

TODAY'S CATHOLIC



A blessed Christmas to all

We approach the crib this year as always, on our knees, and with the realization that here something is asked of us. What is asked of us? The commandment of the New Testament linked also to the Old Testament; namely, that we love God and love our neighbor.

As Pope Benedict says in his beautiful encyclical "God is Love" — it is a commandment, which comes from within us.

This means we can only truly love God when we have encountered him in prayer. Pope Benedict gives the example of Blessed Teresa of Calcutta. It is from the Eucharist, from holy Communion, from her eucharistic adoration that her heart was drawn to the love of God. So must it be for us as we approach together the observance of our diocesan Jubilee.

Kneeling at the crib and in our Christmas Mass, we realize that Jesus Christ is within us, drawing us to himself and to God our Father. He is also always drawing us in love to our neighbor in need. Only when our hearts turn in prayer to our neighbor, especially our neighbor in need, has the mystery of Christmas begun to take hold.

Also, this Christmas our hearts and minds reach out to places where there is a terrible war. Let us think of Iraq, the land of the prophets torn asunder with killings every day.

Let us pray for the Holy Land where Jesus was born and where he preached, a land now torn by strife and killings.

When we kneel at the crib, we must keep in mind all those who suffer, and raise our hearts to God for them. A blessed Christmas to all — a Christmas where your heart is raised to God for those in need.

+John M. D'Arcy
Bishop John M. D'Arcy



CNS PHOTO/ERICH LESSING, ART RESOURCE

Mary and the Christ Child appear in this fragment from a larger 16th-century piece by Bernardino Luini. The Dec. 25 Christmas feast commemorates the incarnation of the divine word at the birth of Christ.

Oplatek traditions

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and at home
this Christmas

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No issue next week

Next publication Jan. 7, 2007
will be sent to all registered
Catholic homes

LAUNCHING 150TH JUBILEE



On Jan. 7, all registered Catholic households will receive a special issue of Today's Catholic with details associated with 150th anniversary of the diocese. The window decal, shown above, will be included. Bishop John M. D'Arcy will launch the jubilee year at the 9:30 a.m., Sunday, Dec. 31, Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne.

Beatification date of Father Basil Moreau announced

NOTRE DAME — The Venerable Basile-Antoine Marie Moreau, CSC (1799-1873), founder of the Holy Cross Priests, Brothers and Sisters, will be beatified in Le Mans, France, the place of his ministry and death, on Saturday, Sept. 15, 2007.

The Vatican Secretariat of State announced the news to major superiors of Holy Cross congregations in a Dec. 7 letter.

As a priest of the diocese of Le Mans and a seminary professor, Basile Moreau established the Association of Holy Cross consisting of two societies, one of men (brothers and priests) and one of women, for the principal purposes of the education of youth and evangelization.

Today there are four Holy Cross congregations: the Congregation of Holy Cross (priests and brothers); and three congregations of women: the Marianites of Holy Cross (France); the Sisters of the Holy Cross (Indiana); and the Sisters of Holy Cross (Montreal).

Since their beginnings the four Holy Cross congregations have grown and spread throughout the world. In the South Bend area,

the priests are perhaps best known in the community for the University of Notre Dame; the brothers, for Holy Cross College and Holy Cross Village at Notre Dame; and the sisters for Saint Mary's College and Saint Joseph's Regional Medical Center. All three congregations also minister in educational institutions and social and pastoral ministries in the local community.

The Holy Cross congregations also minister in North and South America, Africa and Asia, furthering the educational and pastoral vision of their founder.

On April 12, 2003, Pope John Paul II had issued the declaration and bestowed on the Holy Cross founder the title Venerable. The Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints recommended to Pope Benedict XVI on Nov. 8, 2005, that Basile Moreau be declared blessed, the next step toward canonization or sainthood.

For further information on Basil Moreau and the Congregations of Holy Cross, please contact: www.holycrosscongregation.org, www.cscsisters.org, www.marianites.org and www.sistersofholycross.org.

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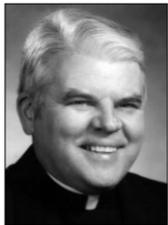
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Boston auxiliary bishops' ordination provides a retreat



NEWS & NOTES

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

A day of joy

I first met John Dooher when he was a deacon at St. John's Seminary. It was the fall of 1968, and I had just returned from Rome. Tumultuous days and yet here was a steady man who expected to be a priest in a few months and had a clear idea of who a priest is.

He later served as a part-time spiritual director at St. John's Seminary and led the Office of Spiritual Development and gave many parish retreats and missions. He held several other difficult and demanding posts in the Archdiocese of Boston. I sent him to Creighton University to study spirituality, and he gobbled it up. He served as chair of the advisory board of the Our Sunday Visitor. But he always remained a parish priest.

So it was a special joy to fly to Boston overnight for his consecration as an auxiliary bishop. Another priest, who was in the seminary when I was on the faculty, was ordained bishop with him — Bob Hennessy who had spent nine years as a missionary with the St. James Society in Peru, and was now a pastor in a parish of Hispanic Catholics in East Boston.

A nostalgic trip

It was in the Cathedral of the Holy Cross where I was ordained a priest and 18 years later a bishop. I could see the bench where my family had sat, including my dear mother and father. But it was not about me. It was about two exemplary priests being made bishops. I have always believed that attending the ordination of a bishop, not so much the installation of someone already a bishop, but the ordination, is for a bishop a kind of retreat.

I heard again the promises I made on the day of my own ordination. The promises are about such things as fidelity and communion with the Bishop of Rome. You make a promise about prayer — are you going to pray constantly? There is a promise about devotion to the poor, preaching the Gospel and celebrating the sacraments. These two young men — well, young to me anyway — prostrated themselves on the altar in that gesture which John Paul II always called "evocative." With full manly hearts, they made their promises. There was the beautiful instruction and the imposition of hands first, of course, by Cardinal O'Malley, by the two co-consecrators and then by all the bishops. The Litany of the Saints was prayed devoutly.

There is a striking moment at the end of

the ordination of a bishop. The newly-consecrated bishop walks through the cathedral with the two co-consecrators, fully robed and carrying his crosier, he blesses the people. I had done that before. It is always joyful. But I do not think I ever saw such intense emotion. You remember everything that the great Archdiocese of Boston has been through — all the suffering, all the pain, all the scandal. Now here were two worthy young priests who had accomplished much. Each one would have been delighted to remain a parish priest for the rest of his life. The explosion of applause, tears and joy was like nothing I had ever heard. It seemed to grow stronger as we approached the hundreds of priests who were present. It was in the creed we pray: the worst is over. Christ is still with us. Grace is everywhere.

Afterward, I told Cardinal O'Malley that I thought Boston was on the way back. I am sure they have many hills to climb, but it certainly was a joy to go back to the cathedral of my boyhood and be joined to so many priests, some of them my companions of a lifetime and experience with them this moment of faith and joy. It was a privilege to be there and to be part of the procession of blessing with Bishop Dooher at the end of Mass. This was at the invitation of the cardinal due to the incapacity of one of the co-consecrators who was unable to take this long and thrilling walk.

This community, with their focus on perpetual adoration and prayer, also has a strong sense of the contemporary needs of the church.

A Christmas gift

For the second year in a row, the sisters who are in formation, that is, novices, postulants and others of the Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration came to my home in Fort Wayne to sing Christmas carols. It brightened up a rainy and cloudy afternoon. Of course, as it so happens in these days, they brought cookies, brownies and other sweets with them. The temptations of the season. But it was wonderful to sing carols with them with a little time for discussion and prayer.

This community, with their focus on perpetual adoration and prayer, also has a strong sense of the contemporary needs of the church. Their superiors have often approached me to see about the needs in the diocese and see how they can help. So, they are involved throughout the diocese in ministry to young adults, in campus ministry, in Marian High School, in parish schools and in various endeavors. It was a joy to sing with them a week before Christmas.

Television Mass

We had over 100 people at the University of Saint Francis Chapel to celebrate together the 20th anniversary of the television Mass, as we did earlier in South Bend. It was all arranged by our devoted and very capable director of communications, Vincent LaBarbera. I was delighted that Christine Bonahoom-Nix, now a mother of two, was there. Christine served with great energy and ability as director of communications. I also thought of Mary Lombardo and Beth Lohmuller, who played a key part in the television Mass. Especially moving was a reflection at the end of Mass by Sean McBride. Sean is the director every week of the television Mass. It was his father, Ed McBride, the father also of my assistant, Maureen Schott, who was central to the establishment of the television Mass. Afterward, there was a delightful brunch at Saint Francis University dining room.

Of course, it was a day of mourning around the campus. The wonderful Saint Francis Cougars once again came to the edge of a national championship, only to be defeated in faraway Savannah, Tenn. But they will be back, and they will bring home a championship. My congratulations to Coach Donley and to Sister Elise Kriss, OSF.

