



The Second Sunday of Advent

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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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'She is always with us': The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

BY JENNIFER MILLER

For the last 70 years, the presence of Our Lady of Guadalupe was visible everywhere Maria Espinoza lived. From Laredo, Mexico, to East Chicago; New Laredo, Texas, to South Bend, she kept running into the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and living under her protection.

"Everywhere I lived, there is Our Lady — wherever I went. So, either she's following me or I'm following her. It is one of the two. But I think I'm following her," she said, with the knowing smile of a faith-filled life.

As a little girl in Mexico, growing up next door to her grandmother, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church sat kitty-corner to their homes. "My earliest memory of seeing her was at church. The bells would ring three times — the first was a warning bell — and by the third, you should be inside the church!" she remembered.

Her father went to work in East Chicago for years at a steel mill, sending money home to his family on the northern Mexican border town. By the time Espinoza was 5 years old, her mother had had enough and wanted the family to be together; the family applied for papers and Espinoza, her two older brothers and younger 3-year-old sister moved to cold, snowy Illinois.

Espinoza found herself adapting to a new culture and learning a new language. But one thing was the same: Her family lived



Joe Romie

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades prepares to bless with holy water an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas, at St. Joseph Church, Fort Wayne, on her feast day last year. Novenas and celebrations to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe are underway in many parishes of the diocese and will culminate on Dec. 12.

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Nation mourns death of 41st president, recalls his life, legacy

BY JULIE ASHER

WASHINGTON (CNS) — When he was running for re-election in 1992, President George H.W. Bush told Catholic News Service that he believed that a strong religious faith could provide "an extra shot

of strength when you need it."

"I don't believe you can be president without having faith. I really strongly feel that," Bush said in a telephone interview that October as he flew en route from a campaign appearance in Kentucky to scheduled stops in Florida.

That religious faith which sus-

tained him and his family and was clearly evident during his years in the White House — and more recently as he mourned the April 17 death of his beloved wife of 73 years, Barbara — is being noted by many in paying tribute to his life and legacy after his death late Nov. 30 at age 94 at his

home in Houston.

His spokesman, Jim McGrath, confirmed the death of the former president in a tweet. The cause of his death was not immediately available, but he had been in failing health the last few years. In

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PUBLISHER: Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Editorial Department

PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Jodi Marlin

PAGE DESIGNER: Francie Hogan

BRAND SPECIALIST: Molly Gettinger

NEWS SPECIALIST: Mark Weber

Business Department

BUSINESS MANAGER: Stephanie A. Patka

BOOKKEEPING/CIRCULATION: Geoff Frank
circulation@diocesefwsb.org

Advertising Sales

Jackie Parker

jparker@diocesefwsb.org

Website: www.todayscatholic.org

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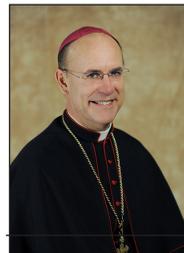
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O Mary, Conceived without Sin, Pray for Us Who Have Recourse to Thee



IN TRUTH AND CHARITY

BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

The following is a portion of a homily delivered by Bishop Rhoades at the annual Mass for the St. Vincent de Paul Society of South Bend on Nov. 27.

Today is the Feast of the Miraculous Medal. It's not a feast on the universal calendar of the Church, but I believe it is a feast of Vincentians. Your founder, Blessed Frederic Ozanam, had a beautiful devotion to the Blessed Mother, a devotion that was especially influenced by the appearance of Mary to St. Catherine Laboure, whose feast day is tomorrow. Our Lady appeared to St. Catherine Laboure in the motherhouse chapel of the Daughters of Charity in Paris on this day, Nov. 27, in the year 1830, three years before Blessed Frederic founded the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

What did St. Catherine Laboure see in that vision of Our Lady? She saw Mary standing on half a globe, holding a golden globe in her hands as an offering to heaven. On the globe in her hand was the word "France." Our Lady explained that the globe represented the whole world, but especially France. Times were difficult in France then, particularly for the poor and unemployed, who were often refugees from war. France was first to experience many of the troubles that ultimately reached the rest of the world and remain even today. I don't think it was a coincidence that Our Lady appeared in Paris, a city of miserable poverty and suffering, the city where in that same year, 1830, and in that very same month, November, Blessed Frederic moved to begin his studies at the Sorbonne, the University of Paris.

The vision that St. Catherine had of Mary then changed to show Our Lady with arms outstretched with dazzling rays of light streaming from her fingers. Our Lady told Catherine that the rays symbolize the graces she obtains for those who request them. Framing the figure was this inscription: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee." On the front side of the Miraculous Medal, Mary is standing on a globe, crushing the head of a serpent beneath her feet. Satan and all his followers are helpless before the Our Lady, the Queen of heaven and earth.

On the back side of the Miraculous Medal is a large M, standing for Mary. From the M a cross rises, symbolizing Christ and our redemption. The weaving of the M and the cross together shows Mary's close involvement with Jesus and her part in our salvation. Twelve stars encircle the M and cross, recalling the vision of St. John in the book of Revelation of a woman clothed with the sun, who has on her head a crown of 12 stars. Below the M and cross are two hearts with flames arising from them: one encircled in thorns, representing the Sacred



The front and back sides of the Miraculous Medal.

Catholicism.org

Heart of Jesus and His love for us, the other the Immaculate Heart of Mary pierced by a sword, representing the love of Mary for us.

The Blessed Virgin Mary asked St. Catherine Laboure to have this medal struck. She promised that those who wear it will receive great graces, especially if they wear it around the neck. The first medals were cast in 1832 and distributed. Among the first to wear the Miraculous Medal were the founding members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Blessed Frederic carried the Miraculous Medal with him during his whole life. The devotion to the Miraculous Medal spread like wildfire. Millions were distributed within a few years. When I think of the blessings that Mary promised to shower upon those who wore her medal, I think of the blessing of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, founded at that very time.

I wish to encourage you to learn from and imitate the Marian devotion of Blessed Frederic Ozanam and of St. Vincent de Paul. In less than two weeks we will be celebrating the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the feast day of our diocese and our nation, and also the feast day of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Blessed Frederic insisted that the society take Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception as its patroness. This was even before Pope Pius IX proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in 1854.

I also recommend wearing the Miraculous Medal as a reminder of Mary's loving protection and as your model as Vincentians. Like Mary, we are called to give ourselves to God through service of our neighbor. St. Vincent de Paul offered Mary's generosity and compassion in her visit to her cousin Elizabeth as our model of service to the poor.

St. Catherine Laboure was part of the Vincentian family. She was a Daughter of Charity in Paris, the religious community of sisters founded by St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise de Marillac. It was a community devoted to the service of the poor. After St. Catherine Laboure received the apparitions

and worked to carry out Mary's instructions regarding the spreading of the Miraculous Medal, she spent the next 46 years of her life in a desolate suburb northeast of Paris in dedicated and compassionate care of the elderly sick and poor. People didn't know she was the one who had received the vision of the Miraculous Medal until soon before her death. Because of her humility, she is often called the "Saint of Silence." Humility is one of the virtues of Vincentian spirituality. You are called to serve the Lord with humility, like Mary, not seeking praise and attention for your good works. The humble St. Catherine Laboure is a good model for us.

I end this homily with the little prayer inscribed on the front side of the Miraculous Medal, a prayer that we can say often, asking for Our Lady's intercession for ourselves and for the society: "O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary

The solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, Dec. 8, falls on a Saturday this year, but as the patronal feast of the United States, it remains a holy day of obligation.

All Masses for the Second Sunday of Advent, Dec. 9, beginning after 4 p.m. Saturday, will use the prayers and readings for the Second Sunday of Advent. Attending Mass on Saturday evening can fulfill either the Immaculate Conception obligation or the Sunday obligation, but not both. The two obligations must be fulfilled separately.

Some may wish to go to Saturday evening Mass to fulfill the holy day obligation, then go to Sunday Mass to fulfill the Sunday obligation; or instead attend Mass on Friday, Dec. 7, after 4 p.m. to fulfill the Immaculate Conception obligation and then a Saturday evening or Sunday Mass to fulfill the Sunday obligation.

Advent is time of vigilance and prayer, pope says

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christians can turn Christmas into a “pagan” or “mundane” holiday by focusing on the gifts and the tree rather than on the birth of Jesus and His promise to come again, Pope Francis said.

Celebrating the beginning of Advent Dec. 2 with the recitation of the Angelus prayer and at morning Mass in the Domus Sanctae Marthae the next day, the pope focused on the attitudes of vigilance and prayer that should characterize the Advent season and preparations for Christmas.

“If we think of Christmas in a consumeristic climate, looking at what we can buy to do this or that, as a mundane holiday, then Jesus will pass by and we will not find Him,” the pope said before reciting the Angelus with an estimated 20,000 people in St. Peter’s Square.

In the day’s Gospel reading from the 21st chapter of Luke, Jesus tells His disciples to be careful that their hearts “not become drowsy,” but to “be vigi-

lant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man” at the end of time.

“Be vigilant and pray — this is how to live this time from today until Christmas,” the pope said.

The drowsy heart described in the Gospel, he said, is a condition that comes from focusing exclusively on oneself, “one’s problems, joys and pains,” continually circling back around one’s own life.

“This is tiring, boring and closes off hope,” he said, while “Advent calls us to make a commitment to watchfulness, looking outside ourselves, expanding our minds and hearts to open them to the needs of people, of our brothers and sisters, and to the desire for a new world.”

The new world Christ promised is the desire of “so many people martyred by hunger, injustice and war; it is the desire of the poor, the weak, the abandoned,” he said.

Advent, he said, “is the opportune time to open our hearts and to ask ourselves concrete ques-

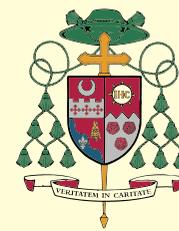
tions about how we spend our lives and for whom.”

Christians must hold fast to their identity, including at Christmas, by keeping the focus on Jesus and fighting the temptation to “paganize” the Christian feast, he said at the Angelus.

Returning to the theme at Mass Dec. 3, Pope Francis said Christians do well to remember they are not celebrating “the birth of the Christmas tree,” which is a “beautiful sign,” but the birth of Jesus.

“The Lord is born, the redeemer who came to save us is born,” the pope said. Of course, Christmas is a celebration, but “there is always the danger, the temptation to banalize Christmas,” to stop focusing on Jesus and get caught up in “shopping, gifts and this and that.”

Advent, he said, is a time to purify one’s focus, remembering that Jesus came into the world to save people from sin, that each person will stand before Him at the end of his or her life and that Jesus will come again.



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, December 9: 8:30 p.m. — Mass, St. Francis Chapel, University of Saint Francis
 Monday, December 10: 6:30 p.m. — Meeting of World Youth Day Pilgrims, St. Francis Xavier Parish Hall, Pierceton
 Tuesday, December 11: 10:30 a.m. — Advent Day of Recollection for Priests, St. Martin de Porres Church, Syracuse
 Wednesday, December 12: 5 p.m. — Mass with Perpetual Profession of Vows, St. John the Baptist Church, Fort Wayne
 Saturday, December 15: 9 a.m. — Annual Mass and Breakfast for St. Vincent de Paul Society, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, Fort Wayne

Canadian Church using new French translation of Our Father

BY PHILIPPE VAILLANCOURT

QUEBEC CITY (CNS) — French-speaking Canadians will begin using a new translation of the Our Father Dec. 2.

