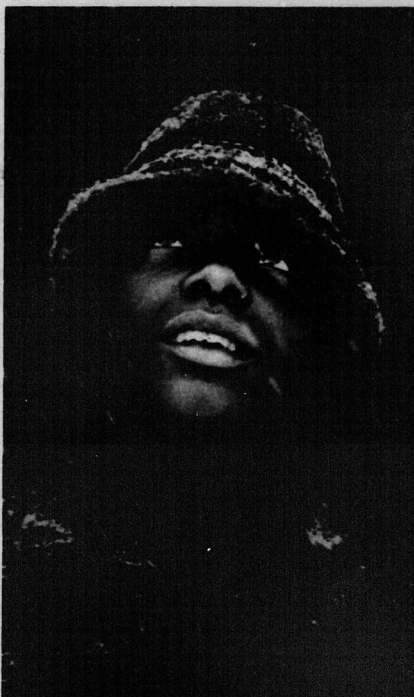
The tree was soon up, hung with our old decorations and looking like a jeweled mountain in front of the window. I sat nestled against my mother's friend, a man I hardly knew, and yet I felt so close to him. In a small way, his caring and concern had revealed a father's love to me. It was a new feeling, or was it?

I began to tell the Christmas Story. As the familiar plot unfolded, I found new meaning. I thought of the Father's great love for his children. Though we were like strangers

toward Him, He sent us the gift of Jesus, as a sign of His great love. For the first time in my life, I discovered my heavenly Father and knew I would never lose my Father again.

That Christmas became a base for my life. Christmas isn't material things that you lose, or discard. It isn't a tangible item, but it is more precious than gold. Christmas to me, is the discovery of faith. Faith found in a stable in Bethlehem, or in front of a Christmas tree 2,000 years later. It is the Father revealing Himself through the gift of Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Barbara Tuttle
Danville



Christmas means to me a time of forgiving and forgiveness, a time when you forget the bad things that have happened to you, and forgive those who have hurt you in previous years. It is also a time of fun, and of happiness. No matter how many problems may arise around Christmas, or how many you may have to think of, Christmas seems to dissolve these cares away for you as you enjoy visiting relatives you haven't seen in a long time, and eating all you can get. It is also a time to give presents to those you love and care for, and a time to receive them too. Another side of the Christmas meaning is that as this festive time approaches, it gives you time to be at peace, to think, pray, and notice the beauty of the earth. If you haven't given to the less fortunate, Christmas looks like the best time to do this, for Christmas gifts seem to have their own sparkle and magic. This celebrated and glorious anniversary of our Lord's coming to earth is certainly a time of majesty and worship of Him more than any time of the year.

Tammy Ayer, age 13
Spencer

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Think a little, think a lot
Then begin to wonder: "What's it all about?"
Lack of patience, misplaced trust
You feel as though your brain will bust.

Begin anew, there's room for you
Though you may ask: "Am I of the few?"
Many hands make work light
Let's pray to do our part right.

Mistakes we made, mistakes we will make
Don't need to cause our hearts to break
We will go to Him and sincerely say
We are little ones who will travel your way.

Mrs. Margaret M. Schmalz
Indianapolis

... And the year had not been easy, when the long hard
winter called. The winds had taken us all apart, and the
phantom bells had tolled.

The logs upon the burning fire, flames laughing with
delight, our hearts of clay warming still, under snows of
the lingering night.

Papa's hands gaily dancing, upon the strings of gold. The
ageless rhymes of Christmas-time, came back from
times of old.

The horses with the jingle bells, on streets of silver ice,
and warm drinks with cinnamon sticks, on snowy
winter nights.

Grandma knitting Cranberry beads, and Santa coming
soon. Our savior coming for us all, and hopes for life
anew.

The bright round tins, of silver and green, piled high with
cookies and Chocolates with cream. Mama's hand came
warming, smoothing back my hair. I saw a tear behind
an aging smile, and it all seemed to pass for a little
while. Ah! how I wish I were there.

The tree with the angel, of bright shining gold. Looking
over the peasant's child, as if she were her own.

Three kings, with gifts of Christmas dreams. Warm carols
and children's smiles, and all the world for once at
peace. At least for a little while.

Patricia Corbin
Madison

Triumphant is the birth of Jesus, the King of kings. Yet
this Christmas, because of many recent births among
family members and friends, I am struck with the meaning
of Jesus' coming as an infant.

If you've ever participated in or witnessed a birthing, the
exhilarating moments of the newborn's entry into the
world are beyond words. The joy is like a two-edged
sword—a sharp hopeful, new and incomparable joy on the
one hand, and then trembling, fearful expectation on the
other. All creation seems to stop in that timeless instant.
How precious was that moment when our Savior was
given us as a delicate, wondrous baby!

We witness His birth each Christmas. We rejoice, sing
and exult in glorious triumph; yet too are we humbled by
the mystery of God become a baby.

To watch a newborn, one is touched by the perfection in
each little movement: of the small, perfect, tightly clasped
hands; of the slow stretches of the body; of the rhythmic
breathing. How delicate life is! What a miracle that life
should ever exist, survive.

The miracle of the Newborn at Bethlehem teaches us
awe and thanks for this pure gift of New Life. All creation
stands still in a timeless moment in a dark night to adore
the Promised One, Emmanuel.

Cheryl Ann Fleming-Cecere
Bloomington

Christmas means fun to me. It is my favorite holiday. I
like putting up our tree and making things for it. Making
cookies is fun. I like going to grandmas and grandpas. I
like to sing. I love looking at Christmas lights with
mommy and daddy and seeing the big tree in town.

I love Santa Claus bringing me presents. I try to be very
good. Christmas means Jesus birthday. I love Jesus. Jesus
loves me. Jesus loves everybody.

Jason Schubert, Grade 1
Coatsville

It is Christmas-time. Millions of people begin to get that
once-a-year spirit of wanting to give and receive freely.
Much time is spent in preparation for the big event.
Finally, Christmas arrives, and we celebrate with our
family and friends. For at least a little while, we can forget
the problems of our world in the joy of the season.

Isn't it strange that on a personal level we are eager to
share with others, but on a larger, global scale we seem to
be incredibly selfish? The ailments of overpopulation,
hunger, the ruination of our ecology, and the threat of war
are largely due to human stupidity and unwillingness to
cooperate with other nations. Each nation puts its own
survival ahead of the world's.

In the future Christmas I would like to see, nations
would share in the same way that individuals do. If indeed
they do, we will be able to celebrate Christmas with the
whole human family. That will be a truly merry Christmas.

David Wright
Cathedral High School
Indianapolis

My husband's work required him to be away from home
on Christmas for the first time. Our eighth child was due
about two weeks later. Santa was to bring one simple gift
to each child. A thoughtless neighbor had asked, "Why do
you buy toys when your children need clothing?" I could
not answer her but I felt that Christmas morning must
bring joy to the little ones. The clothing would have to
come later.

On Christmas Eve I stay up hours later than the children
to finish dishes, ironing, etc. In those days, I prayed
constantly: "God, don't let them be hurt. Thank you God,
they are safe one more day." I was filled with remorse that
I had conceived this child for whom we had so little.

After midnight I brought the gifts out to arrange them
under the tree. There was the miniature Babe in the
manger; the peaceful animals; the love on the faces of
Mary and Joseph illuminated by the lights on the tree. I
thought of our children in warm beds; the soft blankets
ready for the new baby, and Mary's child on the rough
straw. Suddenly I was glad we were a little like Mary and
Joseph with only our love to give.

Since that year we've had better times and some worse
ones. Our faith has been shaken and made stronger.
Christmas is a time to renew our faith, our love for each
other and our love for God, who has loved us so much.

Lola York
North Vernon

(See CHRISTMAS on page 20)



Christmas Opens Our Eyes to the Wonders of the World

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CHRISTMAS SCENE—A snowy walkway to a wreathed door means something special: Christmas is at hand, a special time for hospitality and warmth.

'Christmas Essay Contest' (from 11)

As I sit in our little country church waiting for Mass to start, Christmas begins to have full meaning. I am surrounded by my husband and six children, but I am alone—alone with my thoughts. The rush is over! No new demands will be made, at least for a little while. I can just sit quietly reminiscing.

I remember the joy of my C.C.D. pre-schoolers as I give them ribbon chains to count the days till Jesus is born. The aroma of cookies drifts by as I recall my children decorating them and squabbling over who made the "prettiest" and who made the "dumbest" ones. I think of Bill, who never wraps a present, going off with wrappings to struggle with my gifts. I remember our little boys revealing every present they had bought; the big boys and Bill bringing in the freshly cut tree, which isn't as pretty as our artificial one, but full of meaning because they cut it; our teen-age girls raiding the pantry for a poor family.

And I am thankful. The bell rings for Mass to begin, and I come back to reality. Eagerly I anticipate the rest of this wonderful day.

Mrs. William H. Riggs, Jr.
Floyds Knobs

Christmas, to me, isn't receiving presents. Christmas is just sitting in the living room with all the lights out except the lights of the tree. It is listening to the soft sound of the Christmas records and staring out the window watching the snow fall. It is going to Midnight Mass and hearing the grade school children sing the Christmas carols, as they walk up the aisle, each holding their own Christmas candle. It is looking at the crib in the front of the church and stopping to think about the Christ Child being born in a stable with only the straw in the crib to keep Him warm. Christmas is a time to stop and count all our blessings.

