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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

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The Lord is born to us



CNS/Bridgeman Images

The Nativity is depicted in this 17th-century painting by the three Le Nain brothers, Antoine, Louis and Mathieu. The feast of the Nativity of Christ, a holy day of obligation, is celebrated Dec. 25.

Joy, love consummated in profession of perpetual vows

BY CHRISTOPHER LUSHIS

On the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the universal Church celebrated the miracle of Mary's powerful intercession and triumph over evil effected through her obedient participation in the will of God. Simultaneously, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend also rejoiced in the witness of another faithful woman committing herself to the Lord and sharing uniquely in His redemptive mission of salvation.

Sister Rose Caritas, a Poor Sister of St. Clare, accompanied by her religious sisters and in view of her children, grandchildren, numerous priests and many

other friends, publicly professed to Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades her intention to live as a cloistered nun in unlimited consecration to the Blessed Virgin Mary — in obedience, without property and in chastity — for her entire life.

Bishop Rhoades, reflecting upon the beauty of Sister Rose's life and courageous decision to permanently embrace a vocation that gives powerful life to the Church in a hidden and often unrecognized way, remarked: "At the Annunciation, Mary gives an example of obedience to God's will, even as it is shrouded in mystery. Karen Robertson, a beloved mother and grandmother, has listened to the Holy Spirit and discovered God's call to the consecrated life as a cloistered

nun. Like Mary, she puts her trust in the Lord and says 'yes' to this call. Her religious name, Sister Rose Caritas, reminds us of Mary, the rose God extends to the world; and of charity, the perfection of all the virtues."

He continued: "After Mary conceived the Son of God in her womb, she immediately set off to perform an act of charity. She went in haste to help her cousin Elizabeth and to bring Jesus to her. 'Caritas' means 'charity.' The vows of poverty, chastity and obedience mean nothing if not rooted in caritas. They are meant to be expressions of love. In the hidden life of the cloister, the Poor Sisters of St. Clare are called to live together in charity and, through their prayers and sacrifices, their

intercession for the Church and the world, they extend God's love and serve the Church's mission of salvation. They will seldom know what fruits will be borne of their prayers, but they leave that in God's hands."

Her full name, Sister Rose Caritas of the Mother of the Clergy and Valiant Prince St. Michael, reveals her courageous desire to intercede for the Church, especially for its priests, and to aid in their defense through spiritual battle.

Sharing with elation and thankfulness for the many blessings God has given her, she exclaimed: "The gratitude and joy

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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

260-456-2824

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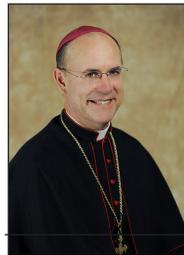
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The Face of God



IN TRUTH AND CHARITY

BISHOP KEVIN C. RHOADES

In these last days of Advent, we are invited by the Church's liturgies to turn to the Lord as we focus on the coming of Jesus at Christmas. We can pray with the words of Psalm 80: "Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved."

God has indeed let us see His face. He showed us His face in sending us His Son. Jesus is not merely a great prophet like Elijah or John the Baptist. Jesus is not just some great religious figure in history. He is the Face of God. Our Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI, once said, that God's Face is "the Face of mercy, the Face of pardon and love, the Face of the encounter with us."

Advent and Christmas teach us to recognize God's face in "the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger." Jesus came into the world to reveal to us the Face of His Father and our Father. He came into the world "to speak to us of the Father; to make Him known to us, His lost children, and to revive in our hearts the joy of belonging to Him, the hope of being forgiven and restored to our full dignity, and the desire to dwell forever in His house which is also our house" (Pope Benedict XVI).

Advent and Christmas are seasons of joy and hope. We are filled with joy and hope because God has a human face. This is the great truth of Christianity and Catholicism, that God became one of us, that He is our Savior. He overcomes sin and death. He is the Prince of Peace who gives us the power of peace that no one else can give us. God is not a reality known only from afar. He came close to us. He came at Christmas to bring heaven to us.

"Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved." God has shown us His face in the child in the manger who later suffered and died for us. That face of Jesus shines forth in the face of every human being, from the child in the womb to the suffering elderly person on his deathbed. "As you did it to one of the least of my brothers and sisters, you did it to me," Jesus teaches us.

As Christians, we are called to discover the Face of Jesus Christ especially in people who are poor and suffering, in the marginalized and forgotten. When we pray Psalm 80: "Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved," we know that we can see God's face, the face of Jesus, in the sick and the poor whom we are called to love and serve. In faith, we look upon them and their needs with new eyes. In them, we are called to see the Face of Christ. In their faces, we discover the mysterious Face of God. When we care for a suffering person, we discover Christ's face when hanging on the cross. We can also glimpse, through faith, the radiant face of the risen Christ who tells us that suffering and sickness will not have the last word in our human lives.

Christmas reminds us of our vocation as disciples of Jesus to recognize Jesus in what Mother Teresa called "the distressing disguise of the poor." It is Christ whom we serve when we show love and compassion to those in need.

In these final days of the season of



Muhammad Muzamil on Unsplash

As Christmas approaches, we prepare to celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation. It is a mystery to be put into practice by the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. St. Vincent de Paul, St. Teresa of Calcutta and many other great saints teach us to see the face of Jesus, God's face, in the persons of the poor and suffering.

Advent, and soon at Christmas, we contemplate the mystery of the Incarnation, the mystery and grace of God's becoming man, of His assuming our human nature. We can say, therefore, that God has a human Face.

St. Vincent de Paul promoted the Mystery of the Incarnation among His followers. He said: "Honor the Incarnation, a mystery beyond words." St. Vincent taught: "Since Christ willed to be born poor, He made Himself the servant of the poor and shared their poverty. He went so far as to say that He would consider every deed which either helps or harms the poor as done for or against Himself." St. Vincent de Paul and St. Teresa of Calcutta and many other great saints teach us to see the face of Jesus, God's face, in the persons of the poor and suffering.

As we approach Christmas, we prepare to celebrate the mystery of the Incarnation. It is a mystery to be believe and celebrated. It is also a mystery to be put into practice by the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. When we do so, we are not engaged in

mere philanthropy. Prayer and the works of mercy help us to focus on the true meaning of Christmas. I think of Blessed Frederic Ozanam, the founder of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. He was deeply devoted to prayer and the sacraments. It was His love of Christ that impelled him to love and serve the poor.

I recently reminded the Vincentians of our diocese that their work can become superficial and compulsive if separated from prayer. That is important for all of us to remember. Prayer is our lifeline and should be the foundation for what we do. It is through prayer and action, not one or the other, but both, that we are called to grow in holiness.

My brothers and sisters, let us continue on our Advent journey to Christmas with the words of Psalm 80 in our hearts: "Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved." May God, who has revealed His Face to us in the Incarnation of His Son, bless all of you with joy and peace at Christmas!

Venerating Cure d'Ars' relic can help Church 'heal,' says head of Knights

BY RICHARD SZCZEPANOWSKI

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The incorrupt heart of St. John Vianney, the patron saint of parish priests, “reminds us God uses instruments to be ministers of his grace and mercy,” said Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the U.S.

He celebrated a nearly two-hour Mass Dec. 9 at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception that opened a four-day public veneration, which he prayed “would help people ask for the grace to change their lives.”

A six-month tour will take the holy relic of the saint popularly known as the Cure d'Ars across the United States. Sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, the “Heart of a Priest” tour was launched in wake of the clergy sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church.

Supreme Knight Carl Anderson, CEO of the Knights of Columbus, said in statement that St. John Vianney offers an example to help the Church heal and rebuild.

“We now welcome as providential this opportunity to invoke the intercession of the patron saint of parish priests, whose holiness and integrity is a singular model for clergy,” Anderson said in his statement.

St. John Vianney was born in 1786 and served as a simple parish priest in the French town of Ars. He was known to spend as many as 18 hours a day hearing confessions from people who traveled from throughout Europe to see the priest who was known for his holiness and piety. He also had a great love of and fostered devotion to St. Philomena. He died in 1859.

Pope Pius XI canonized him in 1925 and proclaimed him patron saint of parish priests in 1929. His incorrupt body and heart are displayed at his shrine in Ars.

With a trumpet fanfare and solemn procession, the holy relic was brought into the Crypt Church at the national shrine in Washington and placed at the altar in front of an icon of the priest. It was to be on display through Dec. 12.

During the opening Mass, which drew 1,500 people, Archbishop Pierre called St. John Vianney “a man of faith.” He noted the saint “was not a particularly handsome man. He did not have a beautiful voice, and it was well known that he was not very clever or good at studies ... but St. John Vianney had so much love. And, what did he offer the people? Forgiveness and mercy.”

Veneration of the saint's heart “offers prophetic witness in a country that does not want to hear about forgiveness or



CNS photo/Bob Roller

A relic of St. John Vianney is displayed before Mass Nov. 12 at the fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore.

mercy,” Archbishop Pierre said. “He (St. John Vianney) was an authentic witness to those who seek a deeper union with God.”

The Catholic Church teaches that a relic — such as the heart of St. John Vianney — is offered to the faithful for veneration, but neither the relic nor the saint is worshipped. Veneration recognizes the fact that God has worked through the saint.

The nuncio also said that veneration of the saintly priest could lead to young men to consider a vocation to the priesthood.

“Perhaps there will be three men here — or maybe more — whom the Lord will raise up to be his faithful priests,” he said.

Among those at the national shrine considering such a vocation was Marek Nowak. He said his prayers to the patron saint of priests were twofold. “I am asking St. John Vianney to guide me as I consider a vocation, and I want to pray for a change of heart for those who think the Church has let them down, and remind them of the goodness of God,” he said.

Alexander Barton said he came to pray before the sacred relic because of what he called “the two big Rs.”

“We need to show remorse and repentance,” Barton told the *Catholic Standard*, Washington's archdiocesan newspaper. “This has been a rough year (for the Church), and maybe this (veneration of St. John Vianney's heart) will start the healing.”

For Erika Torres, veneration of the sacred relic “is something that I feel I have to do. I want to ask this good priest to send us more priests like him.”

In welcoming the holy relic,

the national shrine's rector, Msgr. Walter Rossi, said the four-day veneration was “an opportunity for each of us to pray for our heartfelt petitions as well as for the healing of the Church and an increase in vocations.”

“May St. John Vianney intercede for us and open our hearts so we can see what God's love can do,” he added.

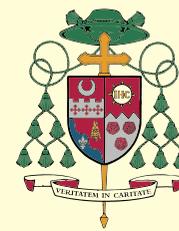
Prior to its stop at the national shrine, the heart of St. John Vianney was displayed in Connecticut, Louisiana, Florida, Alabama and Georgia. After Washington the relic will be in Connecticut — in the Norwich diocese Dec. 13 and the Archdiocese of Hartford Dec. 22-23. It will be in Baltimore Jan. 11 and in South Bend, Indiana, on Jan. 24.