The passage “lead us not into temptation” — that formerly read “do not subject us to temptation” in French — is changed for “do not let us enter into temptation.” The change brings the phrasing closer to its Greek origins and also bears witness to a theological evolution.

“With ‘do not subject us to temptation,’ we had complaints that it’s as if God is the one submitting us to temptation. By saying ‘do not let us enter,’ we are closer to what Jesus says,” explained Bishop Serge Poitras of Timmons, Ontario, a member of the Episcopal Commission of Liturgy and Sacraments, French Sector, of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Several experts believe that the French wording, in use since 1966, was confusing to the faithful.

“Many people didn’t understand. It is God who tempts us?” Bishop Poitras said.

The bishop represents Canada on the international Francophone Episcopal Commission for Liturgical Translations, the same body that was mandated to respond to the Vatican’s request in the early 2000s to rework the French liturgical translation. The work, which saw the adoption of a new official translation of the Bible in 2013, could lead in 2019 to the adoption of a new translation of the Roman Missal.

In Canada, the bishops’ conference decided to follow other

French-speaking countries, including Benin, France and Switzerland, which already use the new translation without waiting for the new missal.

Father Gaetan Baillargeon, former director of the Canadian bishops’ National Liturgy Office, agreed that the translation used for more than 50 years had caused dissatisfaction.

“This was the so-called ecumenical translation. But some Francophone Orthodox communities did not even use it, for example,” he said, stressing that ecumenical relations had to be considered before endorsing the new translation.

Canadian dioceses where French is in use have been explaining the change in recent weeks. In a message addressed to parishioners in early November, Bishop Andre Gazaille of Nicolet, Quebec, wrote that the new version “better reflects the spirit of the prayer taught by Jesus to his disciples.”

Greek Gospels in hand, Alain Gignac, director of the University of Montreal’s Institute of Religious Studies, explained that the phrase, found in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, can be translated literally by “let us not go in the direction of temptation.”

He said the Our Father was constructed borrowing from both Gospels.

“Originally, it’s an oral tradition that is neither from Luke nor Matthew ... First in Aramaic, then translated into Greek, then into Latin, the Our Father that we pray today draws from these



CNS photo/Giuseppe Lami, EPA

The Christmas tree is seen as Pope Francis leads the Angelus prayer from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Dec. 2. The pope lit an Advent candle as he launched the Christmas campaign, “Candles for Peace in Syria,” an initiative of Aid to the Church in Need.

PRAYER, from page 3

two evangelists," he said. The prayer attributed to Jesus has several differences of one Gospel to another, he added.

Gignac welcomed the new translation while recalling its limits.

"We must give up on retracing the exact Our Father that came out of the mouth of Jesus," he said.

Liturgy, Bishop Poitras explained, borrows from Hebrew, Greek and Latin, which remains the official language of the church. In translating the Bible, liturgists consider the original language as well as how it sounds when spoken aloud.

"We are at some distance from the Gospel phrasing. We are indeed in a theological construction," he said.

The modification of the Lord's Prayer is therefore more than a purely linguistic matter; it directly concerns the participation of the faithful during celebrations. In this regard, liturgist Marie-Josée Poire said two of the great objectives of any liturgy remain the active participation of the faithful and its spiritual good.

"Today's liturgy, let's admit it, no longer speaks the language of the majority," Poire said. "So you have to be concerned about liturgical participation in a way that people are not just attendees, but participants."

Poire, who is responsible for a liturgical and sacramental formation program for Canadian dioceses, believes the adoption of the new wording of the Lord's Prayer can be an opportunity to reflect on the status of the prayer for Christians.

"The Our Father builds an image of God. A passage like this ('do not let us enter into temptation') can be an opportunity for reflection for communities or families on its underlying image of God," she said.

"Does the image of a God who wants

to tempt his children match what the Gospel proclaims? The (translation) issue may seem trivial, but ... it shapes our image of God. The ritual builds the person. The Our Father builds our faith, and our way of living our faith."

Philippe Vaillancourt is editor-in-chief of Presence info, based in Montreal.

"We must give up on retracing the exact Our Father that came out of the mouth of Jesus."

ALAIN GIGNAC, DIRECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTREAL'S INSTITUTE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES



CNS photo/Philippe Vaillancourt, Presence

A man walks across the "Rosary Bridge" in 2017 at the shrine of Cap-de-la-Madeleine in Trois-Rivieres, Quebec. In Canada, the new French translation of the Our Father took effect Dec. 2.

U.N. migration pact seeks to promote dialogue, Vatican official says

BY JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVES

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A Vatican official said an intergovernmental pact can help countries address the current migration crisis through dialogue and concrete solutions rather than confrontation and fear.

Jesuit Father Michael Czerny, undersecretary of the Migrants and Refugee Section of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development, said the Catholic Church is doing all that it can to help welcome, protect, promote and integrate migrants in countries where the U.N. Global Compact on Migration is formally adopted.

"The compact has a new

style, a new spirit based on what we have brought," Father Czerny told journalists Nov. 28. "It is our desire to promote dialogue and not confrontation and isolation; to promote a culture of encounter and not let fear decide. This is the problem. If fear is in charge, that is a problem."

Father Czerny was among several experts who spoke about the global compact, which will be formally adopted at an international conference in Marrakesh, Morocco, Dec. 10-11.

Also present were Anne T. Gallagher, president of the International Catholic Migration Commission, and Stephane Jaquemet, policy director for the commission.

The Vatican contributed to the negotiations leading to the agreement and prepared a 20-point action plan that included concrete proposals to help governments improve the situation of migrants and refugees.

The eight-page plan contains proposals "grounded on the church's best practices responding to the needs of migrants and refugees at the grassroots level" and provides "practical considerations which Catholic and other advocates can use, add to and develop in their dialogue with governments toward the global compact."

Through the pastoral action plan, Father Czerny said, the Church shared "the fruit of what we live, of what we do, of what we want and what we dream."

"This is already a step that isn't left within the confines of the church, but we wanted to bring this treasure and this hope within the process of consultation and negotiation," he said.

Father Czerny said the Vatican was pleased to see that the compact not only "reflects on important points in our document, but also the approach, the style and methodology" based on the Church's principles and values.

"If you want this value, here are things that work," he said. "If you want to achieve this goal, here are ways which find that will actually get you to the goal."

The compact's multilateral approach, he added, is an example that countries working together to achieve a common goal "is an indispensable key to solve the problems in the world."

"We are happy for this success in a fragmented world," Father Czerny said.



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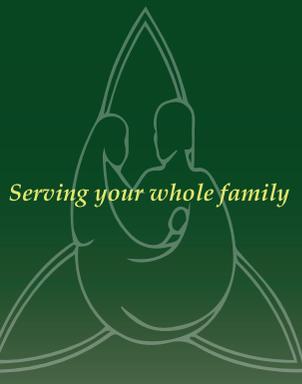
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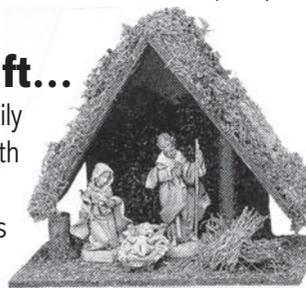


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'Here I am, Lord,' say women at Rejoice retreat

BY STEPHANIE A. PATKA

“In Luke 1:38, when the angel Gabriel comes to Mary and asks her to be the mother of God, Mary answers, ‘Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word.’ In the Hebrew translation, Mary’s reply, ‘Behold’ doesn’t just mean acceptance. Mary’s answer meant an exuberant joyful wish. Mary’s ‘yes’ was an embracing of the will of God with her whole being. And the Lord is longing for us to give Him that same joyful yes: Here I am, Lord.”

With these words, Dr. Mary Healy, keynote speaker for the fourth annual Rejoice Women’s Retreat, opened up the weekend for over 130 women from 36 parishes contemplating the Scripture passage “Nothing Will Be Impossible for God.” The retreat took place at Lindenwood Retreat and Conference Center in Donaldson.

Healy, a professor of sacred Scripture at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, guided retreat participants through stories in both the Old Testament and New Testament in order to dive into the story of Mary’s “yes” and show how women can emulate her trust in God’s plan for their healing, their salvation and the salvation of the entire world.

Nicole Bobay, a parishioner of St. Vincent de Paul, Fort Wayne, and a first-time attendee at the retreat, appreciated the scriptural background that Healy brought to the experience. “As a Scripture scholar, she was so engaging, I was just trying to take in every word and just digest it. It’s nourishing.”

Debbie Blum, a parishioner at Corpus Christi, South Bend, stated that this was her third

year attending the retreat. “I need this weekend in order to fill me back up and give me perspective as I’m going into Advent,” she said. Blum also noted that attending the retreat makes an impact in her work at the parish. “Sometimes you just need to be filled spiritually so that you can go out and give of yourself. That’s what this retreat gives me,” she said.

The theme of healing was another important component of the weekend retreat, something that organizer Jan Torma appreciated.

“I’m just simply grateful to be here. I have journeyed with the Lord in my battle. He is overcoming, and He is healing.” Torma fought an intense battle with cancer over the past year and despite initial negative prognosis reports, she experienced healing. “This walk has been very intense, but very good and very rich and filled with abundant prayer of God’s people, my family, my own personal prayer and a wonderful medical staff,” Torma said.

A healing service took place Saturday night in Ancilla Domini Chapel. It was significant to include healing within the retreat, Torma stated, because “it was a major part of Jesus’s ministry. He came to heal the sick and we are all sick. We all need His healing differently. Mary Healy came to teach us about that and build our faith and strengthen us so that we can move forward in Christ.”

Blum said she had attended healing services before. “We all need different kinds of healing: physically, spiritually and emotionally. You need that shot in the arm. At a healing service, it’s good to just be able to go and be able to rest in the Lord and give Him our fiat.”



Photos by Stephanie A. Patka

Throughout the annual diocesan women’s retreat, the serene Ancilla Domini Chapel, Donaldson, provided the space for the women to have the opportunity for personal prayer and reflection, as well as the sacraments of reconciliation and the Eucharist.

The best part of the retreat for Torma was the community and comradery among the attendees. “I loved being with the women and seeing the Holy Spirit move among us,” she said.

Andrea Kane, from St. Joseph Parish in South Bend, agreed. “I love to make friends. The whole year, I’ve been looking forward seeing the women I met last year. It just creates more unity in the diocese, and that has stayed with me.”

Debbie Green from Corpus Christi keeps returning to the women’s retreat because, she said, “It’s good to see the different people you meet from different parishes. You need a weekend to rejuvenate and there is healing in that. I thought that Healy was very interesting and as a professor, she is teaching us

as well. Healing starts with you and your own family, going on to churches and the world. Your words are very important, they can make and break people.”

At the end of the weekend, Healy encouraged all the retreat participants to remember that as the first evangelist, Mary carried the promise of salvation.