Christmas is the special feeling we get when the whole family gets together. There is just something about Christmas that makes us all a little closer to each other. It makes us realize how important we are to one another. Christmas can be described in one word, and that word is "love."

Connie Fette, Grade 11
Guilford

Christmas means celebrating Jesus birthday. Christmas means a Mass at midnight and waking up in the morning and know that it is the Lord's special day.

Christmas is the best time of the year for me. I like Christmas because people all around me are so joyful and because people make things look so happy like the Christmas Tree.

I'm so happy on my birthday, to know that another year has passed, and I think Jesus feels the same way.

Brian LaMaster, Grade 4
St. Paul's School
Sellersburg

I have to write on giftgiving at Christmas. I had a difficult time deciding how I feel and whether or not I understand its good and bad sides. Naturally I enjoy the opening of presents on Christmas—I can hardly wait!! But I realize, honestly that this is not what the day, Christmas, means. So I guess I'm writing on the "bad" side of giftgiving at Christmas. I feel we rush to buy gifts, wrap them up so pretty, put them under the tree to wait for someone to open them. Yes, it is great to see the smiles and happiness that gift brings someone—but what about Jesus? Hasn't His birthday been lost to thoughts like—have I forgotten a gift? did I spend enough? I think so. Gifts should be exchanged with those we really love—and the best to Jesus: the remembrance of Him and a prayer to Him.

Kristin Kelley
Columbus

Christmas is joy, Christmas is the savior's birth. I like Christmas because Jesus gives joy! I like it because of the snow, snowflakes, presents and most people say that on Christmas night when people are asleep not only does Santa Claus come but Jesus comes. But I think it is only a legend. What do you think? When I go to bed I stay up and read and sometimes I peek around the corner ha, ha ha.

Amy Scales, Grade 2
All Saints School
Columbus

I think Jesus. I think love. I think presents. I think joy. I think Christmas. I think God. I think candy canes. I think me. I think Jesus' Birthday. I think Santa Claus. I think about my mom. I think about my dad. I think about my sister. I think about my brothers. I think of Grandmother. I think of Grandpa. I think of God's birthday. I think of Lucy. I think of my friends.

Julie Bieker, Grade 2
All Saints School
Columbus

"And behold, a child shall be born in the town of Bethlehem, he'll be wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger, his name shall be Jesus, Son of God."

This occurrence took place over a dozen centuries ago, when the angel of heaven came down and told the shepherds to follow the star of Bethlehem.

Still today we remember this with a picture or even a recreation of the manger in which Jesus was born.

What is Christmas besides getting presents from other people?

To me Christmas is a time of joy and thanksgiving, when our families come together to see each other and celebrate the birthday of Jesus.

Jason Clevering, Grade 7
Columbus

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Cornucopia

Next year, we'll get a ready-made tree

by Alice Dailey

Since merchants have been decking the malls with boughs of holly from Hallo-ween on, and my whole neighborhood is all a'twinkle with glitter, it's about time I got on with my act. I'm always the last to decorate and hang the door wreaths and if I don't get the lead out, some neighbors will be taking their decorations down before mine go up.

Where do I go wrong? After I've addressed, stamped and mailed cards, shopped, washed the good dishes and cleaned, there's that yearly time-consuming ritual of cookie baking and exchanging. This year I'm naming all of mine Fortune cookies; it costs a fortune to make them.

Some magazines suggest "get smart. Let the kiddies help." Some laughingly suggest a "tree-trimming party." I love the illustrations with that suggestion. The women, all arrayed in long velvet skirts, with not a speck of dust on them, are handing strands of tinsel to a smiling man on a ladder. If you look closely, you'll notice that he's really clenching his teeth. Some of the onlookers, standing around swigging eggnog have likely had him move the tree five or six times before it suits them.

We went on a "family-trim-a-tree" jag



once. It didn't work. In the first place, the "kiddies" no longer kiddies, announced they had business elsewhere, leaving Maw and Paw to do the job. In the second place, a football classic was on TV, and everyone knows it's sacrilegious to even breathe during such games.

"Here," I swung a strand of tinsel around the tree toward father, "loop it up and down over there and hand it around to me."

Keeping one eye on the TV set he looped the stuff on my ear. Tree lights proved to be obstinate. Some clipped on sunny side up and others reversed. After years of performing, some of the clips broke off leaving no means of support. As I wrapped the cord around branches here and there a six inch pine needle penetrated my finger to the bone.

"Ouch!"

My husband cocked an ear toward the

set. "They gave some kind of decision then. Wish I could have heard it."

A couple of ornaments bounced off behind me and while stepping gingerly around looking for them, I managed to crunch both. Finally the job was finished and I switched on the lights. Instead of the expected oohs and ahhs, I heard a groan. The TV picture was waving at us and even making snow.

"Damn it! They were just heading for a touchdown!"

Next year things will be different; I bet I'll have more time. I'm mounting the whole tree, fully trimmed, on rollers and shoving it into a hall closet, ready for use. The heck with coats and wraps. First things first.

Gospel reflections of the season

by Paul Karnowski

DECEMBER 25, 1980
CHRISTMAS DAY

Midnight:

Isaiah 9:1-6; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-14

Dawn:

Isaiah 62:11-12; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:15-20

Day:

Isaiah 52: 7-10; Hebrews 1:1-6; John 1:1-18

Mankind has a fertile imagination; at no time is it more evident than during the Christmas season. The story of Santa Claus has been so embellished with detail that at times, we are tempted to believe that this merry old man actually lives at the North Pole; that he actually has a wife; that the elves really build all those toys; and, incredibly, that a reindeer with a red nose serves as his personal fog light.

We have also expanded the story of Christ's birth in Bethlehem: you can search every verse of the scriptures and nowhere will you find a reference to a little drummer boy.

In fact, scripture scholars even tell us that the story of Christ's birth as presented in the gospels should not be viewed in the same manner as, say, an instant replay on television. The specific details, they tell us, may not be accurate.

Yet at today's liturgical celebrations we hear portions of the "infancy narratives"; we hear the familiar story of the angel's appearance to the shepherds; we get a description of the type of clothing Mary used on the baby; we are told that the birth took place at a stable because there was no room at the inn.

But why all the detail if it's not accurate? And if it's not accurate, what makes this story any different from the Santa Claus myth?

The essence of the Christmas story far outweighs any historical details. Even if the national networks had film crews at the event, we would still have to come to terms with John's gospel.

On Christmas Day, he tells us, "the Word was made flesh." Not our words, but God's Word. Our words can be speculative, true, false, opinionated, and imaginary; God's Word is truth; God's Word is at the same time, both the teaching of Jesus, and Jesus Himself. The message is loud and clear: God so loves us He became

one of us.

Pure and simple, that is the true Christmas message. Let us love one another as He has loved us. Merry Christmas!

DECEMBER 28, 1980
FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILYSirach 3:2-6, 12-14; Colossians 3:12-21
Matthew 2:13-15

The twentieth century has no shortage when it comes to prophets of gloom. Many people, both in and out of the Church, are speaking in pessimistic tones about the demise of the family. The bishops recently concluded a synod that dealt exclusively with the family; earlier in the year, President Carter established a commission to investigate the decay of this fundamental social unit.

Abortion, birth control, divorce, inflation, working mothers, E.R.A., and the women's liberation movement have all been blamed, partially or totally, as the cause of this "terrible" national affliction.

I for one, refuse to be caught up in the alarmist attitudes that seem to be sweeping our nation and our Church. I do not deny the many serious problems that exist: they stare me in the face. It just seems to me, after reading the second reading, that we're missing the point.

I would like to see a family survey based on today's excerpt from the letter to the
(See REFLECTIONS on page 23)

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Reflections (from 22)

Colossians; such a survey might ask the following questions:

1. Do you clothe yourself with heartfelt mercy, with kindness, meekness, and patience in your home?

2. Do you easily forgive whatever grievances you have against other family members?

3. Do you dedicate yourself to thankfulness?

4. Do you pray together at home?

5. Over all these virtues, do you put on love, which helps bind together the rest of your family?

6. Does Christ's peace reign in your heart?

7. Do you work on loving your spouse more and more? Or do you just "let it slide?"

If you answer every question with a resounding "yes," then you already have a perfect family and are exceedingly happy. Most of us, if we answer with honesty, will probably respond to every question in the same manner: "I try, but not hard enough..."

In the final analysis, we must remember that the most destructive forces that exist come from within us. If the family is falling apart, it is you and I, in our individual homes that are doing it; it is not the economy or a Supreme Court ruling.

Granted, we live in a society where we have more choices than ever before; but that fact should serve as a poignant reminder of our humanity: we alone have it in our power, with the help of God, to choose a better way; more than ever before the choice of a "holy" family is ours.

JANUARY 1, 1981 FEAST OF THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS

Numbers 6:22-27; Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:16-21

Let's face it: not all women make good mothers. In the papers we read about the extreme cases. Babies are burned, beaten, and bruised by their own mothers. In the divorce courts, more and more fathers are awarded custody of the children because, in the opinion of the court, the father seems to be the more responsible parent. Our romantic and pre-conceived notion of motherhood is shattered in the face of such facts.