The coming Jubilee

I am just polishing off a pastoral letter to help launch our Jubilee. I believe it will be in the next edition of this newspaper. The Jubilee begins officially with a Mass I will celebrate at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 31, 2006, and the following week with a Mass at our co-cathedral, St. Matthew Cathedral. I hope you are looking forward to all these wonderful events as I am. More about it in our next edition.

I will celebrate Mass on Christmas Eve at St. Matthew Cathedral, South Bend, followed by the midnight Mass at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, Fort Wayne, which will be televised throughout the Fort Wayne area. On Christmas morning, I will celebrate the television Mass on WISE-TV. Do not forget, there will be a beautiful Mass from St. Adalbert Parish, South Bend, on Christmas at 6 a.m. and 1 p.m. on WNDU-TV. We are not forgetting our homebound parishioners.

A blessed Christmas to you. See you in two weeks.

Papal peace message stresses human rights even when terrorism strikes

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Even when faced with a potential terrorist attack or in the midst of war, basic human rights must be respected, Pope Benedict XVI said in his message for World Peace Day 2007.

"Peace is based on respect for the rights of all," the pope said in his message for the Jan. 1 commemoration.

The message, "The Human Person, the Heart of Peace," was sent to heads of state around the world and was released Dec. 12 at a Vatican press conference.

The pope's message included prayers for peace in war-torn countries, such as Lebanon; special concern for child victims of violence; a condemnation of continued nuclear proliferation; and concern over the potential for violent conflicts over energy resources.

The basis of any hope for peace, the pope said, is a recognition that each human person is created in the image and likeness of God and, therefore, endowed with a dignity and with rights that cannot be usurped by anyone.

Most countries around the world have adopted the tenets of international humanitarian law, recognizing that it applies in situations of conflict as well as in peacetime, he said.

"Unfortunately, to say nothing of past cases, this has not been consistently implemented in certain recent situations of war," he said.

Specifically citing the July war in Lebanon between Hezbollah militias and Israel, Pope Benedict said the duty to protect, assist and avoid involving the civilian population "was largely ignored."

"The heart-rending situation in Lebanon and the new shape of conflicts, especially since the terrorist threat unleashed completely new forms of violence, demand that the interna-

tional community reaffirm international humanitarian law and apply it to all present-day situations of armed conflict," the pope said.

While recognizing the difficulties posed by the threat of terrorism, Pope Benedict said countries must conduct "a profound reflection on the ethical limits restricting the use of modern methods of guaranteeing internal security."

Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, told reporters at the Vatican Dec. 12 that the global fight against terrorism can be seen as "the Fourth World War. The Cold War was the third."

He continued, "But this war does not have the parameters of the wars we experienced in history. This must push countries to



CNS PHOTO/NIR KAFRI, REUTERS

Rescue workers evacuate a wounded man from a building after it was hit by a rocket in Haifa, Israel, July 17. Pope Benedict XVI cited the war in Lebanon between Hezbollah militants and Israel as a situation where the duty to protect, assist and avoid involving the civilian population "was largely ignored."

ask, 'What should we do?' and to develop regulations" that will provide security while guaranteeing respect for human rights.

In his message, Pope Benedict also called for "a vision of the person untainted by ideological and cultural prejudices or by political and economic interests which can instill hatred and violence."

And he urged members of religious communities and their leaders to renew their commitment to dialogue and to denouncing "conceptions of God that would encourage intolerance and recourse to violence against others."

"War in God's name is never acceptable," the pope said.

Throughout the document, Pope Benedict called for a universal recognition that basic human rights are God-given or natural; when an individual or a society decides it can determine who will enjoy which rights, both human dignity and peace are threatened, he said.

"As far as the right to life is concerned, we must denounce its widespread violation in our society," the pope said.

"Alongside the victims of armed conflicts, terrorism and the different forms of violence, there are the silent deaths caused by hunger, abortion, experimentation on human embryos and euthana-

sia," he said.

"How can we fail to see in all this an attack on peace?" Pope Benedict asked.

The pope also condemned as a violation of human dignity, and a threat to peace, situations in which individuals are not free to practice their religious faith, either because a national regime imposes one religion on its residents or because a "systematic cultural denigration of religious beliefs" encourages people to hide their faith or limits their ability to express religious beliefs in public.

In addition, he said, violations of "the natural equality of all persons" also threaten peace.

Obviously, he said, the fact that so many of the world's people have no access to the essentials needed for life, including food, water, shelter and health "lies at the root of violent reactions and thus inflicts a terrible wound on peace."

But also, the pope said, "inadequate consideration for the condition of women helps to create instability in the fabric of society," especially when women are exploited or "where women are still firmly subordinated to the arbitrary decisions of men with grave consequences for their personal dignity and for the exercise of their fundamental freedoms."

"There can be no illusion of a secure peace until these forms of discrimination are also overcome, since they injure the personal dignity impressed by the creator upon every human being," Pope Benedict said.

Bishop requests generosity for efforts of Catholic Charities

My dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

As the feast of Christmas draws near, we are called not only to remember that holy night when the Savior was born but, in a real sense, to relive it. We ponder in our hearts once again the incredible fact that the greatest gift we will ever receive has already been given — Jesus Christ, son of the living God. God loved us so much that he wanted to be close to us, to come among us, to become one of us, like us in all things but sin.

The central question that surrounds our celebration of Christmas must be this: will we welcome him as once Mary and Joseph and the shepherds and Wise Men welcomed him? The description of the Last Judgment in Matthew's Gospel reminds us in a powerful way that we will be judged on how well we welcomed Christ in our midst, present especially in the little child, and in those who are hungry, thirsty, naked, sick and in prison.

Our diocese has a wonderful tradition of taking up a collection on Christmas Day for the work of Catholic Charities, as a concrete way of welcoming Christ in our midst. In the child developing in its mother's womb, in the refugee hoping for a new life in our nation, in the poor family who has lost their home, we are called to see the face of Christ and to do whatever we can to welcome him. This is the heart of the work of Catholic Charities, which provides counseling and assistance and support to so many in our diocese, sharing in the joys and hopes, the sorrows and anxieties of people's daily lives.

The feast of Christmas calls us to see the face of Christ in those who depend on others for their flourishing. In the name of the newborn Savior, who comes to us still in the least of his brothers and sisters, looking for our love and concern, I ask you to make a contribution to this important collection.

Sincerely yours in our Lord,

Most Rev. John M. D'Arcy

Religious leaders declare hope for Mideast, urge strong U.S. role

BY JERRY FILTEAU

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Leaders of 29 national Christian, Jewish and Muslim organizations issued a joint call for the Bush administration and the new Congress to make Arab-Israeli-Palestinian peace a top foreign policy priority.

Peace is "an essential of faith" in all three religious traditions, they said.

They asked U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to meet with them to discuss the "urgent situation" in the Middle East and the need for "active, fair and firm leadership by the United States" to promote a comprehensive peace in the region.

In a consensus statement and a letter to Rice, both dated Dec. 12 and released Dec. 14, the leaders expressed the belief that the current crisis can be turned into an opportunity for change and that the current Israeli-Palestinian cease-fire offers hope for restarting negotiations.

"The crisis in Gaza and the war in Lebanon and northern Israel remind us that the status quo in the region is unstable and untenable," they said in the seven-page statement. "Military

action will not resolve the conflict."

"The only authentic way forward is a negotiated settlement built on difficult, but realistic, compromises and security arrangements with international guarantees," they added. "The path to peace requires a rejection of violence and an embrace of dialogue."

Catholic signatories on the letter and statement were Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore; Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, recently retired archbishop of Washington; and Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Wash., president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Rev. Michael E. Livingston, president of the National Council of Churches, and leaders of 12 Orthodox or Protestant denominations or national organizations also signed the letter and statement.

Among the 12 Jewish signatories were Rabbi Harry K. Danziger, president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism.

The seven Muslim signatories

MIDEAST

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

included Sayyid Muhammad Syeed, national director of the Islamic Society of North America's Office of Interfaith and Community Alliances, and Naim Baig, secretary-general of the Islamic Circle of North America.

The leaders in December 2003 formed the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East and urged the United States to exercise leadership at the highest levels and take concrete steps to press for peace in the region.

"We have been disappointed that the United States did not more actively pursue the 'road map' for peace which we felt held great promise," the consensus statement said. "While much has changed since December 2003, our fundamental call for the United States to more fully engage in the work for a two-state solution to the conflict has not."

More than half of the consensus statement was devoted to specific recommendations to the United States regarding its own role in peace-building and how it should relate to Palestinian leaders, Israel and the Arab states to encourage constructive contributions to peace on their part.

The religious leaders called on the United States to collaborate with the European Union, Russia and the United Nations "to create

conditions that bring about serious negotiations on a two-state solution" of Israel and Palestine enjoying sovereignty and security.

They asked the government to build on the principles and practical ideas of earlier peace initiatives but also to explore bold new initiatives that could help bring the parties to negotiated solutions.

They called on the United States to help rebuild Lebanon's civil infrastructure in the wake of the recent widespread bombing by Israel in retaliation for Hezbollah attacks from Lebanon into Israel.