“Women are called to keep this promise alive: the promise that sin and suffering are not the last word, that God will have final victory.” She gave three examples of how women can keep the promise alive, namely by bearing children, bearing suffering with great love and by bearing the Good News to others. “What’s most important here is not just bringing the Good News in the form of words. While words are extremely important

and while we do have an obligation to use them to spread the Gospel, what is important is to have a heart overflowing with the Holy Spirit,” Healy continued. “Like Mary, we are pregnant with Jesus within us, and when we give birth to His light in the world — we make Him present in the world around us. This is exactly what we are called to do.”

Fourth-year attendee Kathleen Black, a parishioner at Corpus Christi, enjoyed the orthodoxy of the weekend’s speakers.

“They are top-notch every time. I like the time with my friends and meeting people from other parishes who are sharing different experiences together. The speakers are wonderful, because they share insights that we can take back home.”



Retreat participants extended their hands in prayer over Dr. Mary Healy as the final talk of the retreat begins.



At right, Healy weaves together the salvific nature of Mary’s ‘yes’ to becoming the Mother of God through stories in the Old and New Testaments.

Forum explores alternatives to use of fetal tissue in medical research

WASHINGTON (CNS)

Alternatives to the use of fetal tissue from abortions are already plentiful, asserted one speaker at a Nov. 27 forum on the issue hosted by the Heritage Foundation think tank in Washington. "There are alternatives that exist that we can use," said Tara Sander Lee, an associate scholar at the Charlotte Lozier Institute — the research arm of the Susan B. Anthony List — at the forum. What's more, Lee added, "there are so many ethical alternatives." The acquisition of fetal tissue has become a \$100 million industry, according to one 2017 estimate. Lee, who has a doctorate in biochemistry, cited the case of Advanced Bioscience Resources, which she said has been referred to the federal Department of Justice for profiteering. Advanced Bioscience Resources, according to Lee, obtained 20-week-old fetus from an abortion clinic in June 2014 and paid \$60. It then sold the fetus' brain, eyes, liver, thymus and lungs to five different customers, charging \$2,275 in all for the specimens, plus added charges for shipping, disease screening, cleaning and freezing. "Service fee, or profit?" Lee asked. "The human body is amazing and has a lot of tissues and organs that are available right now from the adult and pediatric population," Lee said. "They can come from living individuals as well as post-mortem" rather than from aborted fetuses, she added.

Sacramento Catholic schools welcome students displaced by fires for free

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Once the California wildfires were contained — after burning for more than two weeks and ravaging the town of Paradise and nearby neighborhoods — those displaced by the raging fires began the process of resuming their lives. The Camp Fire, the nation's deadliest fire in the past 100 years, killed 88 people and left nearly 200 unaccounted for. It also scattered local residents far and wide, with some living with family or friends nearby and others in makeshift shelters or tent cities. Schools were closed in Butte County from Nov. 8 when the fire started until after Thanksgiving when the fire was contained. Getting students back to school is just one of the monumental tasks ahead for the region with displaced families and closed schools. In Paradise, eight of nine public schools were destroyed as were two of six charter schools. There are no Catholic schools in Paradise, but Catholic schools in the Diocese of Sacramento have opened their

Service commemorates life, faith of today's martyrs



CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn

People attend a vespers service, "A Night of Witness," for persecuted Christians Nov. 28 in the Crypt Church at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. Catholic churches throughout the world were bathed in soft red light that evening to honor martyrs and mark the "Courage in Red — Stand Up for Faith and Religious Freedom" campaign sponsored by Aid to the Church in Need. In the last two years, some 22 members of the priesthood, most of them in Mexico and South America, and 82 others have killed in terrorist attacks in Pakistan and Egypt: Most martyrs are killed anonymously, while simply going about their jobs before being caught up in the violence from civil wars and terrorist groups.

doors at six elementary schools and a high school to all students displaced by the fires to attend these schools tuition free for the rest of the year.

Ethicist: Gene-editing human embryos 'a train wreck of a thing to do'

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The revelation in late November that a Chinese researcher had edited genes in human embryos and then implanted them in a woman was "a train wreck of a thing to do," said an ethicist at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. "Normally clinical research proceeds in phases. First, you verify it works in animals, etc. Second, you verify that it's safe. In small things you verify it's effective," said John Brehany, the center's director of institutional relations. "He skipped all that stuff. He says, 'I practiced in animals and human embryos.'

Even the Chinese officials are saying he violated their standards," Brehany told Catholic News Service in a Nov. 30 telephone interview from Philadelphia. "He said he didn't want to be first, he wanted to set an example, but he's toying with human health. He said he practiced on human embryos, so that means he probably destroyed them. He practiced in the context of experimentation." Brehany was referring to He (pronounced "hay") Jiankui, who first revealed his efforts Nov. 26 during an international gene-editing conference in Hong Kong. He learned the gene-editing technique known as CRISPR while doing advanced research at Rice University in Texas. His partner from Rice may face sanctions from the U.S.-based National Institutes of Health depending on the depth of his involvement in the scheme. "CRISPR" stands for "clusters of regularly interspaced short palindromic repeats." This is a specialized region of DNA having two distinct characteristics: the presence of nucleotide repeats and spacers.

Charity head: Ultrationalism threatens believers' religious freedom

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Ultrationalism is the chief reason behind the growing number of countries ranked worse than before on guaranteeing citizens their religious freedom, according to Thomas Heine-Geldern, executive president of Aid to the Church in Need. One example was India's "Hinduistic nationalist approach," Heine-Geldern said, "which leads to condemning everyone who is a non-Hindu a non-Indian. Then comes the discrimination." Aid to the Church in Need is an international papal charity that provides pastoral and humanitarian aid to persecuted and oppressed Christians and supports various church projects in more than 140 countries. The organization's report, "Religious Freedom in the World 2018" — one of the few non-U.S. sources

for unbiased documenting of religious freedom issues — cited the case of 10 Muslims who have been murdered by radical Hindus who are known as "cow vigilantes." Cows are considered sacred in Hinduism. The report was released Nov. 27.

English bishop says miracle of U.S. woman could make Newman a saint

MANCHESTER, England (CNS) — Catholic bishops have expressed hope that Pope Francis will canonize Blessed John Henry Newman in 2019 after Vatican medics said the inexplicable healing of a U.S. mother was a miracle attributable to his intercession. The cardinal was beatified in 2010 by Pope Benedict XVI in Birmingham, England, after the miraculous healing of Boston Deacon Jack Sullivan. Archbishop Bernard Longley of Birmingham said the English and Welsh bishops were informed during their "ad limina" visit to Rome in September that the second miracle needed for the canonization of Blessed Newman had been found. "I understand that the medical board responsible for assessing a second miracle has now delivered a positive assessment to the congregation," he told Catholic News Service in a Nov. 29 email. The archbishop said members of the congregation will meet early next year "to consider the medical board's assessment and to make its own recommendation" to Pope Francis, who will make the final decision and possibly set a date for the canonization ceremony.

Salvadoran human rights office pushes courts to prosecute saint's killer

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The human rights office for the Archdiocese of San Salvador is taking the country's judicial system to task, urging the prompt prosecution of those responsible in the assassination of St. Oscar Arnulfo Romero, calling for an end to "creative" excuses for not doing so. A Nov. 28 statement from Tutela de Derechos Humanos del Arzobispado de San Salvador, the archdiocese's office of human rights, said excuses and barriers have been used for more than 38 years (since St. Romero's assassination) for "not carrying out justice," not just in his killing but in the killing of thousands of Salvadorans, including many Catholics who were murdered, tortured and disappeared during the country's 1980-92 conflict. On Oct. 23, days after the Catholic Church declared Salvadoran Archbishop Romero a saint, a judge in El Salvador issued a capture order for Alvaro Rafael Saravia, a former military captain suspected of killing the religious leader in 1980 as the archbishop celebrated Mass.

Abortion business' progress halted in South Bend

FORT WAYNE — The most recent hearing in an ongoing licensing dispute between Whole Woman's Health Alliance and the Indiana State Department of Health took place Wednesday, Nov. 28. A three-member panel presided at the hearing and decided in favor of the ISDH, ruling that its denial of a license to operate an abortion clinic in South Bend was just.

Jackie Appleman, executive director of St. Joseph County Right to Life, issued the following statement in response to the hearing's outcome, which was distributed by St. Joseph County Right to Life.

"The decision of today's panel is a victory for the women and families of Michiana. Abortion is not wanted or needed in South Bend, and we are pleased to see that the panel upheld the ISDH's initial denial. WWHA's character and failure to disclose information about related clinics, which was the basis of their license denial, is a threat to our community and we applaud the panel for recognizing that. The women of our community can get all the support they need without the life-ending option of the abortions that would have been offered at this clinic. This decision affirms our conviction that all life in our community should be lived and loved."

Whole Woman's Health Alliance applied for the abortion facility license in 2017. The State of Indiana denied the license in January. According to a news release issued by Indiana Right to Life, the denial letter stated: "Based upon the Department's review, the Commissioner finds WWHA failed to meet the requirement that the Applicant is of reputable and responsible character and the supporting documentation provided inaccurate statements and information."

Scholarships reflect sisters' thanks, support nonviolence

NOTRE DAME — Over the past 175 years, the Sisters of the Holy Cross helped establish a rich educational foundation in communities around the world. In honor of the sisters' milestone anniversary, the congregation awarded three \$1,000 scholarships to students in South Bend, as a way to thank those who carry the Holy Cross education tradition forward and to encourage nonviolence as a way of life. The scholarships are particularly meaningful in light of the congregation's corporate stand on nonviolence and the challenge of addressing violence in its many forms.

Sister Joy O'Grady, CSC, Area of North America coordinator, reflected: "Giving a tangible expression of our gratitude and support for our lay associates who continue the educational mission of the Sisters of the Holy

AROUND THE DIOCESE

'Choose Love' comes to St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School



Provided by Lois Widner

Trey Mock, the Indianapolis Colts' mascot, Blue, visited St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Fort Wayne the week of Nov. 26 to share a program called "Choose Love." Mock removed the mascot costume and encouraged the middle school students to treat others with respect, love and compassion every day. He shared personal experiences, including how his life has changed for the better by choosing love and respect. He is pictured in a blue baseball cap surrounded by some of the eighth-grade students.

Sisters sing at National Christmas Tree Lighting

BY MARK PATTISON

WASHINGTON (CNS) — To hear the voices of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist from Michigan in Washington, the best bet was to listen to them sing at the National Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony on the Ellipse outside the White House late Nov. 28.

Ahead of the ceremony, the sisters had turned down all media requests for interviews about their planned performance, according to their publicist, Monica Fitzgibbons.

Because they had received so many interview requests, she said, they didn't want to appear as if they're playing favorites by OKing one media outlet while turning down another.

For those unable who were unable to attend the evening event in person, a one-hour special of highlights culled from the ceremony will be shown Dec. 2 on both the Ovation and Reelz cable channels at 10 p.m. EST.

After being introduced as our "very own caroling angels," the 14 sisters assembled in Washington



CNS photo/Jim Young, Reuters

U.S. President Donald Trump and first lady Melania Trump participated in the 96th annual National Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony near the White House in Washington.

sang the Christmas classic "Carol of the Bells."

What they had planned to sing was being kept a secret until the day of the ceremony, Fitzgibbons told Catholic News Service in a Nov. 27 telephone interview from Naples, Florida, home to the DeMontfort Music record label, which releases the nuns' music.