Although she is on the opposite end of the spectrum, Mary, the Mother of God, also defies the stereotype. In today's Gospel, Luke re-creates the scene in the stable; he tells us that Mary "treasured" the recent events in her life, "and reflected on them in her heart." We can rest assured that she was a proud mother: she had just given birth to a healthy child. As the years passed, she would come to a greater awareness of what really happened that night in Bethlehem. She would understand that the biological bond established in her pregnancy, labor, and delivery was also a spiritual bond. Since she was the Mother of God, her child was not really her's: He belonged to everyone. In the face of all this, Mary cannot be called a "typical" mother.

But she can be called a "typical" Christian. Typical in the sense that she is a model for the rest of us. She is the prototype of the true believer, male or female, mother or father. Her role as "Christ-bearer" transcends sexual distinction.

Although we give special honor to Mary and acknowledge her primary role in the plan of salvation, Mary herself would remind us that we are called to be "mothers" of God. It is our privilege to carry within us—as intimately as a mother carries her child—the love of God. It is our responsibility to give birth to that love by sharing it with one another.

So as we begin this new year, let's face it: we can all use some work on becoming better mothers.



CHRISTMASSANDMAN—In a shopping center in San Diego, Calif., Norman Kraus, an architect and interior designer, transforms 80 tons of sand into a model of the little town of Bethlehem. The model, measuring 45 feet in diameter by 17 feet tall and costing the center \$10,000, was created by Kraus to give people a better idea of how the birthplace of Jesus looked. (NC photo by Roger Wrenn)

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Wise men and kings from a distant land
Followed a star to Bethlehem.
Courageous and weary they journeyed far,
Guided by the light of a Heavenly Star.

Kings exquisitely robed in gold and sable
Came, bearing gifts for this child, born in a stable,
Riding camels by night over dry desert sands; oblivious to
all danger,
Seeking the Holy Infant, they found Him lying in a
manger!

Shepherds left their flock and knelt in adoration,
Looking upward in awe at the Divine revelation.
Angels sang hymns of joy and praise...
Rejoicing the birth of this holy Babe!

The Virgin Mother so tenderly smiled
At Her Son, Jesus; she called Him Christ Child.
Softly she bade Joseph to come to Her side,
For their comfort and needs, he would always provide.

Sing praise to the Christ Child and to His lowly birth
The Savior of the world; Proclaim His holy worth!
So we celebrate with Christmas Mass and give Him Glory
Sharing gifts of truth and love and the joyous Christmas
story.

Joan V. Molehan
Indianapolis

One word expresses the meaning of Christmas for me:
HOPE. The spirit which pervades people's hearts and
actions is proof positive of the human potential to transcend
selfishness, to be other Christs. What a hope-full
thought!

Think about it. Aren't we all more loving, thoughtful,
and forgiving at Christmas? There's time for the lonely,
sick and shut-in. Gifts are chosen with exquisite care.
Already busy mothers bake goodies, sew new outfits, and
clean houses in which company will soon strew crumpled
paper and ribbon with gay abandon.

What patience we exercise in long lines at checkout

counters! Jostled by hurrying shoppers, we remain unruffled
and grin understandingly. We smile at strangers—and they
smile back!

Estrangements are forgotten and forgiveness extended
in cards. People who, sadly, don't find joy or comfort in
the church are drawn to the healing magic of midnight
Mass.

Wishing this spirit could abide everlastingly is perhaps
the explanation for the season beginning earlier each year.
The experience of Christmas, where we discover our capacity
for unselfishness and generosity (and the sheer pleasure
of it all!) should fill us with hope as we struggle to
become the persons Jesus came to model.

Therese Carroll
Speedway

For all of us, Christmas is a time for sharing and being
together, but Christmas, deep in the heart, is a time to be
thinking about Christ, Jesus, and what He has done for us.
We should all be thankful and joyful.

On Christmas, at our house, the younger children
usually think about what Santa has brought. Being young,
they don't really understand. I enjoy opening presents too,
but I mostly enjoy looking at the Nativity scene, thinking
of our Lord.

When it comes to putting up the Christmas tree,
everyone wants to help, but when it comes to putting up
the Nativity scene, everyone volunteers wholeheartedly.

The Christmas Mass is my favorite mass of all. It's very
beautiful. The children put on a pageant showing the true
meaning of Christmas. Two years ago I played Mary, and
it was one of the biggest thrills of my life!

I'm so glad our family takes Christmas so seriously, but
yet in a fun and enjoying way. I hope that it will become a
more religious and bigger part of peoples' lives.

Amy Beaupre, Grade 6
Little Flower School
Indianapolis

I would like Christmas to be more centered around
Jesus. Singing, shopping, and everything else with Jesus
in mind.

Is there any way at all to bring Jesus back into His own
birthday party?

Carrie Stauss, Grade 7
Lawrenceburg

Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of our savior,
Jesus Christ. But Christmas also holds extra special meanings
for each of us. For me, Christmas is a time when there
is a feeling of increased unity in our home. It's a time for
happiness and for remembering those we love. A time for
blazing fires to share their warmth as we share with one
another. Christmas is also watching the wide-eyed children
as they experience the joy, beauty and wonder of it all.
The magic in this joyous holiday brings out our feelings
of love for each other. That's what Christmas means
to me.

Julie McClellan, Grade 10
St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Indianapolis

To me, Christmas is a time of love.
It is a time to bring joy
And peace, the symbol—a dove.

It is a family united;
The Advent candles lighted.
Bells beautifully ringing;
Carolers harmoniously singing.

To all of those who know
The whereabouts of the mistletoe,
Christmas is a time of hugging and kissing.
A time of gift giving,
A time of living.
Basking in the warmth abounding
And in the air of happiness surrounding.

Christmas is a time to give love,
Show love,
Live love,
Grow in love—
God's love.

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What's Cookin'?

Celebrate the day the Spanish way

by Cynthia Dewes

Joy to the World! What an apt description of Christmas, when the Savior reigns. In good times and bad, Christians and even unbelievers join in the celebration of this wonderful time with music, family gathering, generosity and love. Many countries have developed customs centered on the glorious Christmas feast, often including traditional meals.

In Spain, as in many Catholic countries, such a meal precedes Midnight Mass. Typically there might be roast chestnuts, octopus or squid, baked chicken in a white wine sauce, green salad and salt cod with vegetables.

Bacalao Al Ajillo Arriero

2 lbs. salt cod
1 c. olive oil
2½ c. finely chopped onions
9 medium tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and finely chopped (or substitute 3 c. chopped, drained, canned tomatoes)
4 tsp. finely chopped garlic
¼ tsp. freshly ground black pepper
2 c. pared, cut up potatoes

Starting a day ahead, shred the cod as fine as possible. Then place in a glass bowl and cover with cold water. Soak for at least 12 hours, changing the water three or four times, each time squeezing the cod vigorously and pulling it into finer and finer shreds. Drain thoroughly. In a heavy skillet heat ½ c. olive oil over high heat until a light haze forms above it. Stir in the cod and ½ c. of the onions and cook, stirring constantly until oil becomes milky white. Add potatoes, reduce heat to moderate, and cook uncovered for 30 minutes, or until most of the liquid has evaporated (do not brown cod or vegetables). Meanwhile, in another large heavy skillet, heat the remaining ½ c. oil over moderate heat until a haze forms above it. Add remaining onions and cook 8 to 20 minutes, stirring frequently. Stir in the tomatoes, raise the heat and bring to a boil. Cook briskly, stirring and mashing vegetables until most of the liquid evaporates and the mixture is thick enough to hold its shape lightly in the spoon. Stir tomato mixture, garlic and pepper into the cod, cover skillet tightly and simmer over low heat for 5 minutes. May be served hot or at room temperature. Serves 6.

Later, carolers travel from home to home serenading their friends and being

invited inside to share dessert. An apple gelatin with mild cheese or a fancier dessert such as this sponge cake roll with rum cream filling may be served.

Brazo de Gitano ("Arm of the Gypsy")

To make 1 15-inch roll: ¼ c. sugar
2 tbsp. softened butter 1/8 tsp. salt
6 tbsp. flour 4 egg whites
4 egg yolks Confectioner's sugar
Rum Cream Filling (below)

Preheat oven to 400°. Coat bottom and sides of a 10 by 15 in. jelly roll pan with 1 tbsp. butter. Line pan with wax paper, letting it extend over the ends. Brush more butter and 2 tsp. flour over pan, spreading it evenly. Set aside. Beat egg whites until stiff enough to form peaks. In another bowl with same beater, beat egg yolks, sugar and salt together until thick, and lemon colored. Sprinkle remaining 4 tbsp. flour on top of egg whites, pour yolks over them and fold lightly. Pour batter into pan and spread evenly. Bake in the middle of the oven for 8 minutes or until cake begins to come away from sides of pan. Remove cake and carefully turn it out on a fresh sheet of wax paper. Gently peel off the layer of paper on top of cake and starting at one long edge, roll the cake into a loose cylinder. Set aside to cool. To assemble cake, unroll it and spread the top evenly with rum cream filling. Roll up the cake and place it on a serving plate. Sprinkle liberally with confectioner's sugar just before serving.