In addition to encouraging a series of concrete peace initiatives by Israel and the Palestinian Authority, they said the United States should undertake diplo-

matic efforts to restart peace negotiations between Israel and Syria and between Israel and Lebanon.

At a conference in September at which the consensus statement was developed, Cardinal McCarrick said, "We gather at a time of crisis in the Middle East. But times of crisis can also become opportunities for change."

Rabbi Paul Menitoff, immediate past vice president of the Central

Conference of American Rabbis, said, "We know how the Israeli-Palestinian conflict will end. There will be two states living side by side in peace with mutually acceptable arrangements for sharing Jerusalem and resolving the issue of refugees. The only question is how many more Israelis and Palestinians will die before this vision is realized."

They asked the government to build on the principles and practical ideas of earlier peace initiatives but also to explore bold new initiatives that could help bring the parties to negotiated solutions.

Pope, Greek Orthodox primate pledge work toward full communion



CNS PHOTO/DANILO SCHIAVELLA, REUTERS

Orthodox Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens and all Greece meets with Pope Benedict XVI at the Vatican Dec. 14. The pope and archbishop said Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox Christians must seek forgiveness and learn to work together for the good of the world. The two leaders signed a joint declaration pledging to preach the Gospel together and work toward full communion.

BY CINDY WOODEN

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — After centuries of allowing themselves to grow apart, Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox must seek forgiveness and learn to work together for the good of the world, said Pope Benedict XVI and Orthodox Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens and all Greece.

The pope formally welcomed the primate of the Orthodox Church of Greece to the Vatican Dec. 14, solemnly signing with him a commitment to preaching the Gospel together and to working for full communion.

"We want to live more intensely our mission of giving an apostolic witness, of transmitting the faith to those who are near and those who are far," said the joint declaration, written in Greek and in French on a large piece of parchment.

In their speeches to each other

and in their declaration, the pope and the archbishop acknowledged how far apart their communities had grown over the centuries and how difficult their relations were, even as late as the 1990s.

Pope Benedict said Catholics and Orthodox should have learned from what the New Testament describes as the situation of the early church in the Greek city of Corinth, which knew "the difficulties and serious temptations of division."

"In effect, a real danger appears where persons want to identify themselves with one group or another," rather than with Christ, the pope said.

Through increased contacts and formal dialogue, the pope said, Catholics and Orthodox have come to value each other's spiritual, liturgical and theological traditions and to see them as gifts from God.

Pope Benedict and Archbishop Christodoulos vowed to use the

newly rediscovered fraternity of their churches to ensure the future of Christianity in Europe and to address a host of modern challenges facing society.

The archbishop told the pope that "in our role as spiritual fathers of the pious members of our churches" the two of them must raise an alarm about "all that threatens the values and structures of European civilization deeply impregnated by the Christian faith."

The "progressive de-Christianization of Europe," attempts to exclude faith-based speech from the public arena, "religious fanaticism," and attacks on human life, including research on embryos, call for religious leadership and moral guidance, Archbishop Christodoulos said.

Archbishop Christodoulos also thanked Pope Benedict for deciding to give a very important relic to the Greek church: links from the chain venerated as that which bound St. Paul during his imprisonment in Rome.

The Vatican said church documents from as early as the middle of the third century spoke of the chains kept at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, the site of St. Paul's burial.

Over the centuries, links have been distributed to others for veneration; the gift to Archbishop Christodoulos consisted of two of the remaining nine links, each is in the form of a figure-eight and is two and a half inches long.

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TIM JOHNSON

Bishop John M. D'Arcy greets parishioners of St. Patrick Parish in Fort Wayne after a Mass of remembrance for Ana Casas-Rios and her three daughters, Liliana Karen, 10, Katherine, 4, and Thannya Karolinna, 20 months, and Alejandra Gutierrez, 10, who were all killed last year. "This was not the will of God," Bishop D'Arcy said.

One-year anniversary Mass held at St. Patrick Church on Dec. 16

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — "Let us pray for and protect our little children. In the face of a child, we see God. Jesus Christ said 'let the little children come to me.' So fathers and mothers and uncles and aunts and priests should protect little children."

These were the words of encouragement Bishop John M. D'Arcy offered to those who gathered at a Dec. 16 Mass of remembrance at St. Patrick Catholic Church, celebrated by Father Eloy Jimenez Zuniga, associate pastor.

Bishop D'Arcy, who presided at the Mass, addressed the congregation.

The Mass of remembrance was in observance of the one-year anniversary of the funeral Mass celebrated by Bishop D'Arcy of Ana Casas-Rios and her three daughters, Liliana Karen, 10; Katherine, 4; and Thannya Karolinna, 20 months, on Dec. 14, 2005. Simon Rios has been charged with four counts of murder and two counts of moving a body in connection with the deaths of his wife and daughters and is awaiting trial.

On Dec. 26, 2005, at St. Patrick's, a funeral Mass was held for Alejandra Gutierrez with Bishop D'Arcy presiding. The 10-year-old girl had been missing since Dec. 13, 2005. Her body was found in Delaware County on Dec. 19, 2005. Rios also is the main suspect of her death.

"This was not the will of God," Bishop D'Arcy said. "God wants young girls, like young boys, to grow up and be happy and have children of their own and grandchildren and live a full life."

He added, "We learned about the power of evil. It is a terrible sin to take a young life. Only God can take away life."

"But we believe they are in heaven and they are happy," he added. "But we are sad. The fact that they are in heaven does not take away our pain and sorrow."

Speaking with the help of a translator, Bishop D'Arcy spoke about the third Sunday of Advent.

"This is the third Sunday of Advent, a day of joy. Christmas is near — the coming of Jesus Christ," he said.

With the nearness of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, just days prior, Bishop D'Arcy told the congregation that he would like to celebrate that feast at St. Patrick Parish in Fort Wayne next year. This was met with the delight and applause from the congregation.

"Be sure to open your hearts to Jesus Christ at Christmas," Bishop D'Arcy encouraged. "As St. John the Baptist tells us, we must repent of our sins. This is best done by going to the sacrament of penance. And with Mary, we open our hearts and ask Jesus Christ to come into our hearts."

He concluded by wishing the community a merry Christmas.

"Through the power of Jesus Christ, we will someday make it to heaven with our beloved Alejandra and the others who were killed. Let us pray to our Lady to make it so," he said.

The congregation sang "Amigo," a hymn that acknowledged the friendship of the bishop to the Latino community.

"Thank you for the beautiful hymn, I will keep it in my heart," he told the congregation.

Through Sister Herodia, the family of Ana Casas thanked the St. Patrick community, Father Jack Overmyer, Father Eloy Jimenez Zuniga and Father Chau Pham, SVD, for their support through the year. The family also thanked Bishop D'Arcy for his spiritual support.

After Mass, balloons were launched by young and old outside of the front steps of St. Patrick Church.

An earlier memorial on Wednesday was coordinated through a partnership between the City of Fort Wayne and the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Pope asks world to do more to meet needs of Iraqi refugees in Syria

BY JOHN THAVIS

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI appealed on behalf of Iraqi refugees in Syria, asking the international community to do more to meet their needs.

The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees estimated in October that 450,000 Iraqis had taken refuge in Syria, with at least 40,000 more arriving each month. Many of the refugees are Christians.

"My thoughts today go to the hundreds of thousands of Iraqi refugees in Syria, forced to leave their country because of the dramatic situation experienced there," the pope said at his noon blessing Dec. 17.

The pope pointed out that the Syrian branch of the Catholic aid agency Caritas was working to help refugee families.

"In particular I call on the sensitivity of individuals, international organizations and governments to make additional efforts to meet (the refugees') most urgent needs," he said.

"I raise my prayer to the Lord, that he may give comfort to these brothers and sisters and stimulate generosity in the hearts of many," he said.

The United Nations has estimated that up to 1.6 million Iraqis are now outside their country, most of them in Syria and Jordan. Tens of thousands who passed through those countries have moved on to Turkey, Lebanon, Egypt, the Gulf states and Europe, the United Nations said.



CNS PHOTO/TONY GENTILE, REUTERS

Pope Benedict XVI waves to the faithful gathered for his Angelus prayer in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Dec. 17. The pope appealed on behalf of Iraqi refugees in Syria, asking the international community to do more to meet their needs.

In his main talk delivered to a large crowd in St. Peter's Square, the pope asked Christians to think of the poor at Christmas — especially those "poor in joy."

"Let us think of our brothers and sisters who, especially in the Middle East, in some areas of Africa and in other parts of the world, are living through the drama of war: What joy can they experience? What will their Christmas be like?" he said.

The pope also recalled the many sick and lonely people who may feel abandoned at Christmas. People should figure out a way to share joy the joy of Christmas with them, while respecting their

suffering, he said.

But he said it was not only the sick and aged who need attention. He said that many people, especially the young, have lost the true sense of joy in their lives and look for it in the wrong places: in alcohol and drugs, in consumerism, in false entertainment and in "the exasperated search for self-affirmation and success."