The order hit the top spot on the Billboard classical music charts a year ago with their

third album, "Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring: Christmas With the Dominican Sisters of Mary." In fact, it was that CD that won them a spot to perform during the ceremony.

"I've been in the music business for a long time, and the promoter was a friend of a friend," Fitzgibbons said. "They had the Christmas album out. ... This is put on by the National Parks (Service), so I submitted it that

Cross seemed like a perfect way to celebrate the 175th anniversary."

Students interested in receiving the scholarship were asked to respond to the following questions: What does nonviolence mean to you? How does standing for nonviolence make a difference in your life and the lives of others? How do you see yourself promoting nonviolence in your family, neighborhood, school and in online/social media spaces?

The scholarship process was developed by a planning committee that included seven sisters, many of whom had ministered in the area's Catholic schools. A scholarship was awarded to one sixth- or seventh-grade student at each of the three local Catholic grade schools that the Sisters of the Holy Cross helped establish: St. Joseph, Holy Cross and Christ the King.

Advent parish mission with John Angotti and Kevin Matthews

FORT WAYNE — St. Vincent de Paul will have a parish mission on Wednesday, Dec. 5, and Thursday, Dec. 6, at 6:30 p.m. in the church, 1502 E. Wallen Rd. The Incarnation — Integrating scripture and music with John Angotti will be on Wednesday, Dec. 5, at 6:30 p.m. The story of broken Mary — A witness on healing with Kevin Matthews and Angotti will be Thursday, Dec. 6, at 6:30 p.m. Then, celebrate the Vigil Mass of The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary at 4 and 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 7. Vigil Masses will offer liturgical music by Angotti.

way." It was so long ago, she admitted, "I just forgot about it."

"They're not Beyonce, they're just kind of doing this and want to put Christ in Christmas," Fitzgibbons added. "Can you imagine Christmas without Christmas music?"

Asked how they got from their motherhouse in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to the nation's capital, Fitzgibbons replied, "The National Parks flew them in. ... They're 'Nuns on the Plane.' They had no choice. That's what was offered to them. They live in poverty, so it was the National Parks that arranged for their transportation."

Although teaching is the order's charism, the Dominican Sisters of Mary have issued two other chart-topping CDs, "Mater Eucharistiae" and "Rosary: Mysteries, Meditations and Music." They also have published three journals, "Advent Journal, Mother of Life," "And the Word Became Flesh" and "Life of Christ Lectio Divina Journal."

More about the Dominican Sisters of Mary Mother of the Eucharist, can be found online at www.sistersofmary.org.

FESTIVITIES

Celebrations of the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, renditions of the “Mañanitas” by mariachi musicians, and Mexican food and

Warsaw: Our Lady of Guadalupe

- Dec. 3-10
5:30 p.m. Novena Mass, reflection and rosary
Dec. 11
10:30 p.m. Rosary
11 p.m. Vigil Mass
Dec. 12
5:30 p.m. Mass followed by folkloric dancers

South Bend: Our Lady of Hungary

- Dec. 12
5 p.m. Rosary, Mass, dancers and fiesta

South Bend: St. Adalbert

- Dec. 3-11
6 p.m. Novena in the chapel
Dec. 11
11:15 p.m. Rosary, Mañanitas and Mass
Dec. 12
5:30 p.m. Dancers, serenade, Mañanitas, Mass

GUADALUPE, from page 1

down the alleyway from a church whose name and patroness were Our Lady of Guadalupe. Our Lady's proximity brought her great consolation as Espinoza adapted to American life. She remembers looking around her new kindergarten classroom, shyly watching all the children happily play, as her teacher spoke to her in English. Espinoza answered, “No sé,” or “I don't know,” to all her questions, which led the teacher to place her in a special education classroom. Her father found out and had her moved back to the main classroom with a translator, who taught Maria directly until she learned English. Espinoza did well in school and quickly began interpreting for her parents. The family grew.

HONOR OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

Our Lady of Guadalupe will include Masses, re-enactments of Mary's apparitions to St. Juan Diego, birthday song traditionally sung to Our Lady of Guadalupe, performances by folkloric dancers and mariachi and music. All are welcome to attend the events, which take place across the diocese.

Angola: St. Anthony of Padua

Dec. 12
5 a.m. Mañanitas
4 p.m. Procession, Mass and fiesta

Bremen: St. Dominic

Dec. 3-11
6 p.m. Novena
Dec. 9
11 a.m. Re-enactment followed by Mass, dancers and reception
Dec. 12
6 p.m. Mass followed by reception

Elkhart: St. Vincent de Paul

Dec. 3-11
Varies Rosary in parishioners' homes
Dec. 8
4 a.m. Rosary followed by Mañanitas and re-enactment
Dec. 12
6 p.m. Mass

Fort Wayne: St. Patrick

Dec. 12
5 a.m. Mañanitas followed by Mass

Fort Wayne: St. Joseph

Dec. 12
5:30 a.m. Mañanitas followed by reception
6:30 p.m. Mass followed by dinner

Goshen: St. John the Evangelist

Dec. 11
8 p.m. Folkloric dancers, followed by mariachi music
11 p.m. Mass followed by Mañanitas
Dec. 12
6 p.m. Mass followed by re-enactment

Kendallville: Immaculate Conception

Dec. 3-11
6 p.m. Novena
Dec. 12
6:30 p.m. Mañanitas followed by Mass and reception

LaGrange: St. Joseph

Dec. 12
5:30 a.m. Mañanitas
6 p.m. Mass

Ligonier: St. Patrick

Dec. 12
5 p.m. Procession followed by Mass

North Manchester: St. Robert Bellarmine

Dec. 12
6:30 p.m. Mass followed by reception

Plymouth: St. Michael

Dec. 11
11 p.m. Mass, followed by Mañanitas and reception
Dec. 12
7 p.m. Mass followed by dinner in the basement

With one paycheck and 10 children, money was tight. Still their mother cared for them well, knowing how to add rice, potatoes or beans to stretch a pound of meat. The children helped too, and began working in the fields in Lansing, Michigan, and Illinois. Espinoza remembers picking onions first, then tomatoes, green beans, cabbages and cherries, along with regular adult migrant laborers.

In 1967, an accident caused her father to retire, and he moved to Texas. Through it all Espinoza felt Our Lady of Guadalupe's presence, saying, "I am with you."

"She means the world to me. You see, now my Mom is gone, so I pray with her. Every day at 11:30 a.m. to 12, I pray the rosary. If I'm doing something, I stop and ask, wait, what time is it? What time is it? 11:30? OK. Whatever I'm doing, I stop and pray with her."

Espinoza's favorite way to pray the rosary is with Sister Angelica, on TV. The singing of the Hail Mary "hits me every time." Her husband and 2-year-old nephew often join in with her. The first time her young nephew sang, "That touched my heart - that he was singing!" she recalled.

"I tell my seven sisters on the phone, 'Goodbye! It's almost time for the rosary!' The one who is in a different time zone, she forgets. I have to say 'Marta, don't call me between 11:30 and 12,' or 'Call back later.' Praying with her Our Lady of Guadalupe and being a part of Guadalupanas, she is always in my heart."

Espinoza is still learning about Our Lady of Guadalupe. Because she was raised in the U.S., she feels she needs to know more about her and about other Mexican religious and cultural traditions.

A large statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe stands on Espinoza's mantle. The image of Mary, like Espinoza herself, comes from over the border. There are pictures of Our Lady of Guadalupe all over her home as well. "When people come inside, they (see her and) bless themselves. And then look around," she said, imitating wide eyes of surprise, "and they see another, and another!"

Espinoza feels as though Our Lady of Guadalupe's caring presence has been pervasive throughout her life, like a sweet-smelling perfume.

"She is always with us. At the time of sorrow, when you really need help, when I am feeling depressed and down, she was there — calming me down, saying it will be OK. She is something deep in my heart," Espinoza explained in a calm demeanor.

Espinoza is currently the president of the Guadalupana Society at St. Adalbert and St. Casimir parish. The Guadalupanas, or followers of Our Lady of Guadalupe, meet once a month to pray, do good works of charity and are most well-known, for planning for her feast day celebrations. Las Guadalupanas have a faithful presence at wakes too, where they pray a rosary with the parishioner's family and accompany the deceased loved one.



Joe Romie

A woman clutches a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe during a feast day Mass last year at St. Joseph Church, Fort Wayne.

This year is the group's 50th anniversary, so the feast day celebrations will have special significance for Las Guadalupanas.

On the vigil of her feast day, the evening of Dec. 11, the celebration will include traditional dancing by the "matlachines," or Aztec-style folkloric dancers and drummers; "Las Mañanitas," a traditional Mexican birthday song sung in praise and thanksgiving to Our Lady of Guadalupe on her birthday; and a beautiful "Misa" or Mass.

Espinoza has fond memories of Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast day in Mexico, sitting on her family's front porch with her extended family on a chilly December evening as they watched the native dancing and live music, praying with the bishop in the church across the street and enjoying delicious feast day foods such as tacos, corn on the cob and a hot chocolate and oatmeal drink. She hopes to ensure that this authenticity, which has been brought to Sts. Adalbert and Casimir, continues, along with the cultural and spiritual dimensions of a devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe that have now been passed down to the youth — who want to start their own group of matlachines.

Reflecting on her first year as president of the Guadalupanas, Espinoza explained that if it were not for Our Lady of Guadalupe, the work might have been too much. "To tell you the truth, I wouldn't have been able to do it without her prayers, without her being in my life. It would have been easier to say no. But she is right behind me, tapping my shoulder, saying 'Yes, Maria. You can do it! Try.' I just love her!"

Visitors are most important things about shrine, pope says

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — People who visit Catholic shrines must find a place of warmth and welcome, as well as good priests who enjoy being with and listening to the faithful, Pope Francis said.

“It is sad,” he said, whenever visitors arrive and “there is no one there who gives them a word of welcome and receives them like pilgrims who have accomplished a journey, often a long one, to reach the shrine,” and it is even worse if they find the place is closed.

“It cannot happen that more attention is paid to material and financial demands, forgetting that the most important part is the pilgrim. They are the ones who count,” he said.

The pope spoke Nov. 29 to hundreds of priests, religious and laypeople attending the first International Convention of Rectors and Pastoral Worker of Shrines, sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization. The convention, held in Rome Nov. 27-29, focused on the way shrines are “an open door to the new evangelization.”

Pilgrimages and visits to shrines are a key part of popular traditions, and Pope Francis told the group that keeping such popular piety alive was very important.

“It is the immune system of



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis places flowers near a statue of Mary as he prays in the Little Chapel of the Apparitions at the Shrine of Our Lady of Fatima in Portugal May 12, 2017.

the Church. It protects us from many things,” he said.

Welcoming groups and visitors is very important, he said, so make sure they are made to feel “at home, like a family member who has been expected for a very long time and has finally come.”

Sometimes visitors are people who have distanced themselves from the Church, but they made the trip because they are attracted to the shrine’s artistic treasures or its beautiful natural surroundings, the pope said.

“When they are welcomed, these people will become more willing to open their hearts and let them be shaped by grace. A climate of friendship is the fertile seed our shrines can toss on pilgrim soil, allowing them to rediscover that trust in the Church” that might have been lost because of having been met with indifference, he said.