Rum Cream Filling (Pastelera al Ron)

2 c. milk
2 2-in. pieces stick cinnamon
1 4-in. piece vanilla bean, broken into ½ in. lengths
2 egg yolks ¼ c. flour
¼ c. sugar 1 tbsp. dark rum

In a heavy saucepan, bring milk, cinnamon and vanilla to a boil over moderate heat. Cover and set aside off the heat. In a large bowl, beat egg yolks and sugar until thick and lemon colored. Beat in the flour 1 tbsp. at a time. Discard cinnamon and vanilla and slowly pour milk into the egg yolk mixture, stirring constantly. Return mixture to pan and cook over low heat, stirring constantly until mixture comes to a boil and thickens heavily. Stir in rum and set aside off the heat. Cool to room temperature. Stir every now and then to prevent a crust from forming. Cream may be kept in refrigerator for 2 or 3 days. Makes 2 cups.

On Christmas day, Spanish children call on their godparents and on Jan. 6, the Feast of the Epiphany, they receive gifts.

Another version of codfish known as Lutfisk is served on Christmas Eve in Norway. The cod is prepared the same way as for the Spanish dish, then put into a cheesecloth bag and boiled quickly in water. It is served with melted butter, boiled potatoes and turnips. Another Norwegian specialty is a cookie which resembles an ice cream cone and is made with a special iron available at specialty cooking shops.

Krumkake

1 c. sugar 2 eggs
½ c. butter 1½ c. flour
1 c. milk 1 tsp. baking powder

Prepare as for cake. Spoon about 1 tsp. batter on hot krumkake iron and close. Turn iron in 10 seconds to cook reverse side. Remove cookie from iron and roll on cone form immediately. When cool, sprinkle with powdered sugar.

England is responsible for many of our favorite Christmas customs. What would the holiday be without "A Christmas Carol," Madrigal dinners, or the cup that cheers?

Wassail Cup

To make 2½ gallons:
2 lbs. 8 oz. granulated sugar
2½ quarts water
½ tsp. whole cloves
10 cinnamon sticks
10 allspice berries
5 tbsp. chopped crystallized ginger

Bring above ingredients to a boil for 10 minutes. Cover and let stand 1 hour. Strain. Add: 2 quarts strained orange juice, 5 c. strained lemon juice, and 5 quarts of sweet cider. Heat to boiling point just before serving.

From Germany we borrow the Christmas tree as well as lebkuchen, spritz and many other kinds of Christmas goodies. One old timer is the Stollen, a coffee cake which makes a great gift or a Christmas morning breakfast.

Stollen

¾ c. warm water (110°-115°)
1 package dry yeast
¾ c. milk, scalded, then cooled to lukewarm
¼ c. sugar
1 tsp. salt
1 egg
¼ c. soft shortening
3½ to 3¾ c. flour

In bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add next 5 ingredients, half the flour, and: ¼ c. chopped, blanched almonds, ¼ c. each cut-up citron and candied cherries, 1 c. raisins and 1 tsp. grated lemon rind. Mix until smooth. Add remaining flour, turn dough onto lightly floured board and knead until smooth. Round up in greased bowl, bringing greased side up. Cover with cloth and let rise in warm place until double, about 1½ hours. Punch down, let rise again about 30 minutes. Then roll or pat dough into 12" x 8" oval. Spread with soft butter, and fold in two the long way. Form into a crescent. Press folded edge firmly so it won't spring open. Place on greased baking sheet. Brush top with butter. Let rise until double, 35-45 minutes. Bake at 375° for 30-35 minutes. Frost while warm with confectioner's sugar and cream or milk icing. Decorate with blanched almond halves, pieces of citron and halves of candied cherries to simulate poinsettias. Or dust top with sifted confectioner's sugar.

How lucky we are to live in a world which Christ Himself entered on Christmas morning. This is the day the Lord has made—let us rejoice and be glad in it!

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Why not celebrate twelve days of Christmas this year?

by Katherine Bird

Christmas is a fascinating blend of religious remembrances and secular customs whose origins are shrouded in the mists of the past.

The term, "Christmas," first used in the 11th century, seems to come from the old-English term, "Christes Maesse," meaning the Mass of Christ. Legend has it that King Arthur of the famed Round Table in the fifth century was an early celebrant of Christmas in England, while records show that King Alfred the Great set aside the 12 days of Yule as a time of celebration in the 9th century.

For the church, Christmas traditions evolved gradually over many centuries. Father Francis Weiser in his "Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs," writes that the church first celebrated an octave, eight days, of Christmas early on, in the 8th century.

For people in the Middle Ages, Christmas became a hallowed time, a week-long series of religious festivals when families rested from their labors, performing only the most necessary chores. Often people prayed the rosary and sang carols at night.

For people today, Christmas often marks the end of a celebration rather than

the beginning. Yet for Catholics, the Christmas season traditionally begins with Christmas Eve and extends until the baptism of Jesus (in 1981 this day is Jan. 11).

Father Frederick McManus of The Catholic University of America, a well-known liturgy scholar and canon lawyer, points out that the church's celebration focuses on the "twin feasts" of Christmas and the Epiphany, days which mark God's manifestation to the world as a human being.

In remembrance of the past, I would like to suggest some ways for observing the Christmas season.

CENTURIES AGO during the octave of Christmas the church designated certain days to honor the "companions of Christ," saints from earlier centuries who had a special connection with Jesus. Some of "Christ's nobility," as these saints are called: St. Stephen, the first martyr (Dec. 26), and St. John, the beloved apostle and evangelist (Dec. 27).

1. Plan a special feast on the second day of Christmas. Remember St. Stephen, perhaps read his story in the Acts of the Apostles, Chapters 6-7.

2. Celebrate the third day of Christmas,

the feast of St. John the evangelist. On this day in central Europe people often bring wine and cider to the church for blessing. Perhaps this custom could be adapted for the home today. Serve cider with your dinner in memory of St. John. Talk about reasons why Jesus especially loved St. John.

3. Plan a merry evening at home with family on Epiphany (In 1981, Sunday, Jan. 4). Feature the "Twelve Days of Christmas," an English folk song dating back at least to the early 18th century.

According to folk authorities, the origins of the song are obscure, but it certainly is a chain song, a number song, enumerating the gifts sent by a lover to his sweetheart on the traditional 12 days between Christmas and Epiphany (Epiphany formerly fell always on Jan. 6).

Some early versions of the song feature tongue twisters such as the one starting, "One old Oxford ox opening oysters," and ending with, "Twelve typographical topographers typically translating types."

During your party, copy an early 19th century tradition found in the British isles. Children and adults then played a game of forfeits to the rhymes of "The Twelve Days of Christmas."

To play the game, arrange dining room

chairs in a circle. Choose a leader. The leader says or sings the rhyme for the first gift: "On the first day of Christmas; My true love gave to me; A partridge in a pear tree."

Each person repeats the leader's words. When all have finished, the leader starts again, this time calling out the first and second rhyme, with each person repeating the rhymes in turn again. This continues through all 12 gifts.

WHEN A PERSON misses a gift, he or she forfeiting a penny or small trinket which is handed over to the leader. At the game's conclusion, the forfeits are "cried for" by game participants. The leader raises high the trinket, the group suggests an appropriate ransom and the person who owns the item earns it back by performing the ransom.

Ransoms might include: reciting a nursery rhyme, turning a summersault, counting from 12 backward to one, singing a song.

Finally, following another British tradition, bake a 12th night cake in a large round pan, like a pie. Put a bean in the cake. The person who finds the bean is the king or queen of the evening's festivities.

Peace
Joy &
Love

From the

Criterion Staff



beating

Suggestions for parents, teachers and young people using the Children's Story Hour for a catechetical moment:

PROJECTS:

1. Open a Bible to the Second Letter to Timothy, 3:11-12. Read and memorize the verses, remembering that God is with you just as he was with Paul centuries ago.
2. The stoning of others is not done today with the kind of weapons the people of Lystra used against Paul. It is, however, done with gossip, unkind and angry words hurled at others, or by refusing to be friendly to someone who needs friendship.
On a stone, write the name of someone you may have "stoned." Also write on the stone a prayer asking for forgiveness, such as "Lord, forgive me."

Read and discuss the story. Questions like the following may guide your conversation.

QUESTIONS:

- How were Paul and Barnabas discredited in Lystra?
- How was Paul almost killed?
- How did Paul's disciples care for him?
- Why does it seem that Paul may have lost his life if God had not been with him?
- In the letter he wrote to Timothy, how did Paul reflect on his days in Lystra?

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st. paul writes to the church in corinth

by Fr. John Castelot

St. Paul reacted rather negatively when he heard that some Corinthian Christians were filing civil lawsuits against other Christians of their community.

The more one reads and reflects on Paul's letters, especially First Corinthians, the more one is struck by the supreme importance he attaches to the idea and reality of Christian community. No matter what specific problem he may be treating in his parishes, the underlying concern always seems to be that of community.



Christians are not just a group of like-minded individuals who happen to get together for dialogue and common effort. They are united in a person, Jesus Christ. They become, in a very real sense, a person, a corporate person.

The unity of Christians is thus not accidental or simply functional; it is organic, life-giving, life-sustaining.

Christians don't so much form community, as the community forms them. This has obvious implications for their mutual, interpersonal relationships. Its implications for the relations of Christians to society at large, while not so obvious, are no less real and serious.

It is as a community that Christians demonstrate in a fragmented world that people, in Christ Jesus, really can live together in love and understanding, peace, harmony and mutual support.

If Christians fail to give this witness, they are not fulfilling their Christian vocation; if they give a contrary witness, they are positively perverting their mission, contradicting their very reason for being.