He said the church's invitation to share in the joy of Christmas is not something that should alienate people or merely soothe their feelings. Instead, he said, it is a call to internal renewal that can lead to salvation.



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Vatican official: World has not been effective in helping Darfur

ROME (CNS) — The international community has failed to act effectively in putting an end to the tragic conflict and “horrific violation of human rights” taking place in the Darfur region of western Sudan, a Vatican official said. The “killing of children, sexual abuse and rape of girls and women, forced uprooting of (the) population, burning of villages, attacks on internally-displaced-people camps, targeting of unarmed civilians” are all part of the human and environmental disaster continuing to unfold in the region, said Archbishop Silvano Tomasi. The Vatican’s representative to U.N. and other international organizations in Geneva spoke Dec. 12 at an emergency session of the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva on the human rights situation in Darfur. Catholic News Service in Rome obtained a copy of his text. “The crisis under discussion has provoked debates and international complaints,” he said, but so far the international community has only responded with “insufficient effective actions.” The No. 1 priority should be concrete measures to end the killings, not wrangling over “political arrangements and commercial interests,” he said.

Baltimore cardinal condemns ‘revisionist history’ of Holocaust

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore condemned “revisionist history” of the Holocaust, the systematic efforts by Nazis during World War II to do away with Jews also known as the Shoah, a Hebrew word meaning devastation or catastrophe. The cardinal took particular exception to a Dec. 11-12 conference in Iran during which speakers “sought to diminish the scope of the Holocaust.” Speakers at the conference in Tehran included David Duke, former U.S. leader of the Ku Klux Klan, and several authors who have been sued or arrested in Europe for denying the Nazis’ mass murder of European Jews. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has in the past denied the Holocaust ever happened. “The Catholic bishops of the United States stand in solidarity with the universal church in condemning ‘revisionist history’ that seeks to minimize the horror of the Holocaust,” said the cardinal in a Dec. 14 statement, “We Must Remember the Shoah.” He is episcopal moderator for Catholic-Jewish relations for the U.S. bishops. The statement was released in Washington.

President of Xavier University receives Presidential Medal of Freedom

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Norman Francis, the president of Xavier University in New Orleans for 39 years, was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor,

WOMAN WALKS THROUGH CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY



CNS PHOTO/NAYEF HASHLAMOUN, REUTERS

A shaft of light falls on a woman as she walks through the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, West Bank, Dec. 17. The church is built over the site traditionally believed to be the birthplace of Jesus.

during a Dec. 15 White House ceremony. During the presentation in the East Room, where Francis sat on the stage alongside nine other medal recipients, the long-time president of the nation’s only historically black Catholic university was praised for being “a man of deep intellect and compassion and character.” In his remarks, President George W. Bush described Francis as the longest-serving university president in the United States and someone who has dedicated his life to education. He noted that Francis, who received his undergraduate degree at Xavier, was the first African-American to graduate from the Loyola University College of Law, also in New Orleans. Bush remarked that, after Hurricane Katrina’s damage to the Xavier campus, “Francis vowed the university would overcome and reopen its doors by January — and he kept that pledge.” He also noted that Francis continues to help the people of his state as chairman of the Louisiana Recovery Authority formed by Gov. Kathleen Blanco.

Reproductive health wording keeps Vatican from signing U.N. document

UNITED NATIONS (CNS) — The Vatican said it could not sign the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities because of language it contains on reproductive health. The Vatican “understands access to reproductive health as being a holistic concept that does not consider abortion or access to abortion as a dimension of those terms,” said Archbishop Celestino Migliore, the Vatican’s nuncio to the United Nations. But, he added,

“in some countries reproductive health services include abortion, thus denying the inherent right to life of every human being,” which the document affirms. Archbishop Migliore outlined his concerns in a Dec. 13 statement. “It is surely tragic that, wherever fetal defect is a precondition for offering or employing abortion, the same convention created to protect persons with disabilities from all discrimination in the exercise of their rights may be used to deny the very basic right to life of disabled unborn persons,” the archbishop said. The convention was adopted by U.N. members Dec. 13 by consensus.

Irish bishops urge government to protect women forced into sex trade

DUBLIN, Ireland (CNS) — The Irish Bishops’ Conference urged the government to immediately pass legislation to protect female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. In a statement released in early December, the bishops said the legislation should offer assistance to female victims and “not be used to deport them back to their countries of origin.” The bishops said, “The legislation must ensure that trafficked women are offered permits for temporary residency after they escape or are persuaded to flee from their traffickers, and this will give the women time to recover to some degree from the trauma.” Since Ireland’s economic boom more than a decade ago, there has been an increasing number of women working in the sex trade against their will. Ireland has not signed on to the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human

Beings. Ireland is one of three countries that does not protect victims of human trafficking with residence permits.

Court convicts priest for ordering deaths of Rwandans during genocide

YAOUNDE, Cameroon (CNS) — A United Nations war crimes court sentenced a priest to 15 years in prison for ordering militias to set fire to his church and bulldoze it, killing the 2,000 Tutsis who had sought safety inside during the 1994 Rwandan genocide. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, Tanzania, found Father Athanase Seromba guilty of genocide and extermination as a crime against humanity Dec. 13. Father Seromba ordered the church destroyed after Tutsis seeking refuge in his church in Nyange Parish in Kibuye, in western Rwanda, repelled an assault by gendarmes and the Interahamwe, the Hutu militia that carried out many of the killings during the genocide. Father Seromba showed the structural weak points in the church to the bulldozer driver, said a statement released by the tribunal.

Former bishop who resigned over Vietnam War, other issues dies

KEYSER, W.Va. (CNS) — Bernard M. Kelly, who resigned as a bishop and priest in 1971 over what he saw as the U.S. Catholic hierarchy’s failure to adapt to the reforms of the Second Vatican Council and to speak out strongly against the Vietnam War, died

Dec. 5 in Keyser at the age of 88. Father Ivan M. Lebar of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis celebrated a funeral Mass for Kelly Dec. 9 at the Church of the Assumption in Keyser. He was cremated and inurned at St. Thomas Columbarium in Keyser. At the time of his resignation June 14, 1971, Kelly had been an auxiliary bishop in Providence, R.I., for seven years. He later married and worked as an attorney in Rhode Island and West Virginia. Ellen M. O’Hara, chancellor of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, said Dec. 12 that Kelly was reconciled with the Catholic Church “10 to 12 years ago” and “died a faithful member” of the Church of the Assumption. As a bishop, Kelly also was active in the fledgling ecumenical movement, and was one of the first Catholic bishops to speak before a Protestant congregation when he preached at the Beneficent Congregational Church in Providence in 1965. Announcing his resignation, Kelly said his fellow bishops were “determined to preserve as far as possible the structures and forms of (the Council of) Trent” and “more concerned about Communion in the hand than they are about the war in Vietnam.” “I see no hope for any future change in their attitude,” he said in a letter to priests of the Providence Diocese. “Since discussion is impossible, I feel obligated in conscience to protest in the only way possible, by my resignation.”

Eighth Providence bishop presides as first bishop’s remains relocated

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (CNS) — With hundreds of worshippers looking on, the eighth ordinary of Providence presided at a Mass and offered prayers Dec. 8 as students carried the remains of the founding bishop of Providence to a new sarcophagus in the Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul. Six students from Bishop Hendricken High School in Warwick carried on their shoulders a sturdy, green-velvet-covered casing containing Bishop Thomas F. Hendricken’s original casket. “This occasion is an opportunity to recall the noble history of the Providence Diocese and to remember and thank all those who have gone before us in faith,” said Bishop Thomas J. Tobin, the current bishop of Providence. Born in Kilkenny, Ireland, in 1827, Thomas Hendricken came to the United States in 1854 with Bishop William O’Reilly of Hartford, Conn., who had gone to Ireland to recruit priests for his diocese. After his ordination, then-Father Hendricken served for 17 years at a parish in Waterbury, Conn. During his first six years as bishop, he established 13 parishes and built a rectory near the old Cathedral of SS. Peter and Paul. He also built the current cathedral, for which the cornerstone was laid in 1878.

St. Joseph Mishawaka Parish provides Healthy Family Center with Christmas cheer

MISHAWAKA — 'Tis the season for giving and parishioners and students of St. Joseph Mishawaka Catholic Church/School answered the Christmas bell for Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center's Healthy Family Center. As a result of the generosity, 75 patients from the Healthy Family Center will receive Christmas presents they would otherwise not be able to enjoy.

A Christmas tree was placed in St. Joseph Church at the beginning of the Advent season. The tree had paper ornaments with Christmas gift ideas for the 75 patients. Parishioners took the ornaments and purchased the suggested items.

The patients received two presents with a value totaling \$25. With 75 patients, the total present value came to \$3,750.

Boys and Girls Scouts, from kindergarten through eighth grade at St. Joseph Elementary, then spent part of a day wrapping all the gifts and later delivered them to the Healthy Family Center for the patients.