No one must ever feel like a stranger or an “outsider, above all when they get there with the burden of their own sins.”

If the sacrament of reconciliation is offered at a shrine, the priests should be “well-formed, holy, merciful” and able to help the penitent experience “the true encounter with the Lord, who forgives,” he added.

Shrines should be places of prayer, but also a place where an individual can pray in silence, he said. He added that priests serving the shrine must be ministers who love being with and understand the people of God. If not, “the bishop should give him another mission, because he is not suitable for this, and he will suffer greatly, and he will make the people suffer.”

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Finding peace in the sanctuary of the heart — 'Meditations for Advent'

BY JEANNIE EWING

Once a well-known and highly sought-after French philosopher and theologian, Father Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet has become a name unfamiliar to most. In the late 15th century, Father Bossuet memorized the Scriptures and became an eloquent preacher and prolific writer of his time, having mainly studied the works of St. Augustine of Hippo and St. Thomas Aquinas. Several of his most beloved reflections comprise "Meditations for Advent," which was translated from French into English more recently.

Featuring meditations with specific titles, such as "The Creation of the Universe" and "The Fall of Man," readers travel theologically from the beginning of Scripture through the incarnation of Jesus. But Bossuet didn't write in an overly intellectual or academic manner. In fact, he was well-loved precisely because of his ability to powerfully convey dense doctrine with clarity and incredible heartfelt love to

the populace.

Intended to be read from Thanksgiving Day through the Octave of Christmas, readers are introduced to "Meditations for Advent" and Father Bossuet by Father Romanus Cessario, OP, in the introduction. Father Cessario explains both the writing and writer thus: "Here we find the stirring calls to poverty, silence, and simplicity of life within the context of reflections on the Blessed Virgin and — in one of the earliest and most celebrated examples of its kind — a sermon in appreciation of the holy patriarch Saint Joseph."

It is with this simplicity and silence that Father Bossuet's works invite hearts to be moved to interior peace. Peace is the fruit of a mind and heart not cluttered with the distractions of daily living, but rather emptied of self and both ready and willing to welcome God to fill it with thoughts of clarity and devotion.

Perhaps one of the most difficult spiritual fruits to acquire, yet one that is longed for in modern, frenetic society, is peace. It is often elusive, with the constant bombardment of diversions from

various sources of technology. The fast pace of technology spurs the belief that people should operate that way as well.

But Father Bossuet offers a reminder to slow down, regardless of what might have to be given up in a person's holiday schedule. There can be no other way to truly enter into the liturgical season of Advent than by making deliberate attempts to pause, reflect, pray and listen to God. It is why silence sought in times of solitude is sacrosanct, and why it is impossible to attain when one is overscheduled, overworked and overwhelmed.

"Meditations for Advent" beckons all to carve time in their schedules this Advent to rediscover the refreshing gift of God's peace. Each reflection is short — only about a page and a half to two pages long — but full of insight, wisdom and an invitation to become poor in spirit so as to fully welcome Jesus to be born in His faithful in whatever ways He wishes this Christmas.

Consider Bossuet's words in the meditation, "He Has Put Down the Mighty from Their

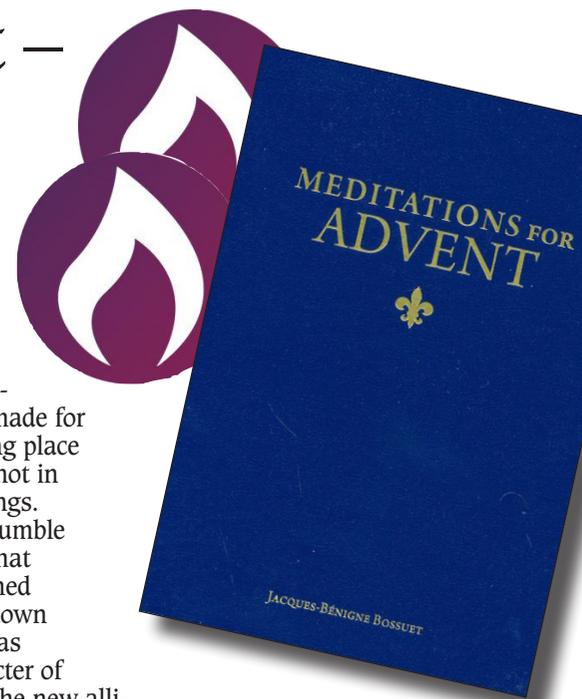
Thrones":

"He raised [Mary] above all others because she declared herself to be the lowest of all creatures. When he made for himself a dwelling place on earth, it was not in the palaces of kings. He chose poor, humble parents and all that the world disdained in order to cast down its pomp. This was the proper character of divine power in the new alliance: to make its virtue felt by its very weakness ... It is when God alone remains great that the souls finds peace."

Journey alongside Father Bossuet in this daily Advent devotional to earnestly ask God to make lowly those who seek Him, as He did Our Lady and St. Joseph; to make them poor and humble, as He made His only Son. God's immense power and strength are made more apparent as people step aside and allow Him to work His greatness through their littleness. As a

result, this Christmas the reader might find himself more fully alive, filled with wonder and awe at the Lord's great love for His children.

"Meditations for Advent" by Bishop Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet Publishing house (Sophia Institute Press, 2012). 173 pp., \$12.95



Pope Benedict XVI's thoughts on Christmas

These quotes and reflections from the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI, are excerpted from "Christmas: Pope Benedict XVI Spiritual Thoughts Series."

Presence

Advent, this powerful liturgical season that we are beginning, invites us to pause in silence to understand a presence. It is an invitation to understand that the individual events of the day are hints that God is giving us, signs of the attention He has for each one of us.

Homily at First Vespers of Advent, November 28, 2009

Waiting

The question is: Is the humanity of our time still waiting for a Savior? One has the feeling that many consider God as foreign to their own interests. Apparently, they do not need Him. They live as though He did not exist and, worse still, as though He were an "obstacle" to remove in order to fulfill themselves. Even among believers — we are sure of it — some let themselves be attracted by enticing dreams and distracted by misleading doctrines that suggest deceptive shortcuts to happiness. Yet, despite its contradictions, worries and tragedies, and perhaps precisely because of them, humanity today seeks a path of renewal, of salvation; it seeks a Savior and awaits, some-

times unconsciously, the coming of the Savior who renews the world and our life, the coming of Christ, the one true Redeemer of man and of the whole of man.

Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience December 20, 2006

Preparation

Christmas is a privileged opportunity to meditate on the meaning and value of our existence. The approach of this solemnity helps us on the one hand to reflect on the drama of history in which people, injured by sin, are perennially in search of happiness and of a fulfilling sense of life and death; and on the other, it urges us to meditate on the merciful kindness of God who came to man to communicate to him directly the Truth that saves, and to enable him to partake in His friendship and His life. Therefore let us prepare ourselves for Christmas with humility and simplicity, making ourselves ready to receive as a gift the light, joy and peace that shine from this mystery.

General Audience, December 17, 2008

Sign

God's sign is His humility. God's sign is that He makes Himself small; He becomes a child; He lets us touch Him and He asks for our love. How we would prefer a different sign, an imposing, irresistible sign of

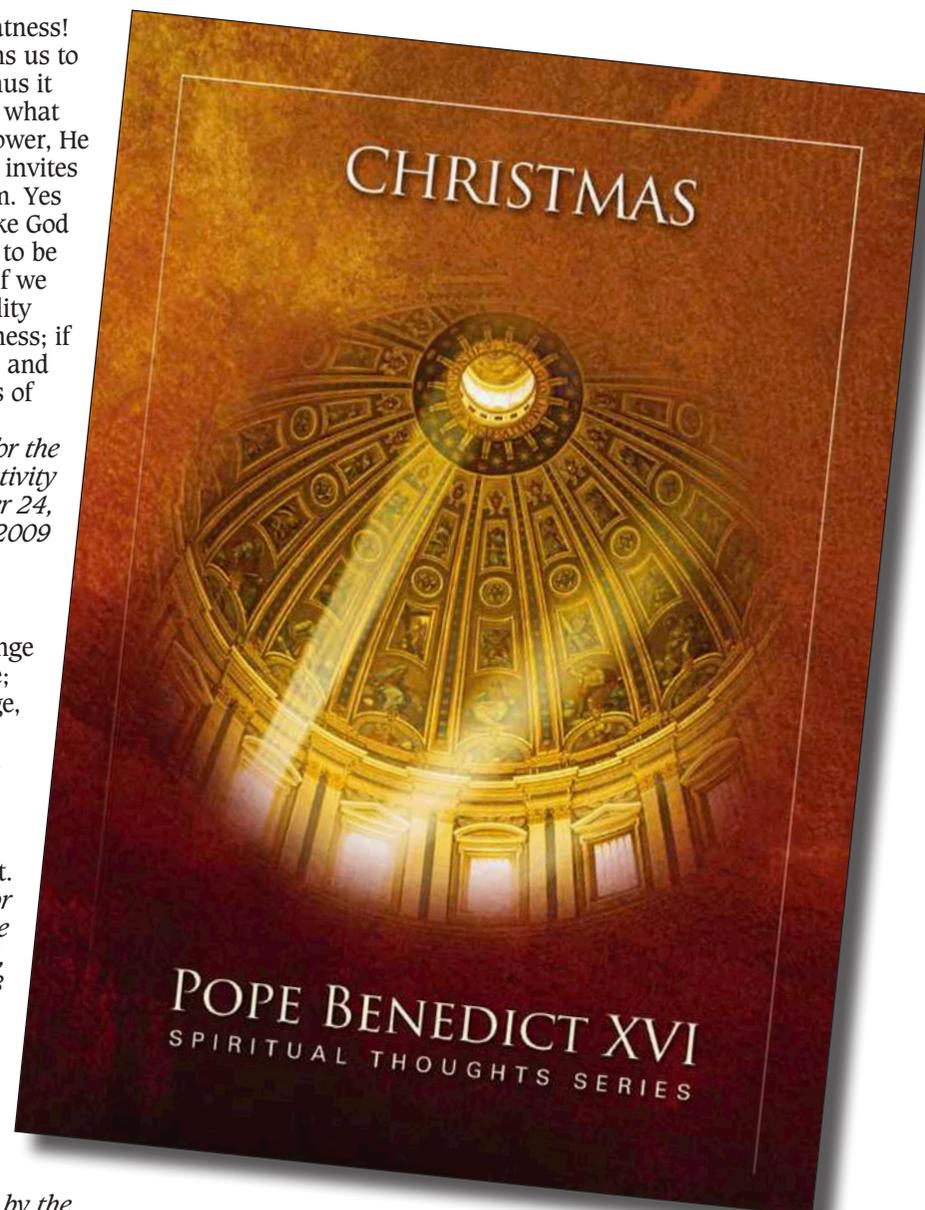
God's power and greatness! But His sign summons us to faith and love, and thus it gives us hope: this is what God is like. He has power, He is goodness itself. He invites us to become like Him. Yes indeed, we become like God if we allow ourselves to be shaped by this sign; if we ourselves learn humility and hence true greatness; if we renounce violence and use only the weapons of truth and love.