These considerations help us to appreciate Paul's reaction to the situation he faces in First Corinthians, Chapter 6. It has come to his attention that some community members are filing suits against fellow Christians in the civil courts.

TODAY WE MAY find nothing unusual about this—it is the accepted thing. But Paul was not of our culture and so viewed matters rather differently.

He may have had in the back of his mind the little Jewish communities scattered throughout the empire. These communities tended to be quite self-contained, following their own laws and customs, and even judging cases in their own courts according to their own law code. They did not hang their dirty linen out for the whole world to see.

In any case, Paul is aghast once more. He appeals to them, not without a touch of irony, by alluding to a popular Old Testament belief that the "saints" would judge the world. If that is true—and with their

native conceit the Corinthians are all too willing to believe that they will judge even "the angels"—then surely they should be competent to handle their own everyday disputes.

The Corinthians boast of their wisdom. Well, then, "Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a case between one member of the church and the other?" Paul exposes a really raw nerve with the next question: "Must brother drag brother into court, and before unbelievers at that?"

The Christians are supposed to transform society, not scandalize and disillusion it. If they really were living the gospel ideal, they would shun vindictiveness in the first place, "turn the other cheek," forgive and forget.

"WHY, THE VERY fact that you have lawsuits against one another is disastrous for you," Paul says. The Christians are supposed to have abandoned the standards and procedures of the pagan world. Christians have been "washed, consecrated, justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God."

This is the ideal toward which the Christians should be striving. But Paul is realistic enough to know that the ideal is not attainable overnight. It is a goal.

In the meantime, the least the people can do is to settle their inevitable squabbles among themselves and give witness to the world that a community can maintain its unity of love and harmony even in spite of human tensions.

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

THE WORD THIS WEEKEND

DECEMBER 21, 1980
FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

by Paul Karnowski

In today's first and third readings, we deal with a difficult subject: the Virgin Birth. What were the exact circumstances of Christ's birth and conception? Did the prophet Isaiah know all of the details six hundred years ahead of time? If he didn't, how can Matthew claim that the prophet's words were fulfilled by the birth of Jesus? Theologians and scripture scholars have asked these same questions for centuries; in all likelihood, the debate over the fine points will continue until the Second Coming.

In one way, it's too bad. Because of all the attention that is showered on the Virgin Mary and the prophet Isaiah, two other people in today's readings get shoved to the rear: King Ahaz, in the first excerpt, and Joseph, in the Gospel.

Actually, Ahaz and Joseph have something very important to tell us. In the first reading, Ahaz refuses to ask God for a sign, saying, "I will not put the Lord to the test." It is likely that Ahaz was afraid of what he might hear. He disguises his refusal to listen in a popular pious phrase.

Joseph, on the other hand, is confronted

with a sign from God and doesn't even know it. His wife turns up pregnant before their marriage is consummated, and he decides a quiet divorce is best. Only when God intervenes more directly in a dream does Joseph realize the significance of the event.

Sometimes we're like Ahaz. We refuse to read the every day events around us as signs from God because we're afraid of what we might hear. Most of the time we're like Joseph. We're surrounded by the activity of God and we don't even realize it. We live everyday in the glory of the created universe, and it passes us by.

Friends, family, spouses, and children share their love with us; we still don't see how God continually reveals his presence through our love for one another. Someone might say something very profound to us; we consistently fail to make any connection with God.

If we spend our lives merely "surviving" and "coping," never taking the time to see signs of God's love all around us, we will live a shallow life. It would be like spending our days decorating a Christmas tree, paying more attention to the ornaments than the tree.

Discussions Points and Questions

1. What reason does Father Philip Murnion give to explain why people are hesitant to help others? Do you agree with his analysis?
2. Can professional agencies serve as an obstacle when it comes to individuals helping others?
3. Why does Father Murnion say that caring for others is central to the Christian life?
4. Father John Castelot explains St. Paul's conviction that Jesus calls Christians to live in communities of unity and love. What is the purpose of such communities? Discuss.
5. Think about your immediate family

- and your extended family, your parents, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles. When have family members needed help? What kind of help? Where did they find the aid they required?
- 6. Which do you find more difficult: trying to help others or needing help from others? Why?
- 7. What specific needs exist in your community? How can your parish and its people help to meet those needs?
- 8. Does your family live a quality life as defined by Bonhoeffer? What could your family do together to improve the quality of your life?

by Fr. Thomas C. Widner

Last week Father Jim O'Riley talked about Holy Guardian Angels parish at Cedar Grove. This week he tells us about his mission parish. When he isn't caring for the 600 people of Holy Guardian Angels, he's looking after the 400 at St. John's at Dover.

With 12 miles and another parish between the two, Father O'Riley can be kept moving. Dover differs greatly from Cedar Grove in that the community there is rapidly being affected by suburban sprawl—the influx of people moving out of Cincinnati.

"It's a challenge taking care of two different parishes," Father O'Riley said. "At Holy Guardian Angels everyone knows everyone else because nearly everyone is related in some way. The families have been around for years, and few people are moving in or out."

"At Dover, on the other hand, there are a handful of what we might call 'the old stock.' But most of the people there are new. The parish is growing and in a few years will likely need a resident pastor."

Father O'Riley noted that although St. John's has fewer people than Holy Guardian Angels, he expects that to turn around within a couple years. There are housing developments going up all around Dover.

ONE OF THE differences in the two parishes is the lack of structure at Cedar Grove as opposed to the desire for structure at Dover. "The people at Dover want to have meetings, they want to get together to meet each other and to find out what's happening in the parish. They're more junior executive, middle class people living in a semi-rural area for the first time."

Another difference is their tie to Cincinnati. "It's hard for them to think in terms of the archdiocese of Indianapolis," Father O'Riley added.

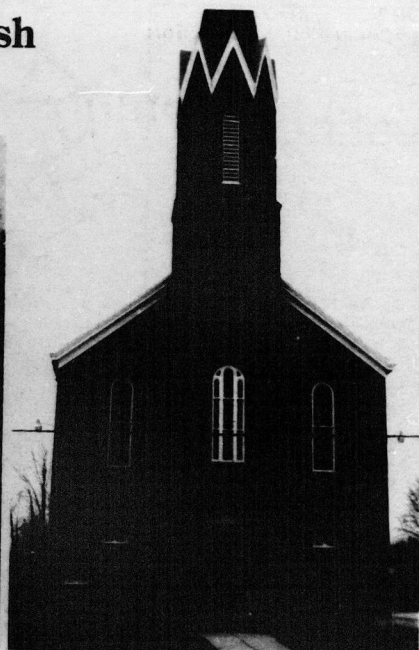
"As a matter of curiosity," he said, "I asked them only a couple of weekends ago how many had ever been in St. Peter and Paul Cathedral in Indianapolis and how many had been to St. Peter in Chains Cathedral in Cincinnati. The church was packed with some people standing. Only four had ever been to Indianapolis. All the rest had been in St. Peter in Chains."

The communities in this part of the archdiocese are intimately connected with southwestern Ohio. Indeed, some Dover

St. John the Baptist Parish

Dover, Indiana

Fr. Jim O'Riley, administrator



parishioners live in that state and, similarly, some Indiana residents drive to Ohio to their parishes.

Dover is one of the oldest parishes in the archdiocese. According to Msgr. John J. Doyle, archdiocesan archivist, it was settled by English and Irish people, something of an anomaly in an area otherwise totally German. But Dover is much older than the German settlers even. When the community came to be in the early 1800's the other whites in the area were mostly French.

"Dover was tended by Dominican priests from the cathedral at Cincinnati," Msgr. Doyle stated, "when most of the rest of southern Indiana was tended by French priests from Vincennes or from Bardstown, Ky."

Dover was known originally as McKenzie's Settlement and its early inhabitants came from Maryland. "There are related families around Nelson County, Ky.," Msgr. Doyle said, "but our information indicates the Dover settlers came directly from Maryland rather than from Kentucky. Why this was so I do not know."

THE DOVER PARISH dates back to at least 1824. At the moment its rectory and parish building are unused. But, according to Father O'Riley, something will have to be done soon because of the growth that parish is experiencing.

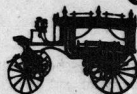
"One of the problems in pastoring Cedar Grove as well as Dover," Father O'Riley explained, "is that Dover in the summertime is on Eastern Daylight Time while Cedar Grove is on Eastern Standard Time. It takes some manipulation to get the Mass schedule correct."

Another problem is the Indiana Highway 1 which connects the two communities. It is not unusual for trucks to burn out their brakes going up and down hazardous hills. And cars often end up at the bottom of a hill with a hazardous turn.

Change in any part of our lives can be hazardous like a highway. For St. John's at Dover the experience of growth is a challenge to the creativity of the archdiocese. What lies ahead?

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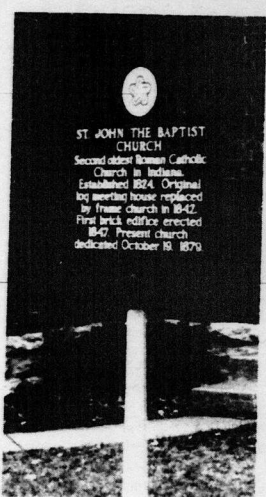
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Generally Speaking

A Lou Grant she ain't ... Thank God!

by Dennis R. Jones

I'd be willing to wager that you're more familiar with the staff of the Los Angeles Tribune than you are with the staff of The Criterion. If you're skeptical, take a shot at it ... how many characters can you name from the L.A. Trib? I'll get you started ... Lou Grant, Joe Rossi, Billie Newman ...