"The generosity is inspiring," said Bonnie Bejma, director of Clinic Operations at the Healthy Family Center. "Obviously, we could not have done this without the St. Joseph Church community. And a big thank you to the Healthy Family Center's Kathy Christiansen and Christine Byrnes who helped coordinate this event. It is an enormous amount of time and effort on everyone's part."

This is the fourth year Healthy Family Center and St. Joseph Church have collaborated on this gift giving event.

Most Precious Blood School places third in We The People competition

FORT WAYNE — Most Precious Blood School eighth graders placed third in the We the People city-wide competition on Nov. 16.

"The past two years we have placed higher than the previous years' unit awards," said Ann Baker, eighth grade social studies teacher. "This year we placed third, which is a great accomplishment. The first-place winners go on to the state competition to compete against other congressional districts in Indiana."

The "We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution" program promotes civic understanding as well as civic responsibility with the students.

The culminating activity is a mock congressional hearing in which students "testify" before a panel of judges. The class, working in cooperative teams, prepares and presents four-minute statements addressing three possible topics for each unit.

"Writing the speeches was hard at first and talking in front of the judges was not as bad as I thought. The judges knew we were very informed and knew the material," said Chelsea Bodinka.

The statements are then presented before a panel of community representatives who act as congressional committee members.

AROUND THE DIOCESE

ST. JOSEPH PARISH STUDENTS BRING CHEER TO OTHERS



MIKE STACK

Students at St. Joseph School, Mishawaka, purchased, wrapped and sent gifts for 75 patients at Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center's Healthy Family Center.

Students then answer questions posed by the committee members.

"The judges asked us follow-up questions and the group worked together answering the questions. I learned even more from the judges and my classmates," said Alexa Hamel.

This gives the students the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles. The students are scored on their presentation and knowledge of the topics.

"We the People competition was fun. Sure it was a lot of work, but in the end I learned a lot about government that I never knew before," said Alexa Hamel.

The active participation of members of Congress, as well as support from professional, business and community organizations, sponsor the program across the nation. The third congressional district is one of the largest participating districts.

"My favorite topic was about the freedom of religion especially in the schools. I liked learning about this because we are dealing with this a lot today especially with the prayer in school and the Pledge of Allegiance with the statement of 'under God,'" said Sunshine Moss.

Most Precious Blood School services students in preschool through eighth grade. Full day kindergarten and full or half day preschool options are available. Most Precious Blood School is located at 1529 Barthold St., Fort Wayne. Visit the Web site at www.preciousblood.org for more information.

John Angotti to entertain at concert

FORT WAYNE — St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Fort Wayne, will host John Angotti in concert on Friday, Dec. 29, at 7 p.m. A free will donation will be taken.

On Dec. 31, St. Vincent will host a New Year's Eve party featuring Angotti from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Price is \$25 per person in advance and includes party favors, food and drink, Champagne at midnight and a cash bar.

Angotti has recently been recognized with three UMCVA (United Catholic Music and Video Association) Awards including Male Vocalist of the Year. For information about Angotti, visit www.johnangotti.com.

For information about the concerts, contact Tony Andorfer at (260) 498-3537, ext. 210.

St. Vincent de Paul Parish is located at 1502 E. Wallen Rd. in Fort Wayne.

Students more engaged at Saint Mary's College

NOTRE DAME — A report recently released by the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) shows that Saint Mary's College students are more engaged, on average, than those at peer institutions (as classified by Carnegie) and those at other women's colleges.

Student engagement is a vital component to the success and retention of college students. A key

finding from the 2006 NSSE report states that "Student engagement is positively related to grades and to persistence between the first and second year of college."

Another key finding shows that first-year students at liberal arts colleges, like Saint Mary's, "more often participate in class discussions and view their faculty more positively than students at other institutions." Survey results for Saint Mary's align with that finding.

Each of the 523 participating schools was measured against five benchmarks of effective education practice: 1) level of academic challenge; 2) active and collaborative learning; 3) student-faculty interaction; 4) enriching educational experiences; and 5) supportive campus environment. In each of those categories, Saint Mary's scored higher — sometimes significantly higher — than its peers.

"This survey measures things that truly matter to student learning and, therefore, our effectiveness as a teaching institution," says Dr. Carol Ann Mooney, president of Saint Mary's College. "The benchmarks used by NSSE are associated with many desired outcomes of college."

'A World at Prayer is a World at Peace' is theme of Rosary Rose Bowl

LOS ANGELES — The largest outdoor celebration of the rosary in Southern California in nearly 50 years will take place at the Rose Bowl, Pasadena, on May 19, 2007, it was jointly announced publicly

on the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Dec. 12, by Holy Cross Family Ministries, Easton, Mass., and its local member Family Theater Productions, Hollywood, and the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, which are planning the event.

"A World at Prayer Is a World at Peace: A Rosary Celebration, The Rosary Bowl" will take place between 6-9 p.m. and is free and open to the public.

"The Rosary Bowl carries forward the tradition and mission of the "Rosary priest," Servant of God Father Patrick Peyton, to foster world peace and support the spiritual well-being of the family by encouraging daily family prayer, specifically the rosary," stated Holy Cross Father John Phalen, president of Holy Cross Family Ministries, furthering Father Peyton's mission.

The special eucharistic celebration, which will combine prayer, music and cultural exhibitions, is expected to draw the many ethnic populations which comprise the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, the country's largest, and serve as a dynamic display of unity of the Catholic faithful. The religious service will culminate in a public recitation of the rosary with people of different cultures and languages leading some of the prayers.

For more information and/or to make a prayer commitment or a financial contribution for the "The Rosary Bowl," go online to www.rosarybowl.org or e-mail info@rosarybowl.org or call 1-800-874-0999.

Make a Difference Michiana assists charity

SOUTH BEND — Make a Difference Michiana encourages the community to make a donation to their favorite charity this holiday season.

"It's the season of giving, and local nonprofits need the community's support. We live in a very generous community. People are willing to help if you explain the need and show them a way," suggests Mary Dunbar, president and founder of Make a Difference Michiana. "Visitors to the Make a Difference Michiana Web site can research over 200 local organizations and donate online to their favorite charity."

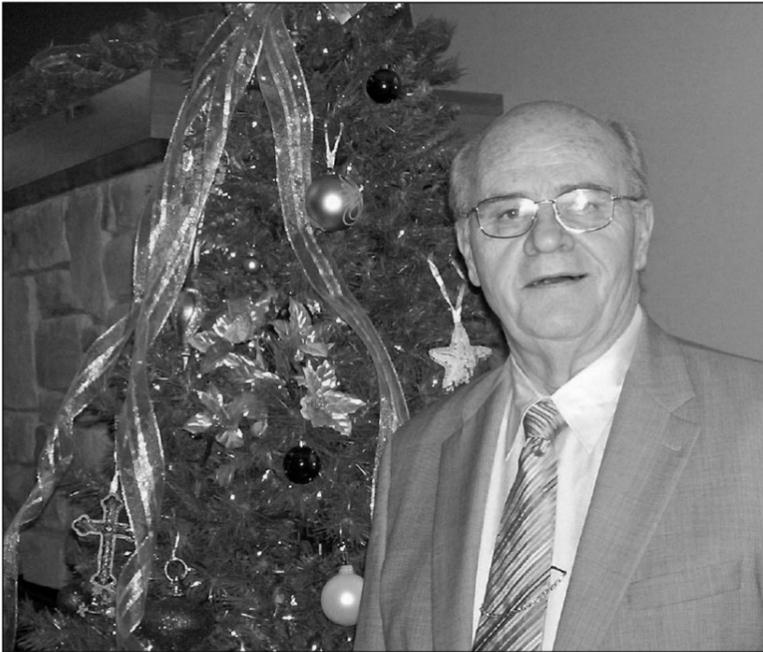
Make a Difference Michiana provides a Web resource, www.makeadifferencemichiana.org, where visitors can search for services, donation ideas, volunteer and job opportunities and donate online to their favorite charity. The initiative was launched in December 2005, and currently sees between 1,200 and 1,500 visitors to the site each day.

Online contributions made at the Make a Difference Michiana Web site are handled by PayPal, a safe, secure way to transfer funds online. 47angotti.txt

Correction

In the Dec. 10 story "Latest Antioch retreat a success," Eric Mammolenti was listed as the student leader, which is incorrect. The student leader was Mary Cate Quiett, of Marian High School. Students on the evangelization team were 30 in number, not 45. Marian's Elizabeth Higgenbotham shot the photo, not Susan Baxter.

TV Mass celebrates anniversary in Fort Wayne



PHOTOS BY TESS STEFFEN

Twenty years ago, Vince Tippmann donated funds, which were used by Bishop John M. D'Arcy, to put the TV Mass on the air in Fort Wayne. Now celebrating its 20th anniversary, Bishop D'Arcy was the celebrant of the Dec. 17 Mass in Fort Wayne on WISE-TV, Channel 33. Volunteers were honored at a luncheon after the Mass, which is transmitted from the chapel at the University of Saint Francis.