Homily at Mass for the solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, December 24, 2009

Changing

Only if people change will the world change; and in order to change, people need the light that comes from God, the light which so unexpectedly [on the night of Christmas] entered into our night.

Homily at Mass for the solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, December 25, 2008



Information provided by the USCCB.

Managing grief during the holidays

It's sometimes hard to face reality, especially when reality includes difficult, dark emotions we aren't used to feeling. Grief often crashes upon our hearts in uncomfortable waves, seemingly out of nowhere. And the holidays, along with other major milestones in our deceased loved ones' lives, draw to the surface those complex, messy thoughts and feelings related to our losses.

I remember the first year Thanksgiving was celebrated differently in my family. My great-grandmother had passed away only a few months before, and my mom and grandpa were too overwhelmed and burdened with their sorrow to even consider putting on a grand feast. Instead, they decided we'd make dinner reservations at a local restaurant, so that we could still enjoy each other's company and a traditional Thanksgiving dinner without the added stress of making everything from scratch.

Our celebration was somber, but memorable. We all agreed that life just wouldn't be the same without "Gigi," but it was also important that we all allowed ourselves and each other the space we needed to feel the hurt and to share what we missed about her.

When we grieve, the nostalgia of Christmases past are but figments of our memories. We're told by our culture to put on smiling faces, set aside our differences and come together without acknowledging the depth of the void we feel. But that's not always easy to do. There are years when you'll feel more like you're having a "blue Christmas" than a white one.

The beauty of our Catholic faith is that we possess the understanding of the theology and gift of redemptive suffering. Even more, we know that

death is not the punctuation at the end of our lives. Rather, we carry the hope that resurrection awaits each of us, especially those who are faithful to God and try their best to live virtuous lives.

We can't know with certainty who is in heaven and who isn't, and that can exacerbate the confusion and restlessness of our grief. But we have the hope of God's incomprehensible mercy, and we also know the value and importance of praying for the dying and deceased.

Though celebrating Christmas may seem cumbersome this year, one way to ease yourself away from the dread is by focusing on Advent instead. (This is actually good for all of us, not just those who grieve.) Advent reminds

Advent reminds us to slow down, rest and simplify — all of which are crucial to those whose grief is new and raw.



GUEST COMMENTARY

JEANNIE EWING

us to slow down, rest and simplify — all of which are crucial to those whose grief is new and raw.

If there's one thing grief does to us, it's nudge us back to the basics of self-care — rest, eating nutritious foods, getting enough water to drink — and evaluating our priorities. When I posed a question on social media about how people coped with their grief during the holidays, many said they appreciated the time they had with their family members who were still with them.

Memorializing your deceased loved ones is also a way to incorporate their memories and legacies into your celebrations. Some told me they purchased a gift that reminded them of their loved one and donated it to charity. Others said they shared stories about their relatives whose famous dish was lovingly prepared for the holiday meal, all while gathered together in the kitchen, recreating the culinary masterpiece.

Sharing stories is the best way to stay focused on what is good about life. Talk about those who have died. Share with each other your favorite memories as you scroll through memory

EWING, page 13

Inspiration from the comics

"America is in mourning. Deep, deep mourning for a man who inspired millions to, I don't know, watch a movie, I guess."

Thus wrote political humorist Bill Maher on the recent death of Stan Lee, beloved creator of the "Marvel Universe" featuring superheroes like The Avengers and Spider-Man. Maher said comic books are for kids, and grown-ups should move on to "big-boy books without the pictures." This complaint is from someone who makes his fortune wisecracking on television.

Maher later added that "a culture that thinks that comic books and comic book movies are profound meditations on the human condition is a dumb (expletive) culture."

My response requires a spoiler alert, as I will comment on the latest episode of the Netflix series "Daredevil," featuring one of Marvel's more complex heroes. Daredevil is the alter ego of attorney Matt Murdock, who was blinded — but had other senses greatly heightened — by a childhood accident.

He is angry over his blindness, the death of his father, his unhappy childhood in a Catholic orphanage and the urban injustices he can't fix legally. He becomes a vigilante by night, with a moral code — based in his Catholic upbringing — against deliberately taking human life.

That code is tested to its limit in Season 3, which begins with Daredevil damaged physically and spiritually by an explosion



A MORE HUMAN SOCIETY

RICHARD DOERFLINGER

that has killed the woman he loved and turned him against God. How he defeats a new threat, finds loving support from friends who refuse to give up on him and recaptures his sense of his own identity and his place in the world is the rest of the story.

In the finale, having prevailed over nearly impossible odds at great cost, he ponders what his parish priest said years ago when he asked how a loving God could make him blind.

"He told me: God's plan is like a beautiful tapestry. And the tragedy of being human is that we only get to see it from the back, with all the ragged threads and the muddy colors. And we only get a hint of the true beauty that would be revealed if we could see the whole pattern on the other side — as God does." If not for his accident, he would never have become Daredevil and saved the lives he has been able to save.

"So, maybe it is all part of God's plan," he concludes. "Maybe my life has been exactly as it had to be."

Daredevil is not the only Marvel hero reflecting on the human condition.

DOERFLINGER, page 13

Joy and peace prevail where Jesus reigns



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Second Sunday of Advent Luke 3:1-6

The Book of Baruch, the source of this Advent's weekend first biblical reading, is relatively brief, only five chapters. It also is among the books called by Protestants scholars the Apocrypha, by Catholics the Deutero-Canonical. As such it does not appear in the King James Version of the Bible and some other translations that rely upon the thinking that led to the selection of books for inclusion in the King James edition.

It is not found in Jewish translations of the Scriptures. Indeed, while some of the ancient Fathers of the Church knew about and

quoted Baruch, St. Jerome did not include it in his translation of the Bible, the Vulgate.

For Catholics, however, most important is the fact that the Church long ago officially recognized it as divine revelation.

Regardless, when Baruch was written, great problems beset God's people — not a rare circumstance. This book encouraged those who were suffering, reassuring them that God would not forsake them, and that God's justice and mercy would prevail in the end.

Always, in good times or bad, some people were lukewarm in their religious devotion. Baruch calls the indifferent to piety.

The Epistle to the Philippians furnishes the next reading. Sent as a letter to the Christians of Philippi, an important city in the ancient Roman Empire, the epistle urges the Philippians loyal to the Lord to be steadfast in their faith, come what may, until the second coming of Jesus.

As often predicted elsewhere in the New Testament, this reading says that one day, but at a

time unknown, Jesus definitely will come again in triumph and judgment. Evil finally will be defeated once and for all.

St. Luke's Gospel is the source of the last reading. This reading centers upon Jesus, although highly visible in the reading is John the Baptist. Carefully constructed, the Gospel presents the coming of Jesus as uniquely important in the course of human affairs.

The Lord's coming was so important, in fact, that preceding this coming was the proclamation of God's majesty and of human responsibility before God, and to God, by John the Baptist.

John was a prophet and a holy man. Ancient Jews thought that holiness gave persons special wisdom. God used such persons to reveal truth to other humans. Through John, God was revealing the person and mission of Christ.

Also, to emphasize the importance of the Lord's coming, this Gospel takes pains in setting the presence of John and the coming

of Christ at an exact moment in history, namely by stating that it all occurred when Tiberius was emperor, Pilate his governor in Palestine and so on. Jesus came in human time and space.

He came, in God's mercy, as fulfilling the hopes of the prophets of old who had yearned for the redeemer who would destroy evil and death. When this messiah would come, all would be made right. The rough ways for people would be made smooth. Now, as John the Baptist declared with such conviction, the Redeemer at last had come.

Reflection

When Baruch was written, times were bad for the Jews. When Philippians and the Gospel of Luke were written, times were hard for Christians.

On this Second Sunday of Advent, the Church speaks to us. Times are hard. Bloodshed has come to be common. So has addiction. Today's drift from God is spinning a deadly web. Sin

still cripples us and dooms us to eternal death.

All will be right, joy and peace will prevail, however, if we admit Jesus into our lives. He will come to us, but we must invite the Lord into our lives sincerely, by reforming ourselves, by renouncing sin and by giving ourselves totally to God.

The call of John the Baptist is spoken to us.

READINGS

Sunday: Bar 5:1-9 Ps 126:1-6 Phil 1:4-6 Lk 3:1-6

Monday: Is 35:1-10 Ps 85:9ab-14 Lk 5:17-26

Tuesday: Is 40:1-11 Ps 96:1-3, 10a-c, 11-13 Mt 18:12-14

Wednesday: Zec 2:14-17 (Ps) Jdt 13:18b-19 Lk 1:26-38

Thursday: Is 41:13-20 Ps 145:1, 9-13ab Mt 11:11-15

Friday: Is 48:17-19 Ps 1:1-4, 6 Mt 11:16-19

Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11 Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 Mt 17:9a, 10-13

On the loss of faith as a cause of our current crisis

In the Liturgy of the Hours last week, we read a remarkable (sic) attributed to St. Macarius, a bishop of the early Church. I marvel at its vivid imagery, and yet at the same time, questions arise in my mind as to the general application of the text. In effect, the text states that if the soul does not have Christ living within, it falls into utter disrepair and a contemptible state.

Allow me to have Bishop Macarius speak for himself, after which I would like to pose a few questions.

“When a house has no master living in it, it becomes dark, vile and contemptible, choked with filth and disgusting refuse. So too is a soul which has lost its master, who once rejoiced there with his angels. This soul is darkened with sin, its desires are degraded, and it knows nothing but shame.

“Woe to the path that is not walked on, or along which the voices of men are not heard, for then it becomes the haunt of wild animals. Woe to the soul if the Lord does not walk within it to banish with his voice the spiritual beasts of sin. Woe to the house where no master dwells, to the field where no farmer works, to the pilotless ship, storm-tossed and sinking. Woe to the soul without Christ as its true pilot; drifting in the darkness, buffeted by the waves of passion, storm-tossed at the mercy of evil spirits, its end is destruction. Woe to the soul that does not have Christ to cultivate it with care to produce the good fruit of the Holy Spirit. Left to itself, it is choked with thorns and thistles; instead of fruit it produces only what is fit for burning. Woe to the soul that does not have Christ dwelling in it; deserted and foul with the

filth of the passions, it becomes a haven for all the vices” (St. Macarius, bishop, Hom. 28: pp. 34, 710-711).

This is a remarkably vivid, creative description of the soul without Christ, of one who has turned aside from the faith. To be sure, St. Macarius speaks in a general way. Each person’s personal journey will be affected by many factors: how absolute his rejection of the faith is, how influenced he is for better or worse by the people and culture around him, how operative he has allowed their natural virtues to be and so forth. Hence, we ought not to simplify the lives of unbelievers. They come in many forms and degrees.

If we apply St. Macarius’ teaching to the sexual scandal currently rocking the Church worldwide, we can note that one of the causes rightly assigned to it is a loss of faith. How is it possible for a man who once consecrated himself to God and who daily celebrates the sacred mysteries of the sacraments to so violate the Sixth Commandment and his promise of celibacy? In many cases this is not a one-time fall in weakness but a repeated action. How can a cleric live such a double life? Somewhere this man has lost the faith, either substantially or totally. As his sinful notions harden and his rationalizations grow, surely his soul darkens. As St. Macarius notes, the Holy Spirit cannot bring forth fruits in a soul in which mortal sin goes on unconfessed, and woe to the soul no longer indwelt by Christ. The filth of sin and the darkness of denial grow ever worse. This is why we must pray for the conversion of sinners: “O My Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell, especially those in most need of thy mercy.”