Now that you've finished that little exercise, how many Criterion staffers can you name?

Two? One? None? Aw, you can do better than that, I'll get you started again ... Father Tom Widner, Valerie Dillon, Sister Mary Jonathan Schultz ... stuck again? That's what I was afraid of.

Over the next few months, I'm going to make a concerted effort to change that. In doing so, maybe you'll better understand the human side of The Criterion and accept it for what it is—11 totally different people working together trying to give you the no more or no less than the best Catholic newspaper in the United States ... well, at least we're trying.

You say the L.A. Tribune has Lou Grant. "Grant"ed, he has his own show, but only because Valerie Dillon didn't try out for the part. Oh, I forgot, some of you don't know Valerie Dillon.

Valerie is the Criterion news editor. Her job is a lot like that of Lou Grant at the L.A. Trib, except Lou is just acting like a city editor. Valerie has much more to do than just worry about her make-up and studying lines on a script. It's her job to select and edit all local, national and international news copy for the Criterion.

But to say that she is just the news editor is misleading. In addition to assigning coverage of local events, her job takes her into all facets of the production of the paper from writing to page layouts to the

responsibility of proofreading the completed pages before they go to press.

Valerie didn't go to acting school. She received a B.S. in journalism from the University of Illinois and an M.A. at Butler University in Indianapolis.

In addition to being the author of three books, she was a reporter for United Press International (UPI), and more recently director of communication for the Indiana Catholic Conference.

Members of St. Thomas Aquinas parish, Indianapolis, Valerie and her husband, Raydon (Ray), are the parents of four daughters all of whom have been successful in their own fields.

Karen, the oldest, is a 1977 graduate of Indiana University, and is presently working as a TV anchorwoman for Channel 25 News in Evansville. Next week, she goes to work for Channel 13 News in Indianapolis as a reporter.

Patricia, an employee relations specialist for Exxon in Houston, Texas, holds a B.A. from IU and a master's degree from Purdue University. In this year's annual competition among thousands of entries nationwide, Karen and Pat were both named "Outstanding Young Women in America." They were nominated by community leaders in their own cities on the basis of professional accomplishment, leadership and community service.

The third daughter, Valerie, is a senior at Hanover College, and is presently making plans for graduate school. She is on the varsity tennis team and has been co-captain of Hanover women's basketball team for the past two years. She also holds the honor of being the all-time leading women's scorer at Hanover.

Daughter number four is Donna. She's a sophomore honor student at Indiana University in pre-law and is a member of the student athletic board.

To read about the success of her daughters is to better understand Valerie. She began working at the Criterion on a full time basis in June of this year. In the short time that she has been associated with the paper, Valerie has established herself as a hard working and extremely dedicated professional member of the staff.

Check it out . . .

✓ The American Association of Blood Banks has awarded a two-year accreditation to **St. Francis Hospital Center Blood Bank**, Beech Grove. This accreditation follows an on-site inspection by the Association that determines whether AABB standards are being met.

✓ **Father William Stineman**, pastor of **St. John Church**, Indianapolis, announced recently that it may be necessary to discontinue the 6 a.m. Sunday Mass "unless there is a significant increase in the number of persons worshipping on a regular basis at that early Mass." Father Stineman noted that St. John's in downtown Indianapolis is the only parish in the area offering the early hour Mass. Six other parishes have their first Sunday morning liturgy at 7 a.m.

✓ **Don McLaughlin**, son of Thomas E. McLaughlin, Indianapolis, was ordained to the diaconate in the Sacred Heart School of Theology Chapel, Hales Corners, Wisconsin, by the Most Rev. Leo J. Brust, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of Milwaukee on Saturday, Dec. 6. He will do his deacon internship at St. Mary parish, Naperville, Illinois, prior to his ordination to the priesthood.



✓ **Mr. and Mrs. J. Herschel Livingston** will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on Saturday, Dec. 20, with a Mass of Thanksgiving at Holy Name Church, Beech Grove, at 2:30 p.m. A reception following the Mass will be held in Hartman Hall at Holy Name School. Relatives and friends are invited. Mr. Livingston is a retired employee of the Dow Chemical Company and Mrs. Livingston, the former Ruthelle Conner, is a retired police officer from the Indianapolis Police Department. The couple's children are James of Boggsstown, Ind., Jody L. Livingston of Beech Grove and Robert E., who is deceased.

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the Active List

December 20

The Catholic Alumni Club will have a Christmas party at 8:30 p.m. at the Redford Park West Apartments Party House. For information call Mary at 255-3841.

December 21

A Christmas card party is set

at St. Patrick parish, Indianapolis, at 2 p.m. Special awards.

The monthly Youth Mass at the Terre Haute Religious Education Center, 2931 Ohio, will be held at 7 p.m. Franciscan Father Ray Mallet of St. Joseph Church will be the main celebrant.

The Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, Beech Grove, announces its 19th annual Christmas concert in the church at 3 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Jerry Craney, parish music director, is in charge of the concert. For reserved seats call 787-4401 or 784-8615.

St. John's Festival of Arts concert will be held at St. John Church, Indianapolis, at 4:30 p.m. preceding the 5:30 p.m. Mass. "The Story of Christmas" will be presented by the choir of St. Malachy parish, Brownsburg.

December 28

The SDRC in the New Albany area will have a Mass and

pitch-in supper at 5:30 p.m. at St. Mary parish. Members and their children are invited. Call 944-2502 or 945-1265 for information.

December 29

The annual Christmas party for Acts II and college contact members and seminarians will be held at the Vocations Center, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis, at 3 p.m.

December 30

A "popcorn-and-movie night" for high school students will be sponsored by the Terre Haute Catholic Youth Council at 7 p.m. The event will be held at the Religious Education Center, 2931 Ohio. Admission with refreshments is \$1.

December 31

New Year's Eve parties are planned at the following locations:

► St. Roch parish, Indianapolis, 8:30 p.m. to 1 a.m. Call 787-6090 for reservations.

► St. Joseph Council, K of C, Indianapolis; buffet dinner, 8 to 9:30 p.m.; party 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Reservations necessary. Call 898-2829 or 897-1591.

► K of C smorgasbord and dance, St. Thomas More gym, Mooresville, 6 p.m. to 1 a.m. Admission: \$10 per couple in advance; \$12 at the door.

January 2-4

A weekend retreat for young adults will be held at the Retreat Center of Mount St. Francis, west of New Albany. For information and/or reservations phone 812-923-8818.

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Socials

MONDAY: St. Ann, 6:30 p.m.; Our Lady of Lourdes, 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY: K of C Pius X Council 3433, 7 p.m.; Roncalli High School, 6:30 p.m.; St. Simon, 6:45 p.m.; Little Flower hall, 6:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY: St. Anthony, 6:30 p.m.; St. Bernadette school auditorium, 5:30 p.m.; St. Francis de Sales, 5:30-11 p.m.; St. Patrick, 11:30 a.m.; St. Roch, 7-11 p.m. THUR-

SDAY: St. Catherine parish hall, 6:30 p.m.; Holy Family K of C, 6:30 p.m. Westside K of C, 220 N. Country Club Road. FRIDAY: St. Andrew parish hall, 6:30 p.m.; St. Christopher parish hall, Speedway, 7 p.m.; St. Rita parish hall, 6:30 p.m.; Holy Name, Hartman Hall, 6:30 p.m. SATURDAY: Cathedral High School, 3 p.m.; St. Francis de Sales, 6 p.m.; K of C Council 437, 6 p.m. SUNDAY: Cardinal Ritter High School, 6 p.m.; St. Philip parish hall, 3 p.m.