Some of the TV Mass volunteers who run the cameras include John Henry, Andrew Lamping, John Bobay, Tess Steffen, Amber Warnick and Christopher Lamping. The TV Mass operates under the diocesan Office of Communications. Vince LaBarbera and his assistant Joanne Summers coordinate the scheduling of priests and parishes in South Bend and Fort Wayne.



Jim and Theresa Lamping and their children provide music at the TV Mass. The older sons, Andrew and Chris, in the back row, have journeyed from in front of the camera to volunteer work behind the camera.



Sean McBride, left, is the associate producer of the TV Mass in Fort Wayne. Next to McBride is Bob Nicola and Fred Price, co-directors.

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In the annual Advent drive, Bishop Luers students, teachers and staff collected items to be donated to the Christ Child Society in December. They collected a variety of newborn items along with 148 packages of diapers. The students were given the opportunity to wear jeans to school on Friday, Dec. 15, if they donated a baby item or \$2. Over \$800 was collected along with the baby items. Christ Child Society uses these baby items throughout the year in preparing layettes for new mothers in need.



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KRISTI R. WARD

In the aftermath of a pie-throwing event to celebrate a successful pie sale, from right, St. Vincent preschooler Noah Hardy, playground supervisor Jeannie Shaw, principal Donna Quinn and top pie salesman fourth grader Morgan Matthew enjoy a messy moment of fun.

St. Vincent School celebrates with pie

BY KRISTI WARD

ELKHART — After a successful pie sale at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Elkhart, a couple of very special pies were reserved for two very special people. These pies were meant to be enjoyed — but not by eating.

Instead, parents, teachers and students gathered to watch two top pie sellers from St. Vincent School do something most kids can only dream about — a Three Stooges pie-in-the-face trick on their principal and longtime playground supervisor.

The anticipation in the school gym mounted as

principal Donna Quinn covered herself with a plastic poncho and took a seat. “Is this fair?” she asked, pulling the poncho hood over her head and face.

“No!” the students responded with one voice as Quinn shrugged and dropped the hood. Top pie seller fourth-grader Morgan Matthew stepped forward with her pie and took her best shot, leaving Quinn laughing through a face covered in shaving cream.

Then it was playground supervisor Jeannie Shaw’s turn to be the target for preschooler Noah Hardy. Hardy was assisted by Shaw’s daughter Heather, a preschool teacher. Teacher and student teamed up with enthusiasm

as Hardy directed his pie at Shaw. To the delight of everyone present, Quinn and Shaw then faced each other, bowed politely, and aimed their pies at each other.

School pie sale organizers Teresa Zinich and Gloria Taylor said the fundraiser was held to help the Rosary Society. A total of 502 pies were sold, one third of those by students at the school. Funds earned will go to the Rosary Society’s treasury to purchase needed sacristy and church supplies.

Zinich said they came up with the pie-throwing idea as a way to make the fundraiser fun. “And it was great — it was perfect. I think they loved it,”

she said of the students.

Shaw said she enjoyed the experience. “They didn’t ask me to do it,” said Shaw. “I volunteered — I said I would do it because the kids would love to throw a pie at me.”

Quinn has a habit of coming up with unique ways to motivate her students. Kissing a cow and letting students decorate her with Silly String, make-up and hair paint for a day are some of her past rewards.

“I’m really into getting these kids into service,” Quinn said. “I don’t know if that’s what they see selling pies as, but I’ll do anything — well, almost anything — to help them learn that.”

South Bend Serrans host seminarians’ luncheon

SOUTH BEND — The Serra Club of South Bend will host the traditional Christmas luncheon for diocesan seminarians and their families on Thursday, Dec. 28, at Holy Family Parish.

President Ronald Moser said invitations for the event have been extended to 18 seminarians

and their families.

The luncheon will begin at 10:45 a.m. with the rosary. Bishop John M. D’Arcy will celebrate Mass. The luncheon for the seminarians, families, guests and the Serrans will be held in the Holy Family School cafeteria.

Father Bernard Galic, director of vocations in the diocese and pastor of Holy Family Church, and Moser will be speakers. — EJD

Social worker offers tips when visiting loved ones in nursing home

BY LISA PETSCHKE

If you are planning to visit a relative or friend in a nursing home over the holidays, follow these suggestions to help ensure positive interactions.

General tips

- Call ahead to the unit where the person resides, to find out the best time of day to visit.
- Plan to visit when you are not rushed for time.
- Bring something with you: flowers and a vase, a photo album, a magazine or newspaper, a guest book for visitors to sign, a favorite music tape or CD, or a special food treat.
- Position yourself at eye level, face to face. Ensure you are close enough and speaking loudly enough that the person can adequately see and hear you.
- Actively listen to what the person has to tell you. Express interest in their daily activities, and allow them to vent their feelings about their situation.
- Encourage reminiscing about pleasant events, especially those from past holidays.
- Tell some jokes or a funny true story, or bring in a humorous videotape to watch together.
- If conversation is difficult or impossible, share news about family, friends and current events, read aloud or listen to music together. Sit in the lobby and people-watch. And learn to become comfortable with silence.
- Check the recreational activities schedule for special events — such as a holiday bazaar or a visit-

ing choir — and accompany the person you visit to one of them. Also check if there’s a Mass you could attend together.

- Telephone between visits if you can’t get in as often as you’d like.

Visiting the person with dementia

Visiting a person who is cognitively impaired can be particularly challenging. You may not be able to relate with them in the usual ways. Visits can still be meaningful, however, once you adjust your expectations and learn new ways of interacting. Here are some guidelines.

- Visit alone if possible. It is much easier for the person to deal with one visitor at a time. If you find visits awkward, though, bring along a friend for moral support.
- Come prepared for any possible mood. Or, call ahead and ask what kind of day the person is having. If it’s a bad one, postpone your visit.
- Approach the person slowly and from the front, giving them time to see you coming. Make eye contact, and use touch as appropriate.
- Address the person by name, and identify yourself also. Be prepared that they may not recognize you or may not recall previous visits. Rest assured this does not make your presence any less valuable. Your visits not only provide mental stimulation, they also validate the person as a unique and worthwhile individual.
- Find a quiet place to visit in order to avoid distractions, since

over-stimulation leads to agitation.

- Speak slowly and clearly. Use familiar words and simple sentences. Avoid clichés. Talk in a calm voice, using a low-pitched tone.
- Ask simple questions that require a short answer — preferably yes or no. Avoid posing questions that challenge their short-term memory, such as “What did you do today?”
- Use body language — gestures, facial expressions, tone of voice — to help get your message across.
- Don’t argue when the person has facts confused. If a conversation appears to be causing frustration, change the subject. If they become restless during an activity, try something else.

Ideas for activities

- Watch home movies or rent a favorite movie — perhaps a holiday classic.
- Decorate the room: bring in pictures, a calendar, a sun-catcher for the window, a plant, special knickknacks or a seasonal decoration.
- Share a project, such as sorting through family photos.
- Look through picture books or albums that reflect past interests.
- Write a letter to someone special.
- Play a card game or board game.
- Play a musical instrument.
- Give a manicure or set hair.
- Give a hand or foot massage.
- Bring your pet in to visit (find out the facility’s policy first).
- Bring children or grandchildren with you.

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Whose birthday is it anyway?

Believe it or not but I hate a lot about this time of the year. People are running around frantically buying things they often cannot afford. Christmas carols are playing in stores even before the Halloween decorations are taken down and people put up their Christmas trees earlier and earlier. The malls are crowded and some people will get up at 5 a.m. to stand in line for store Christmas specials. And the examples go on and on. I get sick just thinking about it. I want to shout at the top of my lungs, "Whose birthday is it anyway?"

Now, don't get me wrong, I am not against Christmas or giving gifts. A gift is an expression of appreciation and love. However, trying to outdo one another or giving gifts only because someone else is giving them to us seems ridiculous.

In this country we have the tendency to think that more is better. Our culture reeks with materialism. Our wants have become our needs. Many want the best and the latest thing. Children hound their parents and Santa for the most popular toys that usually cost a great deal. I know parents who

agonize because they can't afford these items and often go into debt just to give their children what "everybody else" is getting.

There is a saying that "Jesus is the reason for the season." We often, even Christians, lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas. After all, it is Christ's birthday, not ours. The gifts we do give should be expressions of God's love that gave us Jesus.

Right now I can almost read the minds of those who bother to read this column. "What could I possibly do to go against the mainstream? How can I avoid being sucked into what is happening around me?" These are good questions, ones that I also ask myself. The following are a few suggestions that might help us all.

One is to examine our gift giving. Who are the people on our Christmas lists and why do we give them gifts? Is it because we think we have to or because we want to show our love? Does a more expensive gift show more love than an inexpensive one?

Reinforce with our families, especially children, that the joy of Christmas does not

depend on how many presents we receive. By spoiling our kids we are continuing to promote our materialistic culture. Suggest to children and to our young adults that gifts don't always have to be things. How about promising to shovel someone's driveway and sidewalks this winter without expecting to be paid or give a friend or relative some nights of free babysitting, etc.? Use your imagination. Time is a precious gift.