A news release from the Knights said that in between public events, the relic will travel to seminaries, religious houses and other locations for private veneration.

“John Vianney's heart was full of love for the people of God and full of the same love Christ had for the Church,” said Peter Sonski, manager of education and outreach for the Knights of Columbus Museum in New Haven, Connecticut, who is serving as the relic's custodian during the tour. “I hope this pilgrimage of his heart will inspire people to pray for our priests, bishops and for the Church.”

“This is an opportunity to pray for a renewal in holiness,” he added.

Szczepanowski is a staff writer at the Catholic Standard, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Washington.



Public schedule of Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades

Sunday, December 23: 9:15 a.m. — Mass, St. Peter Church, Fort Wayne
 Monday, December 24: 8 a.m. — Mass with Sisters and Friars, St. Andrew Church, Fort Wayne
 Monday, December 24: 10:30 p.m. — Christmas Eve Mass, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne
 Wednesday, January 2 through Tuesday, January 8 — U.S. Bishops' Retreat, Mundelein Seminary, Mundelein, Illinois

U.S. bishops move to address allegations of abuse, claims of cover-up

BY CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — 2018 will no doubt be remembered as a dark time for the U.S. Catholic Church.

Catholics felt betrayed by Church leaders accused of sexual misconduct and cover-up revealed this summer and this cloud still hung over the Church at the year's end.

In June, allegations were made against then-Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, accused of sexually abusing a minor almost 50 years ago and having sexual contact with seminarians while he was a bishop in New Jersey.

A month later, Pope Francis accepted Archbishop McCarrick's resignation from College of Cardinals and suspended him from public ministry, ordering him to a “life of prayer and penance” until the accusations against him were examined in a canonical trial.

The archbishop, who has denied the allegations, now lives in a Capuchin Franciscan friary in Victoria, Kansas.

Since these allegations came to light, Catholic laity and Church leaders, including bishops, have been asking who knew about the archbishop's alleged misconduct and how was it possible for him to move up the ranks in Church leadership.

Open letters to the pope asked him to investigate what happened and a fury of speculation was fueled by unsubstantiated allegations made by Archbishop Carlo Maria Vigano, former papal nuncio to the United States, who accused the Vatican hierarchy and Pope Francis, in particular, of being complicit in covering up accusations against Archbishop McCarrick.

Amid Church turmoil over Archbishop McCarrick, the Church was dealt another blow in mid-August with the release of a Pennsylvania grand jury report covering 70 years of abuse allegations in six of the state's Catholic dioceses, starting in 1947. The report detailed allegations of abuse by 300 clergy and other Church workers and involving 1,000 minors. It also claimed a Church cover-up of abuse in some instances.

The report particularly shined a spotlight on Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl in reporting a mixed picture of how he handled some abuse cases when he was Pittsburgh bishop from 1988 until 2006.

Amid renewed calls for the cardinal to resign, Cardinal Wuerl, who had submitted his resignation two years earlier after he turned 75, as required by canon law, met with the pope about stepping down. Pope Francis accepted his resignation in mid-October, while keeping the now-78-year-old prelate on as apostolic administrator for the Archdiocese of Washington until a successor archbishop is named.

Another result of the Pennsylvania grand jury report was that 13 states and the District of Columbia announced their own investigations into Church records. Several dioceses also started publicly releasing names of priests credibly accused of child sexual abuse, with most allegations decades old.

Although the Pennsylvania grand jury report fueled strong outrage, it also raised questions about its intentions, especially since it focused on what happened decades ago rather than on the changes in Church protocols on addressing abuse that

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have occurred in more than two decades, said Frederick Thieman. The former U.S. attorney for western Pennsylvania has served on the Independent Review Board in the Pittsburgh Diocese for 20 years.

While a full accounting of child sexual abuse "is a story that needs to be told," Pennsylvania's use of grand juries that publicly disseminate accusations, but bring no indictments, can be problematic, he told the *Pittsburgh Catholic* diocesan newspaper.

"Unlike a trial, there is no opportunity for cross-examination and very limited opportunity for those accused to challenge evidence or present evidence of their own," he added.

But as this process is more closely examined, the public shaming of Catholic Church leadership has already been in full swing.

Catholics across the country, many of whom thought the Church dealt with abuse 16 years ago after the Boston Globe highlighted the issue, expressed raw frustration and anger at listening sessions throughout the summer and fall asking Church leaders what went wrong and how the Church could move forward.

Catholics also gathered in cathedrals and parishes across the country for healing Masses said by bishops who have often prostrated themselves before the altar in a posture of repentance. Several bishops individually issued statements on the crisis



Suzanne Emerson, from Silver Spring, Md., holds a sign during a Nov. 12 news conference held by Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops met in Baltimore for the annual fall general assembly. The growing abuse crisis facing the U.S. Church in 2018 topped the meeting agenda.

CNS photo/Kevin J. Parks, Catholic Review

and many urged Catholics to pray and fast for the Church to find healing and restoration.

In mid-September, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, had a long-awaited private meeting with Pope Francis at the Vatican to discuss the growing sexual abuse crisis in the United States.

Between Aug. 1 and that Sept. 13 meeting, the cardinal issued five statements responding to various aspects of the sexual abuse crisis and called for greater transparency and accountability in the Church, particularly on the part of the bishops.

In early October, while they were in Rome for the Synod of Bishops, Cardinal DiNardo and

Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, USCCB vice president, had a private meeting with the pope, again about the abuse crisis.

Abuse was a major focus of the bishops' June meeting in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, as well as at subsequent meetings of their Executive Committee and Administrative Committee.

The issue also was front and center at the bishops' annual fall assembly in Baltimore Nov. 12-14 where protesters, including abuse victims, gathered outside.

The meeting, which many hoped would be a decisive response to the abuse crisis in the Church, began with an announcement by Cardinal DiNardo that the Vatican wanted the bishops to delay any vote on new procedures in response

to clergy abuse until after a February meeting with the pope and presidents of the bishops' conferences around the world focus on the issue.

The Congregation for Bishops, which made the request, also said the delay was needed to better evaluate the bishops' proposals in light of canon law.

So instead, the bishops heard details about establishing standards of episcopal accountability; forming a special commission for review of complaints against bishops for violations of the accountability standards; and establishing a protocol regarding restrictions on bishops who were removed or who resigned over claims of sexual misconduct made against them or for grave negligence in office.

And the end of the meeting, Cardinal DiNardo said he was more hopeful than he was at the meeting's start.

"We leave this place committed to taking the strongest possible actions at the earliest possible moment," Cardinal DiNardo said. "We will do so in communion with the universal Church."

He said the discussion throughout the meeting provided direction and consensus and also would serve as a "springboard for action."

Since the Baltimore gathering, more dioceses have publicized list of priests accused of sexual abuse of minors. On Dec. 6, the Archdiocese of Los Angeles released an updated list that included two cases of alleged abuse of current minors in the archdiocese since 2008.

In remarks posted on the archdiocesan website along with the listing, Archbishop Gomez said that "every case of child sexual abuse is one too many, a crime committed against an innocent soul, a sin that cries out to heaven for justice, reparation, and healing."

He called for continued vigilance but also noted that "we have witnessed a dramatic reduction in incidences of abuse over the last two decades."

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Big decisions, bench changes for U.S. Supreme Court this year

BY CAROL ZIMMERMANN

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Supreme Court's past year will probably be remembered more for the shakeup at the bench than for specific rulings.

In early July when President Donald Trump announced that Judge Brett Kavanaugh was his nominee to replace retiring Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy, the divided nation responded accordingly.

Many praised the judge's qualifications and were pleased that the president had fulfilled his campaign promise to nominate a pro-life judge to the Supreme Court, but the choice angered many Americans displeased that Kavanaugh's vote as a justice could potentially reverse the court's 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion.

Kavanaugh, who is Catholic, spoke about putting his faith in action during Senate confirmation hearings. He said he regularly served meals with Catholic Charities' St. Maria's Meals program in Washington and that talking to the people there helps him to understand the situation that they are in. He also spoke about coaching his daughter's CYO basketball team, and the players came in uniform to one of the hearings to show their support.

Protests about his nomination began the night he was announced as a potential replacement of Kennedy and continued until his swearing in, intensifying during Senate confirmation hearings, particularly the Sept. 27 hearing concerning Christine Blasey Ford's allegations of a sexual assault by Kavanaugh when they were in high school, which he denied.

That same day, the Jesuit publication, *America* magazine, published an online editorial saying that although it "previously endorsed the nomination of Judge Kavanaugh on the basis



CNS photo/Tyler Orsburn

Cherry blossoms are seen in front of the U.S. Supreme Court in Washington March 21.

of his legal credentials" it now said his nomination should be withdrawn "in the best interests of the country."

Other Catholic organizations urged support for Kavanaugh, including the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council, which urged its members to contact their senators and ask them to vote for his confirmation to the high court. An online effort at www.catholicvote.org asking Catholics to support a petition in support of Kavanaugh had gathered more than 17,000 signatures the day after the final Senate Judiciary Committee hearing.

The Senate confirmed Kavanaugh as a Supreme Court justice in a 50-48 vote Oct. 6, days after the Supreme Court had resumed its new term.

The court's new session did not have the drama of high-profile cases on hot-button issues.

Kavanaugh missed one of the court's two death penalty cases for the current session argued Oct. 1. The second case, argued Nov. 6, was about using an alternative execution method on a death-row inmate with a rare medical condition.

Without Kennedy, often the swing vote, on the court, all eyes were on Kavanaugh in the oral arguments in this case. His death penalty views were unknown since as a federal appeals court judge he rarely

heard capital punishment cases. But in oral arguments before the Supreme Court, his pointed questions to the state's attorney indicated he might favor the inmate's request for an alternate form of execution.

In an abortion-related case that could have come before the Supreme Court this term, Kavanaugh was among the majority of justices who agreed not to take it. The case was an appeal from Kansas and Louisiana on lower court rulings that have stopped those states from blocking Medicaid funds from going to Planned Parenthood. The case needed four justices to approve hearing arguments in order for it to move forward.

Pro-life leaders said they were disappointed with the court's decision, saying that while federal funds cannot be used for abortions, Planned Parenthood should not get Medicaid funding because its facilities primarily perform abortions.

Big cases the court ruled on

in its previous term earlier this year that had a specific Catholic Church interest included: the president's travel ban, immigration, a same-sex wedding cake, sports betting, union dues, the death penalty and pro-life pregnancy centers.

Catholic Church leaders weighed in on many of these cases, submitting friend-of-the-court briefs and issuing statements after the decisions were announced.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities USA and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network expressed disappointment with the court's 5-4 decision upholding Trump's travel ban preventing people entering the U.S. from some Muslim-majority countries.