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- † **BUETER, Herman E.**, 73, St. Michael, Charlestown, Dec. 11. Stepfather of Elzora Schuler, Frances Jew, Henry and Carl Morris; brother of Elizabeth Fox.
- † **COOK, Robert E.**, "Bid," 66, Holy Family, Richmond, Dec. 10. Husband of Helen; brother of Bette Lecklider.
- † **CORRAO, John**, 48, Holy Family, New Albany, Dec. 8. Father of James and Lou Ann Corrao; brother of Rose Marino, Carmela, Jane, Thomas, Philip and Pete Corrao, Jr.
- † **DEAL, Helen A.**, 72, Little Flower, Indianapolis, Dec. 10. Sister of Alice Frain.
- † **DEVINE, Robert Charles**, 50, Immaculate Heart, Indianapolis, Dec. 13. Husband of Lou Ann; father of Michael and Patrick Devine; brother of Marcella Hull, Mary Smock, Elizabeth Woodfill, Patricia, Leo and Bill Devine.
- † **DOLAN, Lois**, 95, St. Mary, Richmond, Dec. 5.
- † **DORAN, Cletus A.**, 48, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 9. Father of Cletus, Katherine and Sarah Doran; brother of Mary Suter and Duncan Doran.
- † **DWYER, William L.**, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, Dec. 10. Husband of Mary; father of Patricia Kammer.
- † **GLOVER, George R.**, 67, St. Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville, Dec. 9. Husband of Ann; father of Suzie Areddy, Michael and David Glover; brother of Constance Stanley and Gertrude Alvord.
- † **JASPER, Edward F.**, 82, St. Mary, Indianapolis, Dec. 15. Father of Thomas E. Jasper; brother of Leo Jasper.
- † **JOHNSON, Moody Lyman**, 80, St. Mary, Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Father of Moody, Jr., Mrs. George Carpenter and Mrs. Charles Daniel.
- † **KENNEDY, Dorothy J.**, 83, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, Dec. 8. Mother of Ann Hubbard and John J. Kennedy, Jr.
- † **KERCHER, Russell Jr.**, 44, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Dec. 15. Husband of Sheila; father of Angie and Gina; son of Helen Tallent and Russell Kercher Sr.
- † **LATENDRESSE, Paul J.**, 48, St. Joan of Arc, Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Father of Karen Norton, Paul, Steven, Michelle, Mary, James, Joanne and Frances Latendresse; brother of Anne Krieg, Florence Motz, Rose McKinley, Fred Stahl, Doris Kenney, Lloyd, Albert, Lyle and Frank Latendresse.
- † **MAFFIOLI, Louis**, 99, Annunciation, Brazil, Dec. 12.
- † **McCALLEY, Magdalene M.**, 87, St. Matthew, Indianapolis, Dec. 15. Mother of Francis, William and Richard McCalley; sister of Anna Karst.
- † **MCCARTY, Lawrence**, "Pat," 83, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Dec. 9. Husband of Loretta; brother of Agnes McCarty.
- † **MOHR, Helen J.**, 72, St. Mary, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Sister of Sophia Dowling, Walter, J. Donald and Mary R. Mohr.
- † **PAUL, John D.**, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 9. Son of Richard

and Margaret Paul; brother of Mary Roberts, Barbara Critchfield, Kathleen, Patricia, Michael, Richard, Jr. and William E. Paul.

† **PAULIN, Eugene J.**, 82, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 6. Husband of Alvina; father of Eugene, Jr. and Betty Lou Hess.

† **PUGLIS, James C.**, St. Malachy, Brownsburg, Dec. 17. Husband of Anne; father of Jane Westdyke, Sandra Elsner, Annette and James Puglis; brother of Frank, Phillip, Carl, Joseph, Josephine Culmone, Jennie Cassetta and Rosalie Mirti.

† **RIPBERGER, Amos J.**, 73, St. Gabriel, Connorsville, Dec. 5. Husband of Pauline; brother of Frank Ripberger.

† **ROSEMAN, Joseph L. Sr.**, Holy Name, Beech Grove, Dec. 12. Husband of Bernice; father of Carolyn Woodruff, Joseph, Thomas, Richard, John, William, James and Stephen; half-brother of Ruth Heidemich Stephens.

† **SEIB, Douglas A.**, 35, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 15. Husband of Sandra; father of Kirk and Stacey; son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Seib; brother of Sheila Smith, Karen Orlemanski, Steven, Richard and Brian Seib.

† **SERENO, Doris Mildred**, 46, St. Joseph, Terre Haute, Dec. 10. Wife of Carlo; mother of John.

† **STOCKHOFF, Edna (Densford)**, 83, Sacred Heart, Jeffersonville, Dec. 10. Mother of Roberta Elliott and LaVerne Kitzero.

† **STOEFFLER, Isabel**, 88, SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, Indianapolis, Dec. 10. Mother of Kathryn Robinson, Dorothy Sullivan, Harold, Paul, William, Henry and James; sister of Providence Sister Rose Eileen Heffernan.

† **SWARTZ, Betty J.**, 53 (formerly of New Albany), Christ the King, Evansville, Dec. 11. Wife of Charles E.; mother of Linda Davis, Sherry, Kevin and Terry Swartz; sister of Pat and Robert C. Flynn.

† **SWERBENSKY, William A.**, St. Lawrence, Indianapolis, Dec. 11. Husband of Beverly; father of Caroline Simak, Sheryl Caudill, Vicki Cornett, Marcia Alchin, Mike, and Thomas Swerbenksky, Larry, Richard and Herbert Medical; son of Antony Swerbenksky and Mrs. Mary Swerbenksky; brother of Rita Holmes.

† **TUCKER, Josephine A.**, Holy Spirit, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Mother of William J. Tucker; sister

of Mary Zeller, Julia and Hugh McCauley.

† **WALLACE, Charles**, 21, St. Bernadette, Indianapolis, Dec. 17. Father of Sean Adrian; son of Anna Marie Wallace and Jack Wallace; stepson of Ruby Wallace; brother of Jack R. Wallace II, Cheryl Helton and Marcia Lital.

† **WEISSHAAR, Minnie C.**, 81, Our Lady of Lourdes, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Sister of Mary C. Towey.

† **WEIST, Rosemary**, 54, St. Roch, Indianapolis, Dec. 12. Wife of Frank; mother of Barbara, Anita, Jennifer, William, Lawrence and Jerome Weist.

† **WISSEL, Susan J.**, 32, St. Andrew, Richmond, Dec. 8. Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Wissel; sister of Edna Pletsch, Jeanne Kelly, Nancy Underhill, Peter, George, John, William and Joseph Wissel.



Sisters Sexton, DeJean

ST. MARY-OF-THE-WOODS, Ind.—Funeral services for two Sisters of Providence, Sister Joseph Catherine Sexton and Sister Irene Cecile DeJean, were held here on Dec. 10 and 11.

Sister Joseph Catherine, 86, died on Dec. 7 and Sister Irene Cecile, 75, died the following day.

The daughter of Peter and Mary O'Neil Sexton, Sister Joseph Catherine was born in Indianapolis on Jan. 23, 1894. She entered the Congregation of the Sisters of Providence in 1910.

In a long teaching career, she taught in schools in Indiana, Illinois and North Carolina. In Indianapolis she taught at St. Patrick, St. Andrew, Holy Cross and St. Simon Schools.

She is survived by many nieces and nephews. Among them are Father Charles Sexton, Martinsville; Bene-

dictine Father Timothy Sexton, Blue Cloud, South Dakota; and Father Thomas Lyons, Indianapolis.

Sister Irene Marie was born in Vincennes in 1905, the daughter of William and Marie Blome DeJean. She entered the Providence Congregation in 1922 and taught music in both elementary and secondary schools. Her assignments were to schools in Indiana, Illinois and Massachusetts. Among these were St. Philip Neri and St. Agnes Academy, Indianapolis.

Survivors include her brothers, William and Hilary DeJean and sisters, Marie Koresell, Catherine DeJean, Ann Scheitlin, Rita Smith all of Evansville and Helen Weidner of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Two brothers, Father Maurice DeJean and Otto DeJean, preceded her in death.

Sisters Schmitz, Noe

OLDENBURG, Ind.—The Mass of Christian Burial was held during the past week for Franciscan Sisters Antonia Schmitz, 87, and Mary Norbert Noe, 85.

Services for Sister Antonia were held on Dec. 10 and for Sister Mary Norbert on Dec. 12.

The former Eva Schmitz, Sister Antonia was born Jan. 26, 1893, in Streator, Ill. She entered the congregation of the Sisters of St. Francis here on Jan. 24, 1919.

Before retiring to the motherhouse in 1970, Sister Antonia served as teacher and principal in elementary schools in southeastern Indiana. Her assignments were at Holy Family, Oldenburg; St. John, Dover; Immaculate Conception, Mill-

housen; St. Ann, Hamburg; St. Paul, New Alsace; St. Joseph, St. Leon; St. Martin, Yorkville; St. Lawrence, Lawrenceburg; and part time at St. Nicholas, Sunman, and Holy Trinity, Indianapolis. She also taught in Cincinnati and Evansville.

Sister Mary Norbert, a native of Sacred Heart parish, Indianapolis, was born on Feb. 23, 1895, and served as a member of the Franciscan congregation since 1915.

Both an elementary and secondary school teacher, Sister Mary Norbert taught in Indiana and Ohio. In the archdiocese she taught at St. Anthony, Morris; St. Mary, Aurora; and St. Mary Academy, Indianapolis, where she spent 29 years.

There are no immediate survivors for either sister.

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MOTHER SETON'S STORY—Kate Mulgrew stars as Mother Seton, the woman who founded the American Sisters of Charity, from which the American parochial school system evolved, in "A Time for Miracles," Dec. 21 on ABC. (NC photo)

TV Programming

Swiss village features passion play

by Henry Herx

Western drama began with the religious plays of medieval Christendom. At first these dramatizations of Gospel events were performed in the church. But as they grew in size and popularity they were presented in the church square where the entire town could gather.

Some of these works have survived in printed form, especially the allegories of good and evil known as morality plays. But in a few places the tradition has been kept alive in actual performances.

The best known of these is the Passion Play of Oberammergau, West Germany, recently revised to eliminate passages deemed anti-Semitic. Last spring public television documented a beautiful and moving mystery play about the Assumption performed annually since the Middle Ages by the villagers of Elche, Spain.

There is another religious play associated with a local church that is currently being publicized by the Swiss Tourist Office. It is an unusual history. It is a Spanish play performed in

German by Swiss townspeople.

The place is Einsiedeln, a small mountain village famous for its Benedictine monastery built on the site of St. Meinrad's martyrdom

in 863 and containing a shrine of the Black Madonna. It is one of Europe's oldest centers of pilgrimage. It attracts secular tourists, too, who come to see the incomparable baroque architecture used when the church was rebuilt in 1704-1770.