We can also make our gifts. It is a way of really putting ourselves into our giving. If we are not into crafts, how about baking some goodies like cookies or candy to give our loved ones? It is something our children can do also. I know it means a lot to me when I know someone took his or her precious time to do something special for me.

Another Christmas gift is to send Christmas cards to people we will not see during the holidays. We share the gift of our time by letting friends know what is going on in our lives. As far as I am concerned, don't waste a stamp if all you are going to do is sign your name. (Oops, lots



SISTER MARGIE LAVONIS, CSC

THE CUTTING EDGE

of people are probably going to drop me off their Christmas card list.) Also, remember that the church's Christmas season goes far beyond Dec. 25 so the cards don't have to make it to their destinations by that day.

Changing our materialistic way of celebrating Christmas will not happen overnight, but each of us can do our part to keep in focus just whose birthday we celebrate and perhaps remind others who are caught up in the frenzy. It will also help us to celebrate the meaning of Advent and relieve a lot of stress so we can truly enjoy this beautiful season.

Today's Catholic contributor reflects on grandparents' special Christmas Eve

BY LISA KOCHANOWSKI

SOUTH BEND — While most children's early explanation of Christmas is the birth of the baby Jesus, mine was a talk about the meaning of Christmas and how Christmas Eve is the day Dziadzi and Babci came to this country.

Julian and Maria Walesiewicz came to the United States on Christmas Eve in 1949. Known to me as Babci (grandmother in Polish) and Dziadzi (grandfather in Polish), they had spent years as slaves in the German concentration camps when the German army invaded Poland before being released to America. Accompanying my grandparents to America was my then 3 year old aunt Casmira (Cassie).

Being strong, devout Catholics made their arrival to a new free life even more special. They had endured years of torture and persecution at the hands of mad men, and they were brought to freedom on the birth of the Savior of the world.

What could be more poetic?

Each year, my family thanks God for giving us his only son and says an extra thank you for bringing two special people home.

Dziadzi's uncle Chester Walesiewicz, who was president of the Polish-American Central Civic Committee, sponsored my grandparents to come to this country and helped them find a place to live and work.

Dziadzi was 33 years old when he came to this country. He fought in the Polish army when World War II started. The Russians captured him at Drohiczyn in eastern Poland while the Polish army opposed both the Nazis and the Reds as



PHOTO BY GENNY WOJCIECHOWSKI

Pictured from left to right are Andrew Kochanowski, Kyle Kochanowski, Maria Walesiewicz and Julian Walesiewicz at Julian's recent 90th birthday party.

they partitioned Poland in September 1939.

He was released by the Russians to the Germans in exchange for Ukrainian prisoners of war. He remained in a war prison until April 27, 1944, when he regained civilian status.

My grandfather turned 90 this year.

Babci, who was 24 years old when she came to this country, was Maria Para when she was driven out of her home by the Nazis. She and her family hid in the woods, dodging bullets and capture. The Russians were only a half mile away when Germans ordered the civilians to be transported into the interior of

Germany.

The pair met at German concentration camp and were married while living in slavery. Shortly after they wed, they had my aunt Cassie, who lived with them at the camp.

I am not much older now than my grandmother was then, and just a little younger than my grandfather was when he first came to this country. God has blessed me with a loving husband of 10 years and two beautiful children; Kyle, 7, and Andrew, 3. I cannot imagine how overwhelmed they felt at being a young married couple, with a young child living in a place far from their native land.

Each day I wake up, hustle the kids off to school and myself to work in a life that has become very routine. At this time of year, I always find myself stepping back and thinking about what my grandparents' life was like some 57 years ago.

My grandparents went through years of pure agony in the concentration camps and never talk about those years. The little bits I have heard have been horrific and I just thank God every day for letting them survive those tumultuous times.

Things like digging their own graves, watching people die at their feet, constantly worrying about being gassed and being witness to physical degradation are just some of the horrors they had to witness.

Babci told me once that she remembers the day she came to the states. There was a man, selling hot dogs on the street corner, and my aunt started to cry because she was hungry, but they had no money to buy any food.

They came to a place that was better than slavery, but it was filled with a great deal of obstacles — from proper employment to constant language barriers. In the end, they built a home filled with love, three children, family and lots of good friends.

When I was a child I use to smile when I saw my grandparents tear up on Christmas Eve, but as an adult I find myself not just smiling but also tearing up on Christmas Eve. It saddens me that I cannot always spend

Christmas Eve with my grandparents, but they are always close to my mind and my heart each and every year.

When I became a mother, I decided that helping my children understand Catholic teachings of the holidays was important. Even more important to me, is making sure that on Christmas Eve my sons understand that our world got the baby Jesus and our family got a special Babci and Dziadzi. I hope that they too will pass this story onto their children and their grandchildren.

Naz Drowie, Dziadzi and Babci. Health and happiness always.

My grandparents went through years of pure agony in the concentration camps and never talk about those years.

Tradition of Christmas Eve 'holy bread' bonds Polish families

BY MICHELLE DONAGHEY

SOUTH BEND — “You are sharing something very special. It means a lot to us,” said Lou and Jeanette Ciesielski of their Polish tradition of sharing Oplatek, (pronounced ua-poo-wah-tek) or Koleda in Polish during the Christmas season.

Oplatek, which is not shared other times of the year but can be shared anytime during the Christmas season, is usually purchased (or by donation depending on the church) from the parish office.

The wafers are usually the size of a folded napkin and include mostly white oplatek and one pink. Legend has it that the pink wafer is usually shared with the animals and pets of the household. This legend also has it that the animals who share the Oplatek talk to each other at midnight on Christmas.

Polish in heritage, the St. Adalbert parishioner remembers the tradition of sharing the Christmas wafer since he was a child noting that usually the wafer is shared on Christmas Eve. “A child or the youngest member of the family, looks for the appearance of the first star,” he said. After the star is seen, he or she tells the family and the Wilgilia, or vigil begins.

“It was a must. It was a holy get together,” said Lou who said that the head of the family would begin the sharing of the Oplatek. The oldest member would usually take a plate or platter on which the wafer was served. If it was a large wafer, it would be broken in to enough pieces so that every family member would receive a piece to share with every other family member. The plate was then offered by him to each member to take a piece. After everyone would receive a wafer, the sharing would begin.

“The head of the household would start and would mention what the wafer means,” said Lou who said then the father would offer his piece to another family member, often the youngest. Each person would break off a small piece of the other’s wafer to consume, offering wishes for happiness and health, followed by a kiss or hug.



MICHELLE DONAGHEY

Lou Ciesielski looks over at his wife, Jeanette’s cookbook while he holds the family Oplatek that will be used this Christmas. Lou remembers the tradition back to his childhood. He and his wife cherish their family traditions which include the small, thin, rectangular piece of wafer with the design of the Nativity pressed in to it.

“It brings out that if there are ill feelings between one another, the sharing offers forgiveness and acceptance of one another. This is a holy bread. It’s a bonding of the families that come together,” said Lou who noted that the sharing is to bring people back to starting anew. The sharing continues until everyone has individually greeted each person who is there.

The tradition, which Lou and Jeanette cherish, continues with family members near and far. Since their children have moved away from the area, they send Oplatek to whoever cannot come to celebrate the meal together. This Christmas season, they hope to carry on their tradition of breaking oplatek with their young granddaughter Sara, 9, who will be coming to visit.

Christmas vigil

Lou and his wife, Jeanette, noted that along with the Oplatek, the family of Polish heritage also shared the Wigilia meal. Traditional foods included fish, kutia, a mix of wheat and honey and poppy seed cake. This meal would be large since there

was a fasting time during Advent from meat.

“We also keep an extra place at our table for unexpected guests who come by,” they noted adding that they would be received into their home just as Jesus would himself.

After the meal, there were the singing of Christmas carols, Koledy, in preparation for the entire family’s participation in the parish Midnight Mass (Pasterka).

The season does not end with Christmas, but rather extends from the vigil to the feast of the Baptism of the Lord with times set aside for visiting with family and friends and more sharing of the Christmas wafer.

Lou noted that on or near the feast of the Epiphany, older members of the family are encouraged to bless their home with their entire family present and to mark the lintel (top) of the doorway with the initials of the Three Kings and the Year of the Lord — 20+K+M+B+07 — which indicates to those entering that they are entering a Catholic home.

pointed out that we are now especially now noticing the darkness outside.

“This time of year, all start to notice the darkness. It’s not by accident that the church’s liturgical year plays into it. Right now, we’re celebrating the darkest part of human history before Christ came,” she said adding that up until around Dec. 21 or 22, the days are long and dark. After Christmas, a day, which she said was chosen because it was the

MANGER, PAGE 13

Parishes offer roster of Christmas Mass times

The Office of Catechesis solicited parishes for Mass times for Christmas. The following parishes responded with information.

Fort Wayne-AlLEN County	Sunday, Dec. 24	Monday Dec. 25
• Most Precious Blood	5 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 10:30 p.m.	9 a.m.
• St. Charles Borromeo	4 p.m. 6:30 p.m. Midnight Mass (music at 11:30 p.m.)	9 a.m. 11 a.m.
• St. John the Baptist, FW	4:30 p.m. Midnight Mass	8 a.m. 10:30 a.m.
• St. Joseph, Brooklyn	5 p.m. (Children’s Mass) Midnight Mass (bilingual, concert at 11:15 p.m.)	9 a.m.
• St. Jude	5 p.m. 11:30 p.m.	9 a.m. 11 a.m.
• St. Patrick, Arcola	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 6 p.m. (Youth Mass) Midnight Mass	10 a.m.
North of Fort Wayne		
• St. Gaspar, Rome City	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 10:30 p.m. (choir at 10 p.m.)	9 a.m.
• St. Paul of the Cross, Columbia City	5 p.m. (Children’s Mass) Midnight Mass (music at 11:30 p.m.)	9 a.m.
South of Fort Wayne		
• St. Bernard, Wabash	5:30 p.m. (Children’s Mass) Midnight Mass (music at 11:30 p.m.)	9 a.m.
• St. Joseph, Bluffton	5 p.m. (children’s pageant at 4:15 p.m.) Midnight Mass (music at 11:30 p.m.)	9 a.m.
• St. Mary, Huntington	5:15 p.m. Midnight Mass	8 a.m. 10:30 a.m.
• St. Mary/Assumption, Decatur	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 10 p.m. (music at 9:30 p.m.)	8 a.m. 9:30 a.m.
• Ss. Peter and Paul, Huntington	5 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 10 p.m.	8 a.m. 10 a.m.
South Bend and St. Joseph County		
• Christ the King	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 6 p.m. Midnight Mass	9 a.m. 11 a.m.
• Sacred Heart of Jesus, Lakeville	4:30 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 10:30 p.m.	9:30 a.m.
• St. Joseph, South Bend	4 p.m. 6:30 p.m. 10 p.m.	10 a.m.
• St. Matthew Cathedral	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass with Bishop) 6 p.m. Midnight Mass (Lessons and Carols at 11:30 p.m.)	9 a.m. 11 a.m.
• St. Patrick, Walkerton	5 p.m. Midnight Mass	9 a.m. 11 a.m.
• St. Pius X, Granger	5 p.m. (Mass in church and gym) 7:30 p.m. 11:30 p.m.	9 a.m. 11 a.m.
East of South Bend		
• St. Thomas the Apostle, Elkhart	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 6 p.m. 10 p.m. (adult choir)	8 a.m. 10 a.m.
• St. Joseph, La Grange	5 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 10 p.m. (bilingual)	10 a.m.
South of South Bend		
• Sacred Heart, Warsaw	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 6:30 p.m. (Children’s Mass) Midnight Mass	10 a.m.
• St. Martin de Porres, Syracuse	5 p.m. (Children’s Mass) Midnight Mass	9 a.m.
• St. Michael, Plymouth	4 p.m. (Children’s Mass) 6 p.m. (Spanish) Midnight Mass	8 a.m. 10 a.m. 2 p.m. (Spanish)

Speaker encourages people to come closer to the manger

BY MICHELLE DONAGHEY

BREMEN — “It’s so important to set it up at home and to reflect on, think about, the darkness and the cold and what it means to you. In a world where faith has grown cold, we can look at the manger and take it (love) to the world that needs it so badly,” said Sister Agnes Marie, OSF, of St. Matthew Cathedral to a small group gathered for a soup-and-speaker event at St. Dominic Parish.

“I want you to become like children and think of the first Christmas,” added Sister Agnes in the reflective Advent talk. Everyone should make sure their crèche is up and in a prominent place in their home that they should not “put the baby Jesus in yet” she noted. Instead, “sit and think about and take the place in your hearts of Mary, Joseph, of that wonderful scene, that first Christmas.”

It is not by a rare coincidence that the liturgical year is the way it is, explained Sister Agnes who

Caregiver relies on God, others to make it through

BY DEB WAGNER

FORT WAYNE — Who would think that one Sunday morning in September would be spent with mother and daughter and five other family members completing a Christ Renews His Parish (CHRP) weekend, and the next Sunday, the same mother is thankful that her daughter is still alive — her leg bones crushed like grapes that had been stomped? This is a question that Catherine (Tekie) Andrews reflects upon as this tragedy and several other hospitalizations happen to family members during a short six-week period.

Catherine is no stranger to the caregiver role. Just the month prior to her daughter's accident, Catherine's mother-in-law, Irma Andrews, was admitted to the hospital due to unexplained nausea and low oxygen levels in her blood. Irma, who sometimes stayed for extended periods with Catherine and her husband, Jim, had to have a valve replaced in her heart. She was then transferred to another location for rehabilitation.

After exactly a week had passed, Catherine and Jim received a telephone call that their youngest daughter, Karen, and her longtime friend, Dan, had been in

serious motorcycle accident when another driver pulled in front of them from a dead stop. The result of the low-speed impact to their right legs left them broken and crushed.

Amputation was the standard protocol because of the extent of the injuries. But due to their excellent physical condition at the time of the accident, doctors thought they could reconstruct their legs using muscle and bone from the calves of the injured legs. Karen endured four surgeries; Dan had three surgeries. Shrapnel was scraped from the wounds, pins and rods inserted and skin grafted. In a day and age where outpatient procedures are more common than overnight hospital stays, they were released from the hospital after two long weeks. With manual wheelchairs, crutches and the inability to drive or care for their basic needs, they were sent home to houses with steps and an estimated recovery time of three to six months.

Catherine recalls sitting in the waiting room for one of the earlier surgeries with a sinking heart asking, "O Lord, how can this be happening? Irma is in rehabilitation at a different facility and we don't know the long-term outcome for Karen and Dan's legs."

Catherine spent her time visiting



DEB WAGNER

The Andrews family has had a year of unexpected accidents and illnesses, but they are sustained through prayer. From left, are Karen, Jim and Catherine Andrews. Irma Andrews is seated. Catherine said she finds solace at Most Precious Blood Church in Fort Wayne.



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CHRISTMAS MASSES

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6:30 p.m. with Contemporary Choir

Midnight with Adult Choir

December 25, 7:30, 9:30 & 11:30 a.m.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church

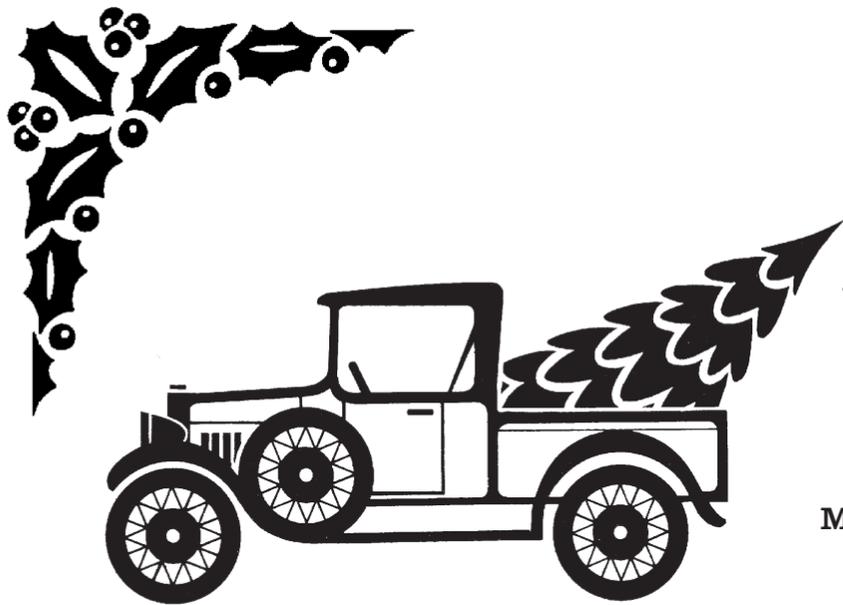
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Regardless of the weather or the food served at a holiday feast, or whether you are alone or in the midst of many, Christmas is always a look at the past.

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each person in the hospital while trying to work at a floral department in a grocery store and undergo cataract surgery herself. She went to bed at the end of the day only to repeat the same schedule the next. Now all of this would be grueling, without complications. But there were complications.

Jim Andrews was unable to help his wife very much during this time. He was at home suffering from edema and other complications from diabetes. He was later admitted to the hospital and released after four days. Catherine experienced eye infections after her cataract surgery. Let's not forget about Irma. Irma usually stays with Catherine and Jim when Jim's brother, Jerry and his wife, Alice, are out of town but that was not feasible this time. Irma was transferred to an assisted living facility for a month while Jerry and Alice flew to California to be with their daughter who was having a baby.

Catherine obviously could not be caregiver for all simultaneously. Yet, she managed to take time for herself and found solace at Most Precious Blood Church, Fort Wayne.

"When I was at church and involved with the people I knew through CHRP, I was at peace. I was comfortable. Every night I thanked God for the day and hoped that if it was God's will, I'd have another day," she said. She is currently on family medical leave. Friends and family have also been helpful around Karen's house, bringing meals