COMMUNITY IN MISSION

MSGR. CHARLES POPE

We see this also in the wider culture, where many live openly in sin and irregularity. Abortion, fornication, cohabitation, homosexual acts, rampant divorce and assisted suicide once shocked us and brought shame and sorrow. Today they are called rights and are often celebrated; it is those who remained shocked and saddened who are excoriated.

This sea of change also illustrates St. Macarius’ words, for we see how our culture suffers gravely from a lack of faith as it has “kicked God to the curb.” It is not an exaggeration to describe the Western world as a house that has no master living in it ... increasingly dark, vile, and contemptible, choked with filth and disgusting refuse ... darkened with sin, its desires are degraded, and it knows nothing but shame. Increasingly, this is our lot in the West.

The #MeToo movement and the current anger about sexual abuse by clergy demonstrate that we as a culture do occasionally awaken to the increasing toll of the sexual and cultural revolution; we do occasionally engage in some degree of self-correction. Too often, however, our outrage is both selective and short-lived. Sexual abusers of every sort are rightly denounced, but there is little evidence that we are willing to consider the overall “pomification” of our culture as another contributing factor. It seems unlikely that the current celebration of sexual misconduct, confusion and immodesty in movies, music and popular culture is going to be included in our national examination of conscience.

Thus, our overall culture remains in great disrepair. As St. Macarius describes, we are adrift like a pilot-

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for December 9, 2018
Luke 3:1-6

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for Second Sunday of Advent, Cycle C: the historical setting of John the Baptist. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

YEAR	REIGN	CAESAR
PILATE	JUDEA	TETRARCH
GALILEE	PHILIP	ITURAEA
LYSANIAS	ABILENE	PRIESTHOOD
ANNAS	BAPTISM	REPENTANCE
WRITTEN	ISAIAH	VOICE
CRYING	PREPARE	ALL FLESH

SET IN TIME

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H U D O O H T S E I R P
S A N N A K P H I L I P
E R I N A N A H C L E R
L E L A J M O G A L U E
F P Y D S S N T E Y G P
L E A N G I E R S S A A
L N O R Y T T J A A L R
A T H R R P T U R N I E
J A C A L A I D R I L K
O N R H C B R E R A E Y
E C I O V F W A R S E P
H E L L A E N E L I B A
    
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less ship, foul with the filth of the passions and a haven for all the vices. It is clear that our jettisoning of the faith and of biblical norms is having increasingly devastating effects on every level. We have become more coarse, base and disrespectful of one another; we are exploitative, wasteful and often ungrateful for what we have; we are increasingly impatient, resentful and sullen at even the slightest inconvenience or problem.

By abandoning the first three commandments that refer to our relationship with God, we undermine the seven commandments that regulate our relationship with one another as well. This is central to St. Macarius’ point. When a house [or culture] has no master living in it [because we have collectively

shown God the door], it becomes dark, vile and contemptible, choked with filth and disgusting refuse.

Help us, Lord, to rediscover the beauty of Your truth. We have suffered by pushing You to the margins. Though even in more religious times we were not free of sin, we have only made things worse by departing from You. Bring us back as a nation, O Lord! Help us to be more faithful and to enjoy more than ever before the beauty of Your truth and order. In Jesus’ name, Amen!

Msgr. Charles Pope is the pastor of Holy Comforter — St. Cyprian Roman Catholic Church, Washington, D.C.

DOERFLINGER, from page 12

Before he considers fighting crime as Spider-Man, Peter Parker hears from his beloved Uncle Ben that “with great power must also come great responsibility.” At first, he ignores that advice, leading to his uncle’s death at the hands of a criminal Peter could have stopped. He remembers this whenever he is tempted to stop using his gifts to help others.

Captain America, surviving in a frozen state since World War II to be revived in the present, retains his old-fashioned sense of honor and personal moral responsibility — and the conflict between his value system and that of pragmatic technocrat Tony Stark (aka Iron Man) is



CNS photo/Marvel

key to the dramatic tension in The Avengers movies. The film “Captain America: The Winter Soldier” warns against placing too much power in one person or organization, or letting a utilitarian ethic drive our efforts to improve the world.

In these and other ways, comic book movies have given us some very positive messages about the human spirit. Negative messages are easier to find among politicians and the late-night comedians who comment on them.

Richard Doerflinger worked in the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. He writes from Washington state.

EWING, from page 12

albums or scrap books. Talk about funny stories and laugh together. Impart some piece of advice that meant a lot to you from your loved one.

Finally, while grief certainly must be acknowledged and experienced in whatever ways unique to you, this is a time of joy, of unity, of peace. When we reframe our perspectives in such a way that we elevate our hearts, minds and souls to God in thanksgiving for every good gift, we will see the life we have left through the lens of gratitude.

Simple words of praise and thanksgiving, when sincerely offered, are often enough to buoy

us out of darkness and depressive thoughts. God is always good, and He gives us everything we have. Joy comes in small doses when we grieve, but it is still present. God never abandons us, especially in our time of greatest need. Turn to Him, especially as you meditate on His birth as a helpless infant born in poverty, and speak to Him with an open heart ready to receive Him in love this Christmas.

Jeannie Ewing is a Catholic spirituality writer who focuses on the topics of grief, redemptive suffering and waiting. Visit her website at jeannieewing.com.

Christmas movies to brighten the spirit

WASHINGTON — The following movies have been evaluated by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops according to artistic merit and moral suitability. The reviews include the USCCB rating, the Motion Picture Association of America rating and a brief synopsis of the movie.

The Bells of St. Mary's (1945) Director Leo McCarey's sequel to "Going My Way" (1944) pulls out all the emotional stops in a sugary confection that takes happy-go-lucky Father O'Malley (Bing Crosby) to a poor parish with a crumbling school run by overworked Sister Benedict (Ingrid Bergman). Though their conflicting views on education have less to do with the plot than the chasm between their personal relations, Bergman's shining performance as the idealistic nun is still worth watching. Sentimental yet warm picture of Catholic life in an age of innocence. (A-I) (NR)

The Bishop's Wife (1947) A debonair, smartly tailored angel (Cary Grant) uses his heavenly powers to help the neglected wife (Loretta Young) of a busy Episcopalian bishop (David Niven) renew her husband's ministry to those in need rather than in raising the money for a new cathedral. Director Henry Koster's sentimental Christmas fable has the virtue of a good script, sincere performances and some amusing moments with Grant's angelic powers and Monty Wooley as a softhearted old cynic. Most of the family

will find it charming entertainment. (A-II) (NR)



A Christmas Carol (1951) This British version of the Dickens' classic has worn well over the years principally because of Alistair Sim's zestful performance as Scrooge, the old humbug whose transformation into a loving human being is a pleasure to behold. Director Brian Desmond Hurst's period piece does well with its 19th-century London setting and the ghostly visitations are done simply but with considerable flair. The result is dandy family viewing. (A-I) (NR)

A Christmas Carol (2009) Lavish, well-crafted but frequently eerie 3-D animated adaptation of Charles Dickens' classic 1843 novella in which miserly misanthrope Ebenezer Scrooge (voice of Jim Carrey) is urged to change his ways by the tortured specter of his late business partner (voice of Gary Oldman) and by the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come (all voiced by Carrey). Though free of objectionable content and unabashed about the Christian context of its conversion story, writer-director Robert Zemeckis' largely faithful retelling features images and special effects likely to disturb the most sensitive youngsters. (A-I) (PG)

A Christmas Story (1983) Adapted from Jean Shepherd's nostalgic piece of whimsy, "In

God We Trust, All Others Pay Cash," the movie re-creates what it was like to be a boy (Peter Billingsley) yearning for a genuine Red Ryder air rifle for Christmas in the Midwest of the 1940s. Director Bob Clark gets some good performances from Darren McGavin and Melinda Dillon as the understanding parents and the period atmosphere is nicely conveyed with what is essentially a warm celebration of a more innocent, less sophisticated America. A few vulgar syllables. (A-II) (PG)

Come to the Stable (1949) Sentimental but amusing picture from Clare Booth Luce's story of two French nuns (Loretta Young and Celeste Holm) trying to establish a hospital in New England with some help from an eccentric artist (Elsa Lanchester) and a cynical songwriter (Hugh Marlowe). Director Henry Koster gets some smiles from the nuns' adapting to American ways and the bemused reactions of the locals to the newcomers' otherworldly simplicity, with mostly heartwarming results. Unpretentious, generally high-minded fun. (A-I) (NR)



The Fourth Wise Man (1985) Adaptation of Henry Van Dyke's vintage short story "The Other Wise Man," tells of a fourth Magi (Martin Sheen) who is delayed in following the star to Bethlehem, then finally catches up with it in Jerusalem some

33 years later in an encounter which fulfills his life's search for truth. Produced by Paulist Father Ellwood Keiser and directed by Michael Rhodes, the 72-minute dramatization effectively amplifies the religious dimension of the original while adding some light humor from Alan Arkin as the Magi's servant. Family entertainment with the universal theme of bettering oneself by helping others. (A-I) (NR)



It's a Wonderful Life (1946) Seasonal favorite about the joys and trials of a good man (James Stewart) who, facing financial ruin on the eve of Christmas, contemplates suicide until his guardian angel (Henry Travers) shows him how meaningful his life has been to those around him. Director Frank Capra's unabashedly sentimental picture of mainstream American life is bolstered by a superb cast (including Lionel Barrymore as a conniving banker) and a wealth of good feelings about such commonplace virtues as hard work and helping one's neighbor. Young children may find the story's dark moments unsettling. (A-II) (NR)

Joyeux Noel (2006) Intensely moving World War I tale of soldiers — Scottish, French and German — who spontaneously agree to a cease-fire on the Western front on Christmas Eve as they hear carols wafting from the enemy's trenches, intermingle and bond on a humanistic level, to the eventual disdain of their superiors. Writer-director Christian Carion's film, inspired by true events, is sensitively acted (by an international cast including Guillaume Canet, Daniel Bruhl and Benno Furmann) and conveys a powerful message about the senselessness of war, while there is an admirable religious underpinning in the character of a dedicated Anglican priest

(Gary Lewis) who brings everyone together for a liturgy on that special night. Partially in English, partially subtitled. Battlefield violence with death, some profanity and crude language, discreet husband-wife bedroom scene. (A-II) (PG-13)

Miracle on 34th Street (1947) Familiar seasonal favorite follows a department store Santa (Edmund Gwenn) as he strives to convince a lonely little girl (Natalie Wood) that he's the genuine article, despite the objections of her rigidly pragmatic mother (Maureen O'Hara) and a court trial that hinges on the U.S. Post Office. Director George Seaton's amusing romantic fantasy has its sentimental moments while spreading a reasonable amount of holiday cheer, largely due to Gwenn's charming performance as Kris Kringle. Problems of single parenthood. (A-II) (NR)

The Nativity Story (2006) Dramatization of the New Testament birth narratives from the Annunciation to the birth of Jesus, focusing on the relationship between Mary (Keisha Castle-Hughes) and Joseph (Oscar Isaac) and their arduous trek from Nazareth to Bethlehem, with subplots tracking the journey of the three Magi and the efforts of King Herod (Ciaran Hinds) to prevent the prophecy of a messiah from coming to pass. A composite of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, embroidered with apocryphal traditions and the imagination of the filmmaker, the Bible story gets the prestige treatment in director Catherine Hardwicke's artful, reverent and affecting retelling. Some violent images. (A-I) (PG)

Information provided by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

USCCB movie classifications:
A-I — General audiences, suitable for children
A-II — Adults and adolescents

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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHAT'S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. View more Catholic events and submit new ones at www.todayscatholic.org/event. For additional listings of that event, please call the advertising sales staff at 260-399-1449 to purchase space.