(Einsiedeln is, of course, the mother house of St. Meinrad Archabbey in southern Indiana)

Religious dramas were regularly performed in Einsiedeln from the 11th to the 16th century. In 1924 the monastery added decided to revive this tradition with a play appropriate to the baroque style of the church. His choice was "The Great Theater of the World" by Pedro Calderon de la Barca,

a 17th-century Spanish poet, playwright and priest.

CALDERON portrays God as the stage manager of life's human drama. He directs the world to set the stage and to assign the unborn their roles. Each plays his part, from wise man to fool, and when the drama is ended, God judges each actor not on the role but on how well it was played.

The play is normally performed every five years, but to mark the 300th anniversary of Calderon's death, it will run from June 20 to Sept. 26, 1981. A new translation, emphasizing the relevance of Calderon's certainties to the confusions of today, has been made by the play's artistic director, Hans Gerd Kuebel.

ABC dramatizes life of Mother Seton

The lives of saints are not the usual stuff of prime-time TV drama. A rare exception is "A Time for Miracles," the story of Mother Seton, first native-born American saint, airing Sunday, Dec. 21, at 9-11 p.m. (EST) on ABC.

The dramatization faithfully portrays the major incidents and accomplishments in the life of Elizabeth Bayley Seton (1774-1821). A widow with five young children, the socially prominent Mrs. Seton was ostracized by family and friends when she became a Catholic convert.

Far better educated than most women of the time, she was invited by the bishop of Baltimore to establish a Catholic day school and found an order of nuns to teach in it. Mother Seton devoted the rest of her life to the American Sisters of Charity and the ideals of Catholic education.

A considerable achievement of the program, scripted by Henry Denker and directed by Michael O'Herrily, is its re-creation of the historical context that made Mother Seton a vital force in the growth of an immigrant

church. At the time Catholics were regarded with suspicion, if not hostility, by the majority of Americans.

"A Time for Miracles," is a biographical introduction to a woman who changed

her world and continues to influence our own. If the program does nothing more than motivate some viewers to learn more about this American saint, it more than deserves its place on the prime-time schedule.

In the fall of 1980 the world Synod of Bishops met in Rome to consider the needs and problems of the Catholic family today. NBC News correspondent, Floyd Kalber, was there to talk with some of the bishops about "The Family in a Changing World," airing Sunday, Dec. 21, at 5-6 p.m. (EST) on NBC.

Sunday, Dec. 21, 10-11 p.m. (EST) (PBS) "A Christmas Special with Luciano Pavarotti." Taped in Montreal's majestic Notre Dame Cathedral, Pavarotti's operatic voice highlights this program of Christmas music, featuring the boys choir, Les Petits Chanteurs du Mont-Royal, and the adult choir, Les Disciples de Massenet.

Sunday, Dec. 21 (ABC) "Directions"—ABC News presents "The World of Jesus Christ: A Christmas Celebration," a look at the meaning of Jesus Christ's life to people around the world. Emyln Williams narrates the nativity story and early years of Jesus' life. Please check local listings for exact time in your area.)

Sunday, Dec. 21, (CBS) "For Our Times"—In the second program on the Bible, "For Our Times" looks at changes in language, style and form. Biblical scholars—Bruce Metzger of Princeton University, Robert Cook of Kings Col-

lege and Madeleine Boucer of Fordham University—join CBS News correspondent, Douglas Edwards, in a discussion of the latest linguistic changes in the Bible. (Please check local listings for exact time in your area.)

Tuesday, Dec. 23, 9-11 p.m. (EST) (CBS) "Aunt Mary." Jean Stapleton stars in a true-life drama about a Baltimore woman who ignored severe physical handicaps to become a sandlot baseball coach in a repeat broadcast of a Christopher Award winner.

Wednesday, Dec. 24, 9-11 p.m. (EST) (PBS) "The Messiah." The 300-member Oratorio Society of Utah performs Handel's "Messiah" with guest conductor Sandoz Salgo in a broadcast from Salt Lake City's Mormon Tabernacle.

Wednesday, Dec. 24, 11:30 p.m. (EST) (CBS) Christmas Eve special: "Mary, Full of Grace: Images in Art" is a photo essay of religious art showing Mary's place in the life of the church. Filmed at the Cloisters, the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art devoted to the Middle Ages.

Thursday, Dec. 25, 12 a.m. (EST) (NBC) Special: "Christmas Midnight Mass with Pope John Paul II" with the Sistine Choir is televised from Vatican City. Bishop Agnellus Andrew provides the commentary.

Thursday, Dec. 25, 11 a.m. (EST) (ABC) Christmas special: "Pastorika: The Mass of the Shepherds—A Polish-American Christmas" originates from St. Florian Church in Hamtramck, Mich. The Mass celebrates the Polish religious traditions with Christmas carols and hymns in Polish. Father Thaddeus Ozog, pastor, is celebrant.

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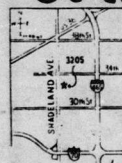
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Viewing with Arnold

'Flash Gordon' pure schlock

by James W. Arnold

If you thought "Flash Gordon" was going to be something like "Star Wars," you're right. It's also something like "The Wizard of Oz," "Superman," "The Black Hole" and even "The Deer Hunter."

Unfortunately, it's also as schlocky as Alex Raymond's original comic strip, and those old Buster Crabbe serials of 1936-40. What it lacks, perhaps, is their inane innocence. What can you say about a movie that tries to be spectacularly dumb? If it succeeds, is that good?

The new "Flash" comes, conceptually at least, from the same folks who did the remake of "King Kong"—producer Dino DeLaurentis and writer Lorenzo Semple, who made his first splash back in the 1960's with the TV "Batman." It's sort of a semi-spoof, meaning that the characters and situations are not only deliberately larger than life in a pop heroic way, but that there are intentional gag lines. E.g., just as the great hall of Mongo is awaiting (abominable!) wedding of heroine Dale Arden and Ming the Merciless, a space ship floats by with a trailing banner: "All creatures will make merry under pain of death."

"Flash" is not a spoof to the extent that the actors, given their stereotyped roles, mostly behave realistically without burlesque, and the big action-and-thrill sequences are in dead earnest.

"Flash" is not as straight as "Star Wars" or "Alien" but it's not a comedy. As a show, though, it definitely falls on the campier side of both "Kong" and "Superman." All this is relevant because it's a mistake:



heroic melodrama should be played to the hilt, and let the laughs fall where they may.

In this version, Flash (blond, muscle-stacked newcomer Sam J. Jones) is a pro football quarterback and Dale (lovely, wholesome, Melody Anderson) is a real estate agent.

THEY happen to be on a plane that crash lands into the laboratory of Dr. Zarkov (Topol) just as that notable scientist is about to blast off to find out who's trying to destroy the earth by disintegrating the moon. The culprit turns out to be Ming, played with oily ruthlessness by Max Von Sydow. (Who cares what Ingmar Bergman thinks?)

While Dale is at the palace fighting off Ming's gorgeous, uninhibited daughter (Ornella Muti) and the enmity of her swashbuckling boyfriend (Timothy Dalton), who runs a nearby planet that seems to be made up mostly of swamps.

Also hovering around is a race of hawkmen led by Voltan (Brian Blessed), a loud-mouthed pirate-type. Eventually, Flash's charm brings all these people together in revolt against Ming's totalitarian empire.

Among the big scenes: a comic ballet brawl in which Flash makes like a football player and runs wild through Ming's clumsy palace heavies; a variation on Russian roulette in which Jones and Dalton take turns sticking their arms into a tree stump inhabited by a monster; a spectacular whip fight on a pit-platform that not only tilts but comes equipped with retractable spikes, and a noisy battle in which the hawkmen invade an imperial space ship.

At the climax, Flash launches a one-man kamikaze attack, diving his ship into the middle of the Ming-Dale nuptials and skewering the villain like a martini olive.

The best that can be said of all this is that it isn't dull.

although the sets and special effects are not always convincing and original. Perhaps the most imaginative episode is the least expensive: a "brain drain" sequence in which Ming's minions empty Zarkov's mind and we watch on TV as his memories flip frantically back through life to the serenity of the womb.

Everything gets a lift from the mind-numbing electronic music of Queen, the very hot rock group ("We Are the Champions," "Another One Bites the Dust"). Melodic it's not, but a refreshing switch from John Williams' symphonic overkill.

AS A family attraction, the film has two standard drawbacks, violence and sex. As in the "Star Wars" series, there is a lot of zapping, but a touch more blood and sadism here. The Mings, both father and daughter, in a mock sexy

tone that doesn't belong here, are allowed to pursue their designs on Dale and Flash well beyond the verbal stage.

The hero and heroine, plus Zarkov, represent a "good guy" humanist morality that impresses the aliens. The funny thing about "humanism" is that it's Judeo-Christian morality, with the religious bases uncredited. But whatever supernatural or magical "force" exists, it belongs to Ming: the gods are malicious.

In any case, the straight-

forward virtue of Dale and Flash is never in doubt. When Flash is hanging in a dungeon about to be executed, she pays a last visit, decked out in a filmy costume as the emperor's latest intended mistress. "Gee, you look great," says Flash. "It's the eye makeup," she says.

(Expensive semi-comic space opera, fast-paced but imitative; satisfactory entertainment, but not for the very young and sensitive.)

NCOMP rating: A-3, morally unobjectionable for adults.

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