In the case of the same-sex wedding cake, the U.S. bishops sided with the court's 7-2 decision in favor of the Colorado baker who cited religious beliefs in declining to make the wedding cake for a same-sex couple. The narrow ruling said the baker's religious freedom had been violated by the state's Civil Rights Commission, but it did not determine if a small business can invoke federal free-speech and religious-exercise rights to deny services to same-sex couples.

The Catholic bishops also sided with the court's 5-4 ruling that a California law requiring pregnancy centers to tell patients about the availability of state-funded abortion services violated the First Amendment. They disagreed with the court's 5-4 decision in the case about union dues where the court overruled

its previous decision allowing state agencies to require their union-represented employees to pay fees to the union for collective bargaining costs even if they are not union members.

One case that might have seemed under the radar for Catholic leaders was the 6-3 ruling that cleared the way for states to legalize sports betting, striking down a 1992 federal law, but editorials in at least two Catholic archdiocesan newspapers warned about some potential dangers of this decision saying it could bring about an increased addition to gambling.

In a death penalty case, the Supreme Court unanimously ruled in favor of a Texas death-row inmate, ordering a federal appellate court to reconsider his requests for funding to investigate his claims of mental illness and substance abuse.

In abortion decisions earlier this year, the justices threw out a lower court's ruling that allowed a 17-year-old last year to obtain an abortion while she was in a detention center after an illegal border crossing. The court also said it would not hear a case against an Arkansas abortion law, thus letting the state's restrictions on abortion-inducing drugs stand.

In immigration cases, the court early in the year ruled that some immigrants detained by the government can be held indefinitely and it also declined to hear and rule on whether the administration has the right to shut down the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA program, which the U.S. bishops have supported.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Filmmaker's 'Camino' documentary finally finds home on PBS

WASHINGTON (CNS) — What a long, strange trip it's been. Not walking the 500 miles in a pilgrimage from southern France to Santiago de Compostela, Spain, that Lydia B. Smith first did a decade ago. Not even making a documentary about "the Camino," as the pilgrimage is called, when she returned a year later with a camera and film crew. It was getting the documentary aired on PBS stations. At long — very long — last, Smith's hopes are being realized. "Walking the Camino: Six Ways to Santiago" is being shown in December on more than 200 PBS affiliates in 118 cities throughout the United States. Thanks to repeat showings, "Walking the Camino" will air more than 1,000 times before the year is out. Although the earliest airings are set for Dec. 15 on a handful of stations, the biggest splash will be Dec. 18. Now that PBS has joined the multicastrated universe along with other over-the-air broadcasters, "Walking the Camino" will be seen that date on the PBS subchannel World at 9 p.m. EST, with subsequent airings over the following two weeks at different times of the day, including overnight, early morning, afternoon, prime time and day parts called "early fringe" and "late fringe."

Three cardinals end service on pope's Council of Cardinals

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Three members of Pope Francis' Council of Cardinals have officially ended their service as papal advisers on the reform of the Roman Curia. In September, the council members had asked the pope for a reflection on "the work, structure and composition of the council itself, also taking into account the advanced age of some of its members." In response to that request, the pope wrote to three cardinal-members at the end of October thanking them for their service, Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office, told reporters Dec. 12. The cardinals ending their service after five years as members are Australian Cardinal George Pell, 77; Cardinal Francisco Javier Errazuriz Ossa, 85, retired archbishop of Santiago, Chile; and Cardinal Laurent Monsengwo Pasinya of Kinshasa, Congo, 79. The three cardinals have missed a number of the meetings, which are scheduled five times a year in Rome. Cardinal Pell has been on trial in Australia on multiple sex abuse charges and Cardinal Errazuriz was to face questioning by a local prosecutor over his handling of abuse allegations. The Chilean cardinal told Radio Cooperativa in November his departure was not a resignation but was because his term had ended.

Pope Francis turns 82



CNS photo/Giuseppe Lami, EPA

Pope Francis holds a baby on the eve of his 82nd birthday during a Dec. 16 audience with children and families from the Santa Marta Dispensary, a Vatican charity that offers special help to mothers and children in need, at the Vatican.

Panel: Aim of 'seamless garment' to unite Catholics on all life issues

NEW YORK (CNS) — Since Cardinal Joseph L. Bernardin introduced the "seamless garment" approach to life issues 35 years ago, the notion has been both divisive and formative for the Church, according to speakers at a Dec. 11 panel in New York. The event, "A Consistent Ethic of Life 2.0: An American Catholic Dialogue Rebooted," was held at Jesuit-run Fordham University, the site of Cardinal Bernardin's 1983 speech. The cardinal was the chair of the U.S. bishops' pro-life committee when his seminal talk connected poverty, euthanasia, nuclear war, abortion and other life issues into a single "consistent ethic of life at every stage and in every circumstance." The cardinal's presentation "ushered in a new way of viewing moral living which emphasized the protection of the unborn, care of the poor, the elderly and the environment as interrelated and intertwined," said retired Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of Tucson, Arizona, who currently is apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Las Cruces, New Mexico. "This 'out of the box' thinking is just

what was needed to move beyond the impasse that had formed within the Church and in society around life issues," he said. Some ignored the unborn focusing their passion for those on the margins. Others upheld the right to life of the unborn without any consideration for the degradation of human life found in the plight of the poor and even less for the care of creation."

Efforts to better world by Opus Prize finalists called 'noble, holy work'

PORTLAND, Ore. (CNS) — "My brother was murdered by a drive-by shooting at the age of 18 years old," says a young man from Chicago whose emotion-stained voice plays in a video. "I lost my sense of humanity at that time 'cause how could a world be so cruel to take someone away who didn't hate no one," he continues. "How do you rebuild that?" The three finalists of this year's Opus Prize, one of the world's largest faith-based awards for social entrepreneurship, are in their own ways working to rebuild such lost hope and provide opportunities for the most vulnerable — while inspiring the next generation of leaders to do the same. "These organi-

zations, led by unsung heroes, are doing noble and holy work, and the prize is meant to be a catalyst for campus and community conversations and actions," said Daniel McGinty, who helped oversee a partnership between the Opus Prize Foundation and the University of Portland. Each year a different Catholic university is chosen as a partner to select finalists and host the award ceremony. The University of Portland was founded by the Congregation of Holy Cross. The 2018 first-place \$1 million prize was presented in November to Rami Nashashibi, founder and director of Chicago's Inner-City Muslim Action Network, known as IMAN. The organization operates in a city plagued by gun violence; the young man who lost his brother in a drive-by is one of the countless people aided by the organization.

Youth, migrant ministries among recipients of USCCB home mission grants

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Recipients of grants approved by the U.S. bishops' Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions range from migrant ministry in the

Diocese of Stockton, California, to pastoral support to children and families on remote islands in the Diocese of Samoa-Pago Pago, American Samoa. In a Dec. 12 announcement, the subcommittee said it had approved \$9.5 million in grants to assist 79 U.S. mission dioceses and eparchies. Subcommittee grants aid dioceses and eparchies that would otherwise struggle due to difficult geography, impoverished populations and limited resources. Catholic Home Missions funding supports various pastoral programs, including religious education and youth ministry, priestly and religious formation, prison ministries, and lay ministry training. "Many dioceses and eparchies throughout the United States cannot provide basic pastoral services without outside assistance," said Archbishop Paul D. Etienne of Anchorage, Alaska, who was elected chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on National Collections during the bishops' fall general assembly in Baltimore Nov. 12-14. "Through the generosity of Catholics to the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, we can help strengthen the Church here at home," he said in a statement.

Late Trappist monk still has impact on people of all faiths, says priest

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (CNS) — Fifty years after his death, Father Thomas Merton is still helping to draw others nearer to Christ through his writings and the communities they tend to create, said Father Lawrence Morey. Like the late monk, Father Morey is a member of the Cistercians of the Strict Observance, known as Trappists. Father Merton lived and wrote from his order's Abbey of Gethsemani near Bardstown. He died Dec. 10, 1968, near Bangkok, where he was attending a conference for monks from the Order of Cistercians and the Order of St. Benedict. Father Morey gave the homily during a Mass of remembrance honoring Father Merton Dec. 10 at the Cathedral of the Assumption in downtown Louisville. Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville presided. The priest said the support of a community is essential in finding Christ and most of Father Merton's writings show how important community was to him. Father Morey shared with his listeners that the burial of a brother monk at the Abbey of Gethsemani is a "community affair." All the monks take part by singing and praying. Six are chosen as pallbearers with the responsibility of lowering the body into the ground. "We all participate at this point by holding our breath," he said. "What if one of the brothers slip and loses his grip? But we've always managed to get our brother to his final resting place without any major accident."

Prayer service to close 150th anniversary year of Poor Handmaids

DONALDSON — This year has been memorable year for the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. In addition to celebrating the 150th anniversary of their presence in America, PHJC foundress Blessed Catherine Kasper was canonized as St. Katharina Kasper in October. Celebrations and events have taken place throughout the year for both special occasions.

To close out the 150th anniversary year, a prayer service will be held Sunday, Dec. 30, at 2 p.m. EST in Ancilla Domini Chapel at The Center at Donaldson. All are invited. A reception will be held following the service.

The Center at Donaldson, 9601 Union Road, Plymouth, is sponsored by the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. For more information visit www.poorhandmaids.org.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton students bake for charity

FORT WAYNE — First-grade students of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, Fort Wayne, sold more than 4,000 homemade cookies and raised more than \$1,200 during a "Goodies for God" fundraising event in early December. The money was donated to three charities: LiveOn Goods; The Little Children's Home in TayTay, Philippines; and staff medical needs. LiveOn Goods

AROUND THE DIOCESE

Notre Dame students confirmed



University of Notre Dame/Peter Ringenberg

Around three dozen University of Notre Dame students have completed their preparation and were confirmed in the Catholic faith on Dec. 2, before winter break. The sacrament was conferred by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart and attended by their families and friends.

founder Helen Nill presented principal Lois Widner and first-grade teachers Alyssa Knuth and Julie Peters with special bibs purchased for patients at Saint Anne Communities' Alzheimer's Unit.

Support group for divorced Catholics

FORT WAYNE — The Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend will host a 12-week support group for divorced men and women from 7-9 p.m. Monday evenings beginning Jan. 7 and continuing through March 25 at the Archbishop Noll Catholic Center in Fort Wayne.

The gatherings will feature Ascension Press' "Surviving Divorce" DVD series, which covers topics such as shock and grief, anger and forgiveness, money issues, helping children cope, and annulment and remarriage. It is based on the teachings of the Catholic Church and is open to anyone who needs comfort, counsel and clarity after divorce.

The cost of the program is \$20 and includes a personal guide for each participant. To register, contact Allison Sturm at asturm@diocesefwsb.org or 260-399-1452. For more information, visit www.diocesefwsb.org/Divorce-Ministry. Registration deadline is Friday, Jan. 4. This group is limited to 12 people.

Decatur youth tour basilica



University of Notre Dame/Peter Ringenberg

Members of the youth group of St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Decatur, traveled to the University of Notre Dame on Dec. 2 and toured the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. During the tour they happened across Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, who was at the basilica for the confirmation Mass of Notre Dame students. He welcomed the students and their youth ministry leaders.

Our Lady of Guadalupe at Luers



Tim Johnson

Students from St. Joseph School, Fort Wayne, present paper roses before a statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe at Bishop Luers High School on Dec. 12. The flowers were made by the Bishop Luers students as a special tribute to Our Lady on her feast day, as well as a sign of welcome and solidarity with the St. Joseph students, who are displaced from their usual classrooms due to electrical problems at the school.

GOD IN OUR MIDST: FAVORITE CH

BY JEANNIE EWING

A Christmas journey of hope and peace

For Kristine DiScala, a parishioner at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Fort Wayne, Christmas is about the journey. "Every year for Christmas, my brother and parents and I would drive to the middle of Kansas and stay with my grandparents for about a week," she began. Her family spent the weeks beforehand getting their own Christmas preparations complete, such as sending cards, baking, decorating and wrapping gifts. It was a sacred time of year for them, a time in which they set aside to spend with family – and without interruption.

Once they were on the road, DiScala felt an incredible peace about the journey. There was hope and anticipation about seeing her grandparents and extended family. "We never went on expensive family vacations," she noted. "When you don't live where your extended family lives, you make it a priority to be with them during the holidays and when it matters most."

DiScala remembers her maternal grandparents' hospitality and generosity. They would stay up and await the arrival of her family, even if it was very late in the evening — sometimes past midnight. Their excitement matched that of their granddaughter's and her brothers and her parents. DiScala recalled the little things that made their stay go smoothly and set the tone for a relaxing and enjoyable time together.

"While we stayed with them, my grandparents would make our favorite cookies and meals. We knew they were so grateful for us taking the long road trip out to see them," she mused. "My brother, who was a teen at the time, played guitar, and my grandpa would rent him an amp so that he could play his music for the family while we were together." The simple, little things such as these were what made DiScala realize how much her grandparents loved her.



Kristine DiScala

"They were always present. They never multitasked and didn't schedule anything the whole week we were there. We would just sit there and visit with them, read, talk, etc. Those were special memories for me."

DiScala and her family also visited her paternal grandparents, who lived in the same small Kansas town her maternal grandparents did. She recalled how they helped form her faith in a very specific way. "They helped me develop a devotion to Our Lady. Though they died when I was young, I remember they talked so much about Mary and the saints, and we'd pray a rosary with them in the car," she said. They also visited the grave sites of deceased family members together and would add fresh flowers while praying for the departed souls.

Those memories have made DiScala more intentional and conscientious about how she celebrates the holiday season. "If I remind myself that Advent isn't the season about getting Christmas preparations done but rather a time of quiet and solitude, then I think more about Mary's journey on the back of the donkey and how she prepared her heart to welcome Jesus, too."

Small family, personal stories

Growing up in a small family with an older sister and his parents, David Eiserle, a member of St. Charles Borromeo, Fort Wayne, cherished Christmas, because it was a time of security and warmth — a time in which he was able to get to know each member of his family on a deeper level. "Christmas taught me about the importance of family," he said. "Since we had such a small family, and most of the elder members are now gone, I got to know everyone on a more personal, intimate level than if we had 40 people gathered together."

To Eiserle, Christmas was a cozy and safe feeling, a time of year in which he knew what to expect because of particular traditions and the flow of the holiday. He and his family would spend the night at his maternal grandfather's house on Dec. 23, the adults doing most of the preparation for the Christmas Eve meal. "It was a German tradition to celebrate Christmas on Christmas Eve," he explained.

Christmas Eve morning welcomed a leisurely breakfast with lots of time to chat, laugh, wrap any last-minute gifts and set the table for a formal feast. "Grandpa was very traditional and wanted the meal to be fancy," Eiserle added. The fine linens adorned the table, usually with a beautiful floral centerpiece as the focal point. Fine china and real silverware were always used, along with crystal wine glasses. "Grandpa taught my older sister and me how to properly set the table with different sized forks, spoons and knives," he shared.

After the meal, the family would gather around the Christmas tree in the living room and the eldest male member of the family — at the time, his grandfather — would read the Christmas story from the Gospel of Luke. "The biggest part of Christmas for me was having the focal point be on reading the Christmas story, which has always helped me remember



David Eiserle

why we have Christmas and what we are truly celebrating," Eiserle added. It made all the fancy things their family did make sense in the reality that they were welcoming the King of kings into their homes and hearts. "But truly Christmas is about the simplicity of life, not the extravagance," he noted.

Now that Eiserle is an adult, he spends more quality time with his parents, sister and his nieces than he believes he would have if he had not treasured those holiday gatherings as a child. He is grateful to spend leisurely time with his parents, just enjoying a meal together or watching a movie and talking about life, hardships and blessings.

He appreciates his family now more than ever before, because he sees them as interesting. "I realize now that my family are people who have real stories and are fun to be with," he said.

Eiserle believes that Christmases past shaped him into the man he is today, both in celebrating the birth of Christ and in remembering the value of taking time to show his loved ones how much they mean to him. "Christmas brought us all together," he concluded. "Those memories mean so much more to me now, because I know God gave me the gift of my family to love, just like He gave us the gift of Jesus."

The best gift present to th

For many, Christmas has become a season of dread because the secular implication is that material gifts are preferred to the simpler gifts of one's time, of a handmade card, of a conversation. For Claire Stuertzenberger, a member of St. Louis, Besancon, Parish in New Haven, memories of giving back to her elderly grandmother, even as a young girl, are paramount when she considers this time of year.

"When I was a kid, my Aunt Marilyn took me and all of my girl cousins to my [maternal] grandmother's house so that we could help her decorate it and spend some time with her," she remembered. "My grandma lived in Jay County, which was about an hour away from my house, so it was a road trip for us. I started going when I was about 8 years old and kept going every year until my grandma moved to Saint Anne's [retirement community] about five years ago."

Stuertzenberger and her female family members piled in her aunt's vehicle and would anticipate the joy they were about to bring to their grandma. It was a time of laughter, as the girls would giggle while changing the lyrics to certain Christmas carols in order to pass the time in the car.

Once they arrived at their grandmother's house, they would put up her artificial tree and help her decorate it with the lights and ornaments. Then they'd put up smaller decorations, such as her Nativity set, and head outside to complete the day with festive décor on her home's exterior.

"While we were decorating," said Stuertzenberger, "Grandma would linger around and watch us, just talking, and after we were finished, we'd hang out with her by watching Christmas movies, eating brownies and playing the piano while singing together."

Stuertzenberger explained that the reason this memory is so special to her is that it set Christmas apart from the rest of the year. It was different, and they got to spend quality time

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

is being
those we love

'Singing together reminds us to praise God'



Claire Stuertzenberger

together as a family. Plus, she and her grandma have always had a special relationship. "I knew she was a faith-filled woman who attended daily Mass, which was a great example to me," Stuertzenberger shared. "Even though I was young, it made a huge impression on me."

Once her grandmother started losing her memory, Stuertzenberger's mother and her siblings took turns driving to take care of her on a weekly basis. Stuertzenberger was able to spend time with her more frequently this way, which she appreciated. Today, she and her cousins visit their grandmother every Wednesday to pray the rosary with her at Saint Anne's.

For Stuertzenberger, Christmas isn't about what a person receives, but about what they give — making time to spend with family in order to create special memories and moments of laughter and love. "We're celebrating Jesus as Emmanuel — "God with us" — and He is the best present we can receive. But Christmas is also about being present to the people God has given us to love. This time with my family is ... a way for me to remind myself that this is a sacred time of year, and that there's something special about this time," she concluded.

St. Augustine of Hippo famously noted that "he who sings, prays twice." For Father Daniel Whelan, parochial vicar at Our Lady of Good Hope Parish, Fort Wayne, music has been an integral part of his memories surrounding both Christmases past and those of the present day. The sights, smells and sounds picked up by the senses and integrated into memories are what, to him, make Christmas a special time of celebrating the gift of family and of the birth of Jesus.

"One of my favorite memories," Father Whelan explained, "began when I was in about fifth grade and started playing the piano. During Christmastime, I'd begin playing favorite hymns and sacred music, and my four brothers and mom would gather around the piano for an impromptu singalong." What began as a very informal, casual tinkering on the piano has become both a tradition and beloved memory in the Whelan family.

Father Whelan shared that, after that first occasion in fifth grade, each Christmas, the family would continue to gather together and sing their favorite songs of the season. "It was eventually expected," he said, "and as my family would congregate around the piano, I'd sit down and play."

One particular Christmas, Father Whelan's older brother, who has seven children, decided to send different vocal parts, such as tenor and bass, ahead of time to different family members so that they could practice their singing before everyone came together to celebrate Christmas. The tradition has continued.

What makes this memory so special is that Father Whelan's mother would harmonize and had "the most beautiful voice," he said. Now that she is gone from earth, the Whelan family continues to incorporate memories of her by singing her favorite hymn, Silent Night, and



Father Daniel Whelan

remiscing about years past when she would make Christmas candy while singing in the kitchen.

"Silent Night is such a tender hymn," Father Whelan reflected. "Think about the verse, 'round yon Virgin, Mother and Child.' I think it touched her heart as a mother with her own children and also as she pondered the birth of Jesus." These fond memories engender love among Father Whelan and his family. He explained that "this is one of the messages of Christmas: about Jesus' love for us."

Father Whelan also shared that his Christmas memories of gathering with family members and singing songs about the birth of Jesus is something also done in Church, when voices are lifted in song to praise God. It was in the silence of listening to music, too, and in the glow of candles in his home that he'd remember that all people are supposed to be a reflection of Jesus as the light of the world — a world in darkness.

"The Christmas message is that people came and gathered in the front of the manger to worship and honor Jesus. They were singing God's praises. In that darkness of Bethlehem, they were just grateful to be in the presence of Jesus as the light."



PILGRIMAGE

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Young pilgrims prepare for World Youth Day

BY STEPHANIE A. PATKA

Highly anticipatory teenagers, young adults, priests, religious sisters, parents and chaperones met with Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades in Pierceton on Dec. 10 in preparation for the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend's pilgrimage to Panama for World Youth Day in January. The group, filled with energetic excitement, shared a meal together and then discussed their preparations and plans for the trip.

Sophomore Emanuel Alaniz and junior Sophia Rodriguez first heard about the pilgrimage through the St. Adalbert Parish, South Bend, youth group, led by Father Ryan Pietrocario, CSC. He will attend the international event. Rodriguez said what made her want to go on the pilgrimage was not necessarily that it was in Panama, but the fact that she would be attending with hundreds of thousands of her Catholic peers. "Honestly, everything makes me want to go on this trip. It's about the entire event," she said.

Alaniz agreed. "I'm kind of nervous, really excited, and I know that this is an experience that I will never forget, so I'm hoping to make the most of the entire trip."

Both students have been preparing for the pilgrimage with prayer, by praying with their families and staying active in their parishes and youth groups.

Diocesan staff distributed travel information, packing lists

and important checklists of things to do before the pilgrims leave the morning of Jan. 20 from Chicago. Bishop Rhoades shared with them important preparatory steps that would form them spiritually for the journey, as well. He encouraged them to say the World Youth Day prayer, and to learn the World Youth Day song so that they could sing it in both English and Spanish. "Say the words of the prayer slowly, so that you can really reflect on their meaning," he suggested.

Bishop Rhoades noted that the designated saints of World Youth Day were excellent companions for the journey, and asked the pilgrims to learn about their life stories in order to reflect and be inspired by how the holy men and women were able to lead others to Christ. "I highly recommend that you keep a prayer journal with you before and during your pilgrimage to Panama," he said. "In this journal, you can write down the prayer intentions of those people who have asked for your prayers, intentions for your family and even for yourself and your vocation. There are many graces that flow from going on a trip such as this."

"I love the theme for this World Youth Day," he continued. "'Behold. I am the handmaid of the Lord, be it done unto me according to your Word.' This is Mary's 'yes,' her fiat. They are the greatest words of faith because she trusted and believed. Mary's perfect example of openness to God's will is an example



Stephanie A. Patka

A young pilgrim is welcomed by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades to a preparatory meeting Dec. 10 at St. Xavier Parish, Pierceton, which took place to prepare diocesan teens and young adults for their upcoming experience at World Youth Day in Panama.

to all of us."

The pilgrims had the opportunity to ask questions of others who had attended previous World Youth Day events. All of this year's WYD participants were encouraged to keep in mind that while they would be

exposed to very interesting and beautiful sites, this was not a sightseeing tour. Rather, it would be an opportunity to deepen their

faith and devotion by learning about other cultures, their histories and how those histories are rooted in a deep devotion of faith.

On this pilgrimage in particular, Bishop Rhoades added, there will be numerous opportunities to talk to their peers from other countries.

"This can be a lifelong memory of a beautiful spiritual experience, if you approach it asking God to help you grow closer to Him. You have the chance to experience what it means to be Catholic among the universal Church."

Father Terrence Coonan Jr. from St. Therese, Little Flower Parish in South Bend, closed the meeting with a prayer and encouraged the pilgrims to travel light. "Open yourselves up. If your hands are full, you have no opportunity to take the gifts that God wants to give you."

Opportunities will be made available to those who are not traveling to World Youth Day to be spiritually formed along with the pilgrims. Resources including the World Youth Day patron saints, special lectio divina prayers, songs and additional prayers can be found in *Today's Catholic*, at www.todayscatholic.com and on the *Today's Catholic* app, available on Google Play and the App Store.

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Let us adore Him: finding God's love this Advent

BY JEANNIE EWING

A fancy book cover with a catchy title isn't always needed to grab a person's attention in Advent season. In fact, perhaps the simpler, smaller books reveal a hidden treasure that isn't visible to most.

At first glance, Father Richard N. Fragomeni's tiny tome of Advent and Christmas reflections seems so unassuming that one would be inclined to overlook it. But the navy-blue cover with a simple star of Bethlehem hovering above the title, "Let Us Adore Him: Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas," captures exactly what it means to seek Christ and give Him due homage. He is, after all, the light of the world, the Word incarnate. What could be more apt than allowing all ostentatious pretention to fall by the wayside in order to welcome the one born into poverty, that we might imitate His poverty of spirit?

Father Fragomeni's angle, in the book, is to take the daily Communion Antiphon, either recited or sung during Advent Masses, and base a thoughtful reflection on it, concluding with a rhetorical question for further prayer and contemplation. What better way to adore Jesus and discover His love for us than to ponder the Communion Antiphon, especially after receiving Him in the Eucharist?

A glimpse from the book's

brief introduction paves the way for the reader to engage in intimate conversation and deepen his love for the Christ-Child with this excerpt: "Nothing will ever satisfy us but the love of God. Nothing will ever tame the restlessness of our desire except the joy of heart that comes with living in God's light and sharing that light with the world."

The author understands well the modern struggle most people face and attempt to fight against: the chaos of busyness, distractions, stress and worry. Each reflection invites the reader to enter the sanctuary of his heart and set aside that sacred space of solitude to truly prepare for Jesus to be born anew this Christmas.

In fact, Father Fragomeni doesn't conclude the book with the Fourth Sunday of Advent. Instead, he segues from Communion Antiphons to the grand finale of O Antiphons leading up to Christmas Day, and then continues through the feast of the Baptism of Jesus. What's equally beautiful is that he includes solemnities and feast days always celebrated during Advent, such as the feast of St. Nicholas, the Immaculate Conception and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

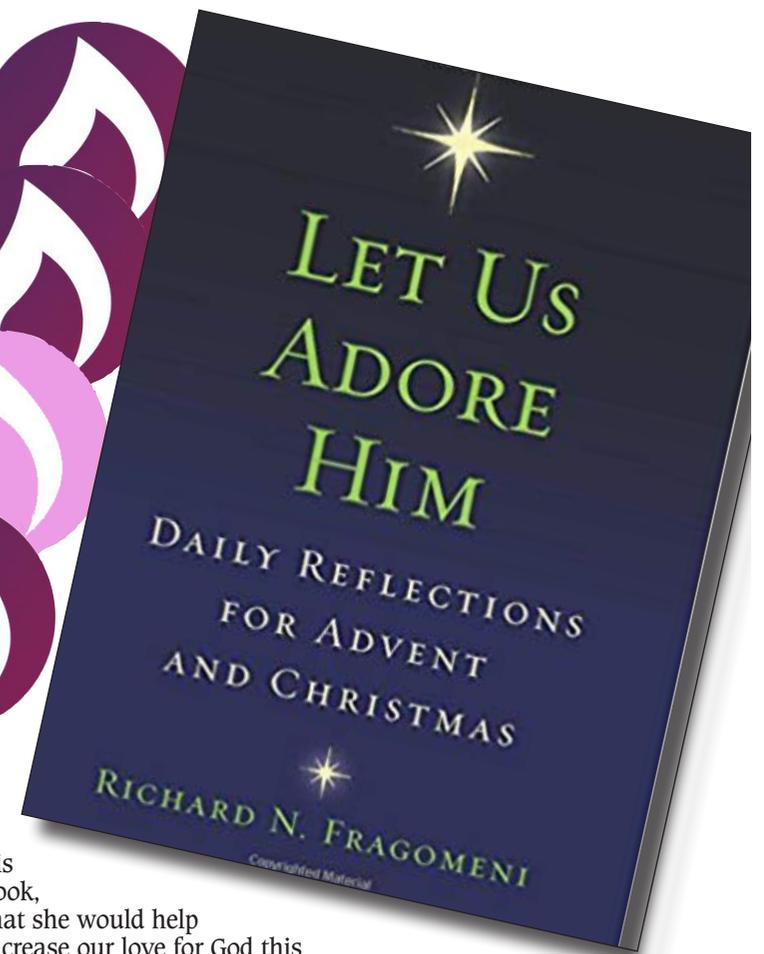
Endearing and heartwarming stories are peppered throughout the book, in order to make relevant both Scripture and the rich traditions celebrated this time of year. On Christmas Day, the author concludes his reflection with, "Christmas is an opportu-

nity for us to rejoice in the Word becoming flesh, to savor this wonderful mystery with all our senses, so that in turn we can go out and be seen and heard and touched and scented and tasted as the living Christ this Christmastime and each day of the new year."

Father Fragomeni encourages the reader not only to learn more about Jesus, but to embrace His love in such a way that one becomes love incarnate. True union with God doesn't happen during one Advent season. But the Church, in its wisdom, knew that it can be helpful during this time to step away from hectic lives and continue to reach for Jesus in a new, holy way.

Advent is that time in which love for Jesus necessarily deepens. And that love is compounded day by day, throughout the year, when His faithful continue to dialogue with Him in tender conversation that draws them away from self and inward to where He dwells. "Let Us Adore Him" will draw the reader to that place within, where there may be longing for a Savior to deliver us from sin, fear, worry and suffering.

The reader might consider praying with Our Lady the heartfelt words written by Father Fragomeni on the final pages of



his book, that she would help increase our love for God this Advent season: "Star of the new evangelization, help us to bear radiant witness to communion, service, ardent and generous faith, justice and love of the poor, that the joy of the Gospel may reach to the ends of the earth, illuminating even the fringes of our world."

"Let Us Adore Him: Daily Reflections for Advent and Christmas," by Father Richard N. Fragomeni (Franciscan Media, 2014) 112 pp., \$3.99

Book recounts Notre Dame's little-known fight against Ku Klux Klan

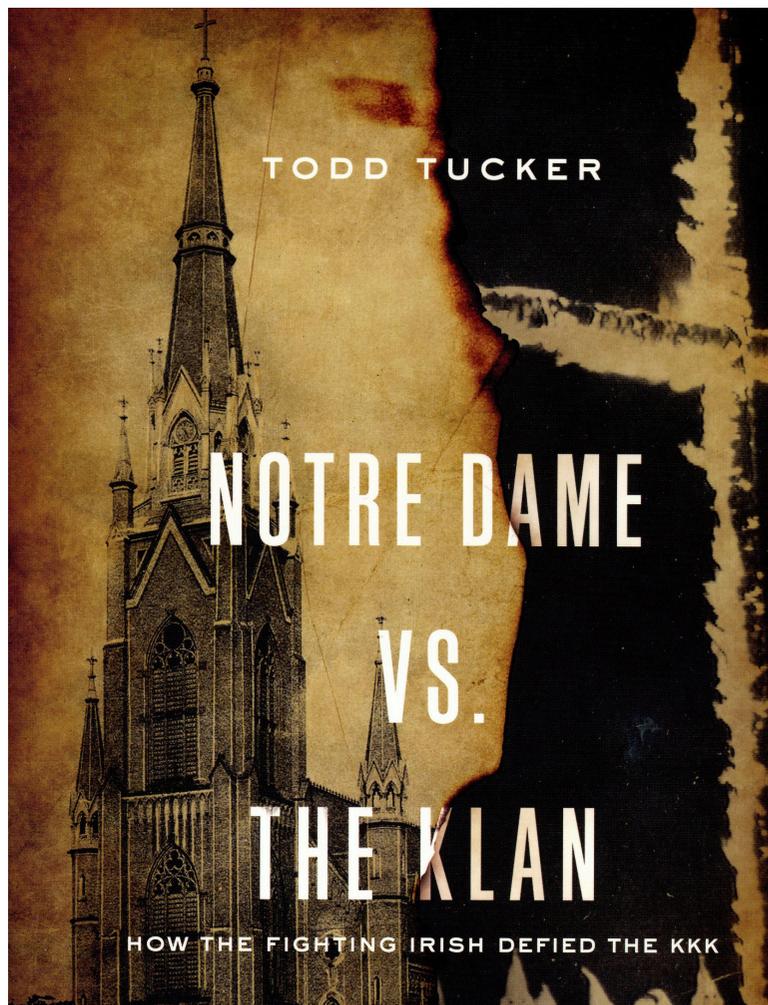
BY EUGENE J. FISHER

This excellent book will engage Catholic readers with the history not only of University of Notre Dame but also of the anti-Catholicism that prevailed in much of America up to and even after the World War II.

It centers on a violent clash between the students of the university and a much larger group of members of the infamous Ku Klux Klan in South Bend, Indiana, in 1924.

The KKK is usually remembered as a Southern group, primarily involved in suppressing African-Americans freed from slavery after the Civil War. Its incursion into Indiana, and the fact that it represented the views of a majority of Indianans, to the point that most of the political leaders of the state were members or sympathizers of the Klan, is less well known.

The three Ks stood for, if readers will excuse this vulgar language, Koons (African-Americans), Kikes (Jews) and Catholics. The Klan welcomed as members all native-born, white, Protestant, gentile males. Catholics and Jews, of course,



were the immigrants of the time who were seen by many as a threat to the WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant) "purity" of America. The racial bigotry of the Klan, of course, mirrored the anti-Semitic racial bigotry then rising in Germany in the wake of World War I.

When the Klan in 1924 announced that it would stage a major march through the streets of South Bend, students of the university, not heeding the advice of the university faculty that they should remain on campus, mobilized and marched into South Bend to confront those who sought to intimidate them. A violent clash was inevitable, with the Klan ultimately routed.

Author Todd Tucker centers his gripping narrative on three people: D.C. Stephenson, the Klan leader who organized the march; Father Matthew Walsh, then president of the university; and a representative student, Bill Foohey.

Tucker begins with the founding of the school in the early

1840s and its often-painful development as a Catholic institution in an area dominated by Protestants. He sets the story in the context of the larger history of American Catholicism. He features the importance of D.W. Griffith's racist movie, "The Birth of a Nation," in 1915, and its popular success, as precipitating the revival of the KKK and its spread around the country, North as well as South.

He describes the slow growth of Notre Dame over this same period, with the "immigrant" Catholics and the "native-born" Klan members both rising in prominence, to the point where the university became a symbol for the Klan of the "threat" posed by Catholic immigrants to the WASP nature of the "true" America.

The university survived the Klan's attack and the anti-Catholicism of the period, as Tucker narrates, to take its place as one of America's leading institutions of higher learning. This uplifting story gives hope in our own challenging times.

"Notre Dame vs. the Klan: How the Fighting Irish Defied the KKK" by Todd Tucker. University of Notre Dame Press (Notre Dame, 2018). 312 pp., \$20.

Fisher is a professor of theology at St. Leo University in Florida.

The morning offering — reconsidered

Many of us have had the habit — perhaps instilled in us by our parents or teachers — of offering the day to God. I recall, as a grade school student at St. Thomas the Apostle in Elkhart, toddling into the classroom at the beginning of the day and hearing the teacher say, “OK, boys and girls, let’s stand and pray.” We would rise, turn and face the crucifix and together pray, “O Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary, I offer you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day ...” and so on. It was a fine habit to instill, the enacted and vocalized reminder that we are to make an offering to God of our day and all that it includes.

St. Josemaria Escrivá wrote of the “heroic minute” — the moment of initial consciousness when we arise in the morning — as pivotal in establishing the course or trajectory of our day. For example, if my first waking thoughts are, for instance, “Ugh ... what a day I have ahead of me ... especially that dreadful meeting at 2 this afternoon ... ugh,” we can be fairly certain that we will be prophets of our own unhappiness, frustration and resentment. However, if our first conscious thoughts each day involve turning immediately to God in praise, wonder and gratitude, it is quite possible that our day will not be so marked by grumbling, ingratitude and sin. It is not that we are rewarded for being positive in our attitude, much less shielded from unpleasantness by a special divine favor in response to our heroic minute, but rather that because we have — with God’s grace — begun our day with Him and in Him,

we will likely be very different in our orientation all day than if we had sought to launch out of bed and march out into the day without Him.

I humbly suggest here two practices that I have undertaken in recent years which have helped me as I limp along as a disciple.

First, I suggest, as you roll out of bed in the morning, wander to the shower, stumble toward your first cup of coffee or start to make the bed, that you renew your baptismal promises. Renounce Satan, all his works and all his empty show. In doing this, be specific. And be personal. What I mean by “specific and personal” is, don’t simply renounce Satan as an avatar of abstract evil-ness hovering somewhere in the cosmos, but acknowledge Satan as quite real and whose demonic agents desire quite literally our damnation by making us complicit in their rebellion.

After renouncing Satan, be specific about which particular demons you are renouncing, rather than doing so generically or abstractly. And be personal — use the second person in rebuking the demonic, rather than the third (which keeps them at an unsafe distance). For example, feel free to use formulas such as “I renounce you, demon of anger,” or “I renounce you, spirit of envy,” or “I renounce you, demon of lust”; the list can — and should — go on. Tailor your renunciations, after your preliminary renunciation of Satan, to those demons you battle most regularly; we all have embedded sins and recurring struggles. This kind of renunciation acknowledges that fact. And then recite



THE HUMAN CONDITION

MSGR. MICHAEL HEINTZ

with conviction the Apostles’ Creed, that affirmation of the Truth of things (the devil and his minions thrive on lies and half-truths) in the wake of your rejection of all that is low, mean, ugly and sinful; such an affirmation will properly orient your day. Try it. You may find it helpful.

Second, and here is where the title of this essay is perhaps meant to be slightly provocative, before making an offering of your day to God, begin first by receiving. It is a simple but too often forgotten theological truth that we have nothing to offer God that He has not first given us. To begin our prayers with “offering” may subtly convince us that we’re doing God a great favor or service. Before we can offer God anything, we must first recognize that everything we offer Him is first His gift to us. Our offering in return of the gift does nothing for God; but it does affect us. Deeply. We begin to live out of gratitude and wonder, rather than entitlement or resentment.

Try these or similar words: “Lord, help me to receive this day — every encounter, conversation, every meeting, every task and obligation — as Your gift. Help me to receive it with joy and to return it to You with gratitude.” Such a prayer is indeed an offering, but it’s an

HEINTZ, page 13

Christmas is about what is right

Lately, the news has really weighed me down. It was heartbreaking to see the raging fires in California night after night and take in scenes of ravaged land, smoldering ruins and broken lives.

There are so many shootings that the less sensational ones hardly catch our attention anymore. How did mass shooting become “less sensational”?

Migrants seeking reprieve from gang violence and unspeakable brutality will be turned away with the threats of family separation, tear gas and possibly lethal force. The climate report issued by the federal government spares no words on the devastating consequences to our well-being.

New reports of escalating opioid addiction, alcohol-related deaths and anxiety among young people point to human pain of epidemic proportions.

With all these in my heart, I approached the Advent season. How does the Christmas promise of a peaceable kingdom, joy and hope reconcile with the realities of our bungling, fears, self-interest and capacity for destruction?

Yet this is the world that Christ chooses to make a home in, I sense not despite the suffering we both inflict and experience, but because of it. The conditions of Christ’s birth were defined by a political edict for a census to update the count for tax collection; no hospitality was extended to His parents who ended up in a cave; a king sent the family into exile upon ordering a murderous purge to preserve his power.

But Christ’s birth is not a state-



OUR GLOBAL FAMILY

CAROLYN WOO

ment of what is wrong in the world. Rather, it is a statement of what is right. He came to sanctify the world. Thus, we and everyone else (including those we disagree with and find reprehensible) are made holy.

Regardless of what we have or have not done, He finds each of us worthy: He claims each of us as His brother, sister, friend, co-worker, beloved. Like us, life could bring Him down; He would weep for His pain, the loss of a friend and the suffering He foresaw. But He also celebrated feasts, shared meals and threw the banquet that still continues today.

Never mind the squalor and oppression in the background of His birth; in the foreground are His earthly father who chose to protect His betrothed despite the perception of betrayal, and His mother who accepted whatever came because it came from God.

In Jesus, God has made Himself love among us and in us. Even a French wine merchant recognized transcendence when he penned the verses in “O Holy Night”: “Long lay the world in sin and error pining. Till he appeared and the soul felt its worth. ... Chains he shall break, for the slave is our brother.”

WOO, page 13

Receive the Lord, the king of peace



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Fourth Sunday of Advent Luke 1:39-45

This weekend observes the last Sunday in Advent. The first reading is from the Book of Micah, who is regarded as one of the minor prophets, in large part because of the book’s brevity. It contains only seven chapters. By contrast, the Book of Isaiah has 66 chapters.

The author was a contemporary of Isaiah, the author of the first section of the Book of Isaiah.

Very few biographical facts about the author of Micah are known. He came from a small village some 25 miles southwest

of Jerusalem, but nothing else is known of his background.

As did so many prophets of ancient Israel, Micah was determined to call his people, the Chosen People, back to God and away from sin. He argued for piety and for loyalty to the covenant with God. Furthermore, he warned that indifference to God only led to disaster, personal as well as national.

In his day, piety was in short supply. Greed and exploitation overwhelmed the economy, merely indications of rampant personal greed. Religious practices were sparse and often insincere, and poorly presented when they did occur.

Amid all this, Micah promised that a savior will come. This savior will lead the people away from sin and to God. The savior will come from Bethlehem.

Here, Micah obliquely refers to David, who was born in Bethlehem, without mentioning his name. David was important as king of Israel. His royal role was not primarily political, but

rather religious. His task was to see that the people obeyed God.

Micah forecasted that when the Savior becomes king, all will be well.

For its second reading, the Church this weekend gives us a lesson from the Book of Hebrews. Heavy with its Hebrew symbolism, this epistle also is renowned for brilliantly extolling Jesus as Lord and as the Lamb of God.

In Hebrews, Jesus appears as the perfect victim and priest. His sacrifice on Calvary was sublime, perfect and utterly unique. Also, it was eternal. Its effects of reconciling humanity with God will never cease. Thus, no other sacrifices are necessary. All has been accomplished.

St. Luke’s Gospel furnishes the last reading. It is the story of the Visitation. Mary travels from her own home to a place in the hills of Judah. Traditionally, it has been thought that this place is the site now called Ein Karem. Once a few miles from Jerusalem, it has been absorbed by the growth of the city and for

all practical purposes is today a part of Jerusalem.

Mary goes to meet her cousin, Elizabeth, the wife of Zachariah. Elizabeth herself is pregnant. Since Elizabeth was past the childbearing age for a woman, her conception was regarded as miraculous. Her child had a special destiny. He was holy. Elizabeth’s unborn child will be John the Baptist.

Elizabeth realizes that Mary is expecting a child, but Mary’s child will be the Messiah. Elizabeth’s unborn child understands the profound character of all that is transpiring, and the unborn child senses God in the presence of Mary and her own unborn infant. Elizabeth and her unborn testify to the Messiah.

Reflection

It is the last weekend of Advent. Christmas will be within the week. For almost everyone, it will be a busy, hurried day, even if it is a day of excitement,

anticipation and joy.

Nevertheless, there is time to make Christmas a personal spiritual event. So, in these readings, during Advent’s last weekend, the Church calls us to Jesus. He is everything, the Church emphatically and joyfully declares. In the words of Hebrews, in the words of Luke, Jesus is the answer to every human need.

READINGS

Sunday: Mt 5:1-4a Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 Heb 10:5-10 Lk 1:39-45

Monday: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Ps 89:2-5, 27, 29 Lk 1:67-79

Tuesday: Is 52:7-10 Ps 98:1-6 Heb 1:1-6 Jn 1:1-18

Wednesday: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59 Ps 31:3-4, 6-8, 16-17 Mt 10:17-22

Thursday: 1 Jn 1:1-4 Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 Jn 20:1a, 2-8

Friday: 1 Jn 1:5—2:2 Ps 124:2-5, 7b-8 Mt 2:13-18

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:3-11 Ps 96:1-3, 5b-6 Lk 2:22-35

Cleansed and conformed to God's will

Father, We Thank Thee, Who Hast Planted" has long been one of my favorite hymns. Its tune, taken from the 16th-century Genevan Psalter, is eminently singable. The hymn text — when not corrupted by that politically-correct scoundrel, "alt.," — is even better, for Francis Bland Tucker's lyrics put 21st-century congregations in touch with the second generation of Christians — and perhaps even the first — by combining various phrases from an ancient Christian prayer book and catechism, the Didache.

Scholars continue to debate whether the Didache, more formally known as "The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," comes to us from the second or first Christian centuries, but the weight of academic opinion now favors the earlier date. Thus, "the Teaching" ("Didache" in Greek) links us to what biblical scholar Raymond Brown called "the churches the apostles left behind:" the Christians who were taught by those who were taught by the Lord Himself. Singing "Father, We Thank Thee, Who Hast Planted," we are praying as second-generation Christians, formed by those who had known the Lord Jesus and were witnesses to His resurrection, prayed.

That should be both a consolation and a challenge as the Church prepares to begin a new liturgical year in this season of Catholic grief and anger. Why? Because the primitive Eucharistic Prayer found in the Didache, and the hymn that Father Tucker wrote from it, remind us that the Church is always in need of purification: "Watch o'er Thy Church, O Lord, in mercy/save it from evil, guard it still/Perfect it in Thy Love, unite it/cleansed and

conformed unto Thy will."

That the Church needs cleansing is not much in doubt. And that cleansing will necessarily involve everyone in the Church. All of us are called to live chastity as the integrity of love. All of us are called to support each other in meeting that lifelong challenge — by prayer, counsel, example and fraternal correction when necessary. No one should doubt that, in this matter of the integrity of love, living "cleansed and conformed" to the divine will can be difficult, especially in today's cultural circumstances. That is all the more reason for intensified prayer and penance in Advent and throughout the Church year, asking the Lord to watch over His Church in mercy, saving it from evil and guarding it from the Evil One.

Reaching too easily for Satan as the explanation of a Church crisis or a historical disaster should be avoided. Ignoring Satan is just as dangerous, however. And the Evil One is surely a factor in sowing the evil with which the Catholic Church is contending today. Sexual predation has as many causes as there are sexual predators, but each act of sexual abuse is a manifestation of evil and of a victory for the Evil One. Malfeasance among bishops — whether it be rooted in cowardice, a false notion of the imperatives of institutional maintenance, or personal corruption — is not just a matter of managerial mistakes; the failures of the shepherds touch the "mysterium iniquitatis," the "mystery of evil," and that should be recognized at every level of the Church's life. The people who wrote the Didache knew that, it seems. So should we.



GEORGE WEIGEL

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

At the end of one liturgical year and the beginning of a new year of grace, the Church reads from the apocalyptic literature of the Old and New Testaments. Whether the seer is Daniel in Babylon or John on Patmos, the message is similar: Do not flee from difficult, even horrific, situations, but live responsibly even when things seem to fall apart — perhaps especially in those moments when the foundations seem to be crumbling. Here, too, is a lesson for this season, in which so many Catholics are saying, "I have to do something."

That's true; we all do. We must all intensify prayer and penance. We should all be inviting to church those who have left out of boredom, anger, confusion or disgust. We should all support the good priests and bishops we know, and we should firmly call clergy who are wayward to a change of heart and a change of life. It may seem as if Jesus is asleep in the storm-tossed boat, and we should call to Him for help. But He also expects us to do something, and "something" will always be close at hand.

George Weigel is Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

ful — which is not the same thing as successful — than beginning our day with dread or pre-emptive resentment.

It is a function of all the faithful, by virtue of their baptismal priesthood, to "offer spiritual sacrifices" (1 Peter 2.5) to God, not limited to mere pious thoughts or gestures, but from the very fabric of their lives; lives that are often muddled, marked by a deep desire for holiness and simultaneously by a profound proclivity to sin. These offerings, small and large, ultimately and as an ensemble constitute the gift of self, offered in union with Christ in His perfect self-offering to the Father, made present and effective at each Mass, wherein He offer us nothing more — but also nothing less — than Himself. But this act of offering, in a fallen cosmos and experienced in such a fragmentary and fickle way by fallen creatures, is never a one-off affair for us. We must daily renew that offering. Each morning. Every day.

Msgr. Michael Heintz is on the faculty at Mount Saint Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Md.

WOO, from page 12

People often lament that Hallmark and its compatriots got Christmas wrong by over-romanticizing the stable birth and the angelic child. I think they got it right: How can we overdo a depiction of divine love? Beauty extraordinaire?

Our gift-giving may not always be prudent, but it is our attempt to explicitly express love and tenderness for the other. We may be too tired to take note, but our making everything special — home, baking, greetings and letters — is to not let God's birth pass as just another day. We try to create magic for children perhaps as our own assertion that life cannot be suppressed by worries and disappointments, but sparkles with the joy and hope of God in us.

Hang another string of lights — as a statement of the light of God that dispels the darkness. We are not just our failings. Our stories have not ended. Emmanuel: God is with us; He has not left us to ourselves!

Carolyn Woo is the distinguished president's fellow for global development at Purdue University.

HEINTZ, from page 12

offering that has not forgotten the utter gratuity of everything, including our daily grind. The final words of the "Diary of a Country Priest," a young and sickly priest whose life was far from glamorous or notable in worldly terms, are simply: "tout est grâce" — "Everything is grace."

Further, if we ponder the coming day as part of this receptivity and subsequent offering, we are more likely to have bolstered ourselves with a graced awareness in anticipation of each day's less savory or exciting tasks or encounters. "Lord, help me to receive this day — even that meeting I am dreading at 2 this afternoon — as Your gift, and to return it to You with gratitude." To make the morning offering this way is something of the inverse of what is done in the daily examen, that examination of conscience before bed: We begin our day anticipating the various moments and, aware of our own sinful tendencies, asking in advance for the grace to receive those moments and live them well, even offering them back to God. This will make us far more fruit-

SCRIPTURE SEARCH®

Gospel for December 23, 2018

Luke 1:39-45

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Cycle C: Mary's journey to the house of Elizabeth. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

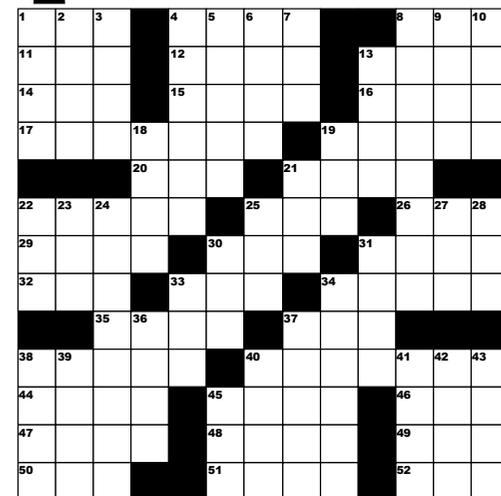
MARY	HILL	COUNTRY
ENTERED	ZECHARIAH	GREETED
GREETING	LEAPED	WOMB
SPIRIT	BLESSED	ARE YOU
AMONG WOMEN	MOTHER	MY LORD
SHOULD	COME TO ME	MY EARS
JOY	BELIEVED	SPOKEN

THE MOTHERS

S R A E Y M Y L O R D O
H W J E N T E R E D A G
O C O U N T R Y A M N C
U A Y M A R Y J O I B O
L R C N B W K N T D E M
D E P A E L G E O S L E
E Y I N Y W E C H P I T
T O H A O R J S E O E O
E U R M G T L E S K V M
E R E H T O M L E E E E
R N S P I R I T I N D L
G Z E C H A R I A H A L

The Cross Word

December 23 and 30, 2018



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Sunday readings: Mi 5:1-4a; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-45 and 1Sam 1:20-22,24-28; 1Jn 3:1-2,21-24; Lk 2:41-52

ACROSS

- 1 Expression of triumph
- 4 Outlaw
- 8 Taxi
- 11 ____, vigor and vitality
- 12 Gaudete Sunday color
- 13 American river
- 14 Shade tree
- 15 Detail
- 16 Orange skin
- 17 Drool
- 19 Briny
- 20 Conger
- 21 Lay away
- 22 Unit of electric power
- 25 Infant leapt for ____

DOWN

- 1 Hail Marys
- 2 Mary went to ____ country
- 3 Bullets
- 4 Clans of Judah
- 5 Inn
- 6 One who exploits
- 7 Ruby
- 8 ____ of Israel
- 9 Am not
- 10 "The ____ of Christ Jesus"
- 13 Spoken
- 18 Second Greek letter
- 19 Legume
- 21 Used to attract attention
- 22 Compact bundle
- 23 "____ and you shall receive"
- 24 Fib (3 wd.)
- 25 Holy Name month
- 27 Business title ending
- 28 Good-____
- 30 Ill-being
- 31 Podium
- 33 Stretch to make do
- 34 South American animals
- 36 Cal. University
- 37 Spooky
- 38 Parent teacher groups
- 39 Console
- 40 Jesus' mother
- 41 Solitary
- 42 Dark brown
- 43 Beget
- 45 Owned

Answer Key can be found on page 15

PARISHES CELEBRATE OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE



Leo Patiño

Yesenia Ponce carries the crown she later placed on the head of an image of Mary at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Warsaw, at a vigil Mass Dec. 11. Ponce was crowned queen of the parish's Guadalupe festival in August and so was given the honor of crowing Our Lady of Guadalupe at the vigil.



Leo Patiño

Members of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish's "Grupo Guadalupano" prepare to process carrying a statue of her during a vigil Mass for the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Dec. 11. The men planned the decorations for the Mass, as well as the post-vigil festivities.



Photos by Joe Romie

At St. Patrick Parish in Fort Wayne hundreds attended a traditional early-morning celebration Dec. 12, which began with a rosary starting before 5 a.m. The prayer was followed by spirited singing and clapping around the icon of Our Lady of Guadalupe, accompanied by a group of musicians and individual singers directing their songs toward her. A re-enactment of the story of St. Juan Diego encountering Our Lady of Guadalupe in rural Mexico in 1531 then gave way to a Mass that began with a brief performance in the aisles by young dancers wearing colorful Aztec-style costumes, and finally a social with refreshments in the school building. St. Juan Diego was played by Valentin Martinez and Our Lady of Guadalupe was played by Norma Salaz.



More photos are available at www.todayscatholic.org

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.

Knights plan spaghetti dinner

SOUTH BEND — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521 will have a spaghetti dinner at the South Bend Francis Club, 61533 Ironwood Rd., on Friday, Dec. 21, from 5-7 p.m. Tickets are Adults \$9.50, children 5-12 \$3.50, children under 5 free.

Christmas lessons and carols

GRANGER — St. Pius X Parish, 52553 Fir Rd., will have lessons and carols before each Christmas Eve Mass at 4, 6:30 p.m. and midnight. The children's choir and adult ensemble will sing at 3:30 p.m.; the Sunday evening choir will sing at 6 p.m. and the Sunday morning choir will sing at 11:15 p.m. Instrumentalists will join all choirs. The handbell choirs will play prelude music 15 minutes before Mass on Christmas day at 9 and 11 a.m.

Cupertino Classic

FORT WAYNE — The annual basketball game featuring priests and seminarians is coming back to Fort Wayne on Thursday, Dec. 27, at 6:30 p.m. at Bishop Dwenger High School gym, 1300 E Washington Center Rd. The seminarians look to defend their win in 2017 while the priests are seeking revenge. Join this night of fraternity and community and support the vocations of the diocese.

Christmas concert

FORT WAYNE — Most Precious Blood Church, 1515 Barthold St., will have a Christmas concert Sunday, Dec. 30, at 7 p.m. in the church. Music presented

by Jim Didier and Kathy Schall. Admission is free.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish to offer New Year's Eve trivia night

FORT WAYNE — A New Year's Eve trivia night will be Monday, Dec. 31, from 9 p.m. to midnight at St. Vincent de Paul Life Center, 1502 E. Wallen Rd. Doors open at 8 p.m. Sign up online at saintv.org or call 260-489-3537 ext. 3. Tickets are \$10 per person with 10 people per table. Bring your own food and drinks. Prize for best costumes. All proceeds benefit the seminarians.

Christmas concert

FORT WAYNE — St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 1502 E Wallen Rd., will present a Christmas concert followed by a reception on Thursday, Jan. 3 at 7 p.m. in the church. The concert will feature musicians of the Fort Wayne Philharmonic who will be performing music by Mannheim Steamroller.

Christmas concert at St. Pius X, Granger

GRANGER — St. Pius X Music Ministry, under the direction of Jeremy Hoy, Beth Habas, Sherrie Hoy, and Samantha Kneibel will celebrate the Solemnity of the Epiphany with a concert on Sunday, Jan. 6, at 2:30 p.m. in the church, 52553 Fir Rd. Featured choirs include: children's choir, middle school choir, Sunday morning and evening adult choirs, adult and youth handbell choirs and instrumentalists. The concert is free.

The CrossWord
December 23 and 30, 2018

A	H	A	T	H	U	G	C	A	B		
V	I	M	R	O	S	E	O	H	I	O	
E	L	M	I	T	E	M	R	I	N	D	
S	L	O	B	B	E	R	S	A	L	T	Y
			E	E	L	H	O	L	D		
W	A	T	T	S	J	O	Y	R	I	B	
A	S	E	A	W	A	Y	D	E	N	Y	
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P	E	A	C	E	M	E	A	S	L	E	S
T	A	L	L	H	A	R	M	O	B	I	
A	S	I	A	A	R	I	A	N	O	R	
S	E	E	D	Y	E	S	E	N	E		

REST IN PEACE

Fort Wayne

Donald J. Hake, 90, St. Jude

Kathleen M. Merritt, 73, St. Jude

Rita J. Bubbs, 76, St. Jude

Marie Steinberger, 101, St. Jude

John Zollinger, 69, St. Jude

Elkhart

Mary Harris, 87, St. Thomas the Apostle

Kathleen Albrecht, 77, St. Thomas the Apostle

Goshen

Vincent R. Traxler, 97, St. John the Evangelist

Shirley A. Swartz, 87, St. John the Evangelist

Granger

Paul Derse, 83, St. Pius X

Shari Stogsdill, 66, St. Pius X

Notre Dame

Thomas R. Pilot Jr., 75, Sacred Heart

Walkerton

Diane Marie Hesters, 55, St. Patrick

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend

AUBURN — Can't figure out what to give your spouse this Christmas? Give the gift of love this holiday season — give the gift of a Marriage Encounter Weekend. Take your marriage to the next level. The next Weekend is scheduled for Jan. 25-27, in Auburn. To see more information go to wwme.org or wwme-ni.org, or call 260-422-0803.

Bingo at St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel

FORT WAYNE — Bingo will be held at the St. Joseph - Hessen Cassel hall, 11521 Old Decatur Rd., on Sunday, Jan. 13. Doors open at 2 p.m. and games start at 2:30 p.m. Cost is \$25 per player and includes 10 bingo games. Payouts between \$25-\$100. Must be 18 to play. Extra door prize tickets for canned food donations brought for the food bank.



Our calling to serve keeps growing.

Divine Mercy Funeral Home is excited to announce the addition of Stephanie Zelt to our staff of experienced funeral directors. Stephanie will join Bob Jesch and Monte Freeze in their calling to serve local families with compassion, understanding and kindness.

priced affordably to meet your budget. Also, if you've already pre-planned through another funeral home, you'll be pleased to know that you can quickly and easily transfer those arrangements.

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Serving all faiths.

With nearly 75 years of experience between them, our funeral directors serve all faiths and will thoughtfully guide you through our traditional and cremation funeral service options,



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Merry Christmas
from *The Galley!*

622 North 13th St., Decatur
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www.thegalleydecatur.com

VOWS, from page 1

I have! The fact that God is letting me do this, and that He chose me, before time, to give me two vocations, to let me have children and be married and now to marry Him — who gets to do this? He has given me such a joyful heart. I just have joy and I am so grateful for that, because that joy is all about Him and I am beyond wonder for this.”

“We just don't have any idea how much He loves us, and in every little thing He shows me that love,” she continued. “It's just too beautiful. Of course, there are tough times, there is sorrow, but the joy and sorrow are so mixed that it becomes one thing.”

Sister Rose, who married at the age of 17, shared that when her husband of 41 years sud-

denly passed away over 10 years ago, she thought God might direct the next chapter of her life. “I just felt like God had a plan for me. I didn't know it was this!”

“I have never felt like this,” she continued. “To be able to have my three children, their spouses and my grandchildren share this with me and be involved in this Mass is incredible. I feel overflowed with love.”

The ceremony included Bishop Rhoades bestowing a wedding ring upon Sister Rose, signifying her perpetual espousal to God, as well as a crown of thorns made from the sisters' garden outside their convent, where she will daily live out her vows.

She explained, “I am wearing Jesus' crown with Him, and my marriage bed is the cross.”

Her sister, Jill Wright, a



Photos by Jerry Kessens

Above, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and Sister Rose Caritas of the Poor Sisters of St. Clare exchange the sign of peace at the conclusion of the Rite of Perpetual Profession at St. John the Baptist Church, Fort Wayne, Dec. 12. Sister Rose wears a crown of thorns made from the garden outside the convent where she will live out her vows. At left, Sister Rose kneels before the bishop during the rite.

parishioner at St. Jude, Fort Wayne, shared how Sister Rose's journey has uplifted their family.

“It was very tough in the beginning. We weren't really sure what all this entailed, and where she was headed. However, as time has passed, we have seen so many graces from God. We are beyond blessed. We have all grown tremendously in our faith, but also as a family unit. There is really no one else you can talk to about such a life-changing event, who will understand what you're going through, except for your own siblings. Even without her present in our everyday lives, the blessings, the miracles, the graces of God are abundant.”

Darlene Simpson, whom Sister Rose encountered through 40 Days for Life, served as

coordinator for the “wedding” ceremony. Simpson shared: “I watched her journey of faith, and I could see in her life how she was changed, especially through her daily hour of eucharistic adoration. No matter what, she always got that hour in. My faith has grown just by watching her.”

Twelve priests and one deacon concelebrated the Mass, alongside the grandchildren and friends of Sister Rose who assisted as altar servers. The music was coordinated and performed by Thomas Saul, Bernadette Becker and Robert Becker.

In his final remarks, Bishop reminded those present that “Sister Rose Caritas has not asked ‘What's in it for me?’ Her only question has been ‘What is God's will?’ This should always

be our question too.” Yet, he emphasized to her, “You do not lose your freedom today any more than Mary lost her freedom on the day of the Annunciation. In entrusting yourself totally to God, you find true freedom.”

“In entering the cloister, you did not distance yourself from your family and friends or withdraw into your private salvation, but you have become closer to them through prayer and the love of God. Last month, Pope Francis spoke of the mission of cloistered nuns as ‘the praying heart of the Church.’ I am so grateful to Sister Rose Caritas and to all our Poor Sisters of St. Clare. Sisters: You are the praying heart of the Church in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend!”



Merry Christmas from
TODAY'S CATHOLIC

May the joys of the Season be yours in abundance

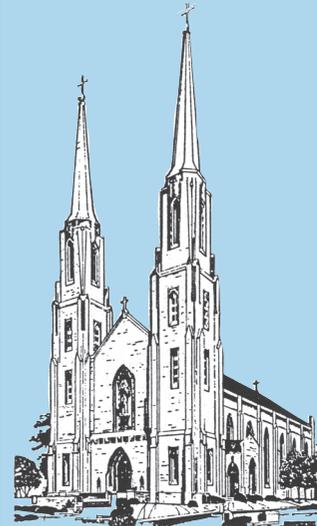
Wishing you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Saint Anne Communities

www.sacfw.org

Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

1100 South Calhoun Street - Fort Wayne



Christmas Eve Masses:

5:00 PM Vigil Mass
10:30 PM Mass During The Night
(Music begins at 10:00 PM)

Christmas Day Masses

8:30 and 11:30 AM

New Year's Masses

Vigil Mass December 31 - 5:00 PM
January 1 - 8:30 and 11:30 AM

Epiphany Concert in Chapel
January 6 - 4:00 PM

Visit the Cathedral during this Season of Grace.