Bishop Luers High School Christmas concert

FORT WAYNE — Bishop Luers High School Performing Arts Department will present a Christmas concert on Sunday, Dec. 9, at 3 p.m. in the school gymnasium, 333 E. Paulding Rd. The Bishop Luers concert band, jazz ensemble, choirs and show choir will perform. The Luers Senior Art Show will be on exhibit from 2-3 p.m. prior to the concert.

Knights of Columbus fish fry

SOUTH BEND — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521 will have a fish fry at the Francis Club, 61533 Ironwood Rd., on Friday, Dec. 7, from 5-7 p.m. Shrimp and chicken strips are also available and pizza for \$1 per slice. Prices for all meals are adults \$9.50, children 5-12 \$3.50, children under 5 free.

Altar Rosary Society hosts cookie walk

PLYMOUTH — Celebrate Christmas and support St. Michael's Altar Rosary Society Saturday, Dec. 8, at the church, 612 N Center St., with a purchase from a variety of homemade cookies for sale at \$4 per pound. Containers available or bring your own. Contact Chris Morrow at 574-540-9686 for information.

St. Charles pancake breakfast with Santa

FORT WAYNE — The St. Charles Athletic Association will serve pancakes and sausage in the St. Charles cafeteria, 4910 Trier Rd., and provide the opportunity to sit on Santa's lap. The cost is \$5 per adult, \$3 per child and free for preschool and younger, or \$30 for the entire family. All proceeds benefit the St. Charles Athletic Association.

Advent Taize prayer

GRANGER — St. Pius X, 52553 Fir Rd., will offer a Taize prayer service Tuesday, Dec. 11 at 7 p.m. Taize Prayer is composed of songs that originated in the tiny French Village of Taize. These songs, known throughout the world, have led Christians of all languages to a pathway of prayer. The repetition of the text and music takes a person to the heart of the mystery of prayer, for prayer is not something that can be explained — it arises when individuals open themselves to God's love together, in an atmosphere of simple trust.

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne

Shirley Morken, 76, St. Therese

Anne Crew, 59, St. Therese

Mishawaka

Jean Gryp, 92, Queen of Peace

Plymouth

Frances Houin, 87, St. Michael

South Bend

Chester J. Kolber, 90, Holy Family

Norbert V. Kopinski, 88, St. Anthony de Padua

Dimpna Naval, St. Jude

Barbara Kellogg, 92, St. Anthony de Padua

Anton Sakara, 99, St. Anthony de Padua

Rosa Hahn, 94, St. Anthony de Padua

Advent lessons and carols

SOUTH BEND — Advent lessons and carols will be at St. Matthew Cathedral, 1701 Miami St., on Dec. 12, during the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe from 7-8 p.m. Refreshments offered immediately following in the cathedral basement meeting room.

Christmas Around the World

SOUTH BEND — Holy Family School students will present Christmas Around the World Thursday, Dec. 13, from 5:30-7 p.m. at the school, 56407

Mayflower Rd. Facts, snacks and crafts will be offered as students take visitors on a joy-filled journey around the globe.

Solemn Advent vespers

SOUTH BEND — Our Lady of Hungary Parish will host a service of solemn vespers on Friday Dec. 14, with music, readings, preaching and prayer beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the church, 829 W. Calvert St. If you have any questions or would like to be a part of the choir contact the parish office at 574-287-1700.

FESTIVAL OF LESSONS AND CAROLS



St. Bavo Church, 511 W. 7th St., Mishawaka, will hold its 14th annual "Festival of Lessons and Carols" on Sunday, December 16, at 4:00 P.M. The St. Bavo Parish Choir will be joined by the Marian High School Liturgical Choir and the Antioch Youth Group. Each

of nine scripture readings, which outline a brief journey through salvation history, will also be followed by festive choral anthems, moving solos, and carols with congregational participation. There is no admission charge and everyone is welcome.



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2012, he announced that he had vascular Parkinsonism, a condition that limited his mobility and required him to use a wheelchair most of the time.

"Jeb, Neil, Marvin, Doro and I are saddened to announce that after 94 remarkable years, our dear Dad has died," said former President George W. Bush, the late president's oldest son. "George H.W. Bush was a man of the highest character and the best dad a son or daughter could ask for. The entire Bush family is deeply grateful for 41's life and love, for the compassion of those who have cared and prayed for Dad, and for the condolences of our friends and fellow citizens."

The White House announced Dec. 1 that a state funeral was being arranged "with all of the accompanying support and honors." President Donald Trump designated Dec. 5 as a national day of mourning. He and first lady Melania Trump planned to attend the funeral at the National Episcopal Cathedral in Washington. The flags at the White House were lowered to half staff.

Air Force One, technically called "Special Air Mission 41," flew to Houston to bring the body of the late president back to Washington. After arrival at Joint Base Andrews just outside Washington late in the afternoon Dec. 3, his body was to be transported to the U.S. Capitol Rotunda to lie in state through the early morning of Dec. 5. The public was invited to pay respects beginning Dec. 3 through Dec. 5 at 7 a.m. The funeral service was planned for 11 a.m. at the cathedral.

The final "Special Air Mission 41" flight was to return the president's body to Texas late Dec. 5 for funeral services the next day in College Station, Texas. He will be laid to rest the afternoon of Dec. 6 at the George H.W. Bush Presidential Library, where wife Barbara and their daughter Robin, who died at age 3, are buried.

Catholic leaders, including the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, joined in "grieving the loss of one of our nation's leaders."

"We remember with gratitude this great man who spent his life selflessly in service of his country," the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said Dec. 3. "With an unwavering commitment to building bridges of peace and ensuring our nation's freedoms, he also inspired many as a devoted husband, father and family patriarch."

"On behalf of my brother bishops of the United States, we pray for the repose of the soul of our 41st president as we remember a life well lived," said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, who heads the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. "We also offer our deepest sympathy and prayers for his bereaved family



U.S. President George H.W. Bush applauds St. John Paul II after a welcoming ceremony prior to their audience at the Vatican in 1991. Bush, the 41st president of the United States and the father of the 43rd, died Nov. 30 at his home in Houston.

CNS photo/Rick Wilking, Reuters

and all those who mourn his passing. May you find peace and comfort in the consoling love of Jesus Christ."

"Notre Dame joins with our nation and world in mourning the passing of President Bush," said Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, president of the Catholic university in South Bend, Indiana. "He was the epitome of a public servant, not just in the Oval Office, but in his eight years as vice president, his many years as a congressman, ambassador and CIA director, and in his service in the U.S. Navy during World War II."

"We were fortunate to host him at Notre Dame on five occasions, and in each instance, the honor was ours," said Father Jenkins said in a Dec. 1 statement. "Our prayers are with the Bush family."

Bush received an honorary doctor of laws degree from Notre Dame in 1992; he had visited the campus more than any other U.S. president.

Holy Cross Father Edward A. Malloy was Notre Dame's president from 1987 to 2005 and presented the honorary degree to Bush during commencement ceremonies that year. He also worked on two of the president's

major initiatives — his Drug Advisory Council and his Points of Light Foundation.

"I found him to be a leader deeply committed to the country he had been elected to serve, a gracious host and a down-to-earth person," Father Malloy said in a statement. "He recognized the importance of American higher education and he sought to enhance it. He also sought to promote a culture of citizen engagement with the great issues of the day."

The National Right to Life Committee, a federation of state right-to-life affiliates and more than 3,000 local chapters, also mourned Bush's death and praised him for a number of pro-life measures he supported as president.

It cited among other actions his administration urging the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade* and allow states to pass laws to protect unborn children. He used "the power of his veto to stop 10 bills that contained pro-abortion provisions, including four appropriations bills which allowed for taxpayer funding of abortion," NRLC said in a statement.

"President George H.W. Bush dedicated his administration to

advancing pro-life policies to protect mothers and their unborn children," said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life. "He used his presidency to stop enactment of pro-abortion laws and promote life-affirming solutions. Our prayers today are with former President George W. Bush and the entire Bush family."

While in office, Bush stated that the "protection of innocent human life — in or out of the womb — is certainly the most compelling interest that a state can advance," she added.

With regard to capital punishment, Bush differed with the Catholic Church's opposition to the death penalty, telling CNS that he supported it "in certain instances because I think if somebody murders a police officer that that person ought to pay with his life."

Bush was criticized by Catholic and other faith leaders as well as peace activists for his decision to go to war in the Persian Gulf after then-Iraq President Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait.

Some months before the U.S.-led war began Aug. 2, 1990, St. John Paul II pleaded for peace in the Gulf. "May leaders be con-

vinced that war is an adventure with no return," he said. "By reasoning, patience and dialogue with respect to the inalienable rights of peoples and nations, it is possible to identify and travel the paths of understanding and peace."

Attending the funeral of the pope in 2005, then-former President Bush recalled for reporters how the pontiff had opposed the war, which ended Feb. 28, 1991, citing what he called the pope's "standard position on the use of force" and his concerns about "the long length of the war." One news account said Bush "lamented the fact that he (himself) never engaged in a discussion about the concept of a 'just war.'"

During his pontificate, St. John Paul met with Bush twice at the Vatican, first when Bush was vice president and then when he was president.

"I had the opportunity to express my profound gratitude to the Holy Father for his spiritual and moral leadership," Bush said in a statement after the two leaders met privately for more than an hour Nov. 8, 1991.

"His message for peace and the message that he sends across the world to all these countries" experiencing war and other hardships "is a message of hope and, indeed, a message of peace," the president said.

Born in Milton, Massachusetts, June 12, 1924, Bush delayed entrance to Yale University to volunteer for service in World War II. At 18, he was one of the Navy's youngest pilots. After several flying successful bombing missions, he was shot down during one in 1944 and was rescued at sea. The rest of his flight crew perished.

After graduating from Yale, he became an oilman in Texas, but after his successful stint in the oil fields, he spent most of the rest of his life in public service — including as a two-term congressman from Texas, director of the Central Intelligence Agency, an ambassador, vice president under President Ronald Reagan (1980-88) and finally president (1988-92).

He and Barbara married Jan. 6, 1945. As a young couple they suffered through the death from leukemia of daughter Robin at age 3. Throughout their lives they and their whole family mourned her loss. Bush is survived by son George W., the nation's 43rd president, and four other children; 17 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren; and two siblings.

"We are guided by faith," Bush said of his wife and family in that 1992 interview with CNS. "We (are) regular attendees at church and that gives us strength every Sunday. And we just feel that it's important as a family to pray together. We still say our blessings at our meals and we still say our prayers at night."

Carol Zimmermann contributed to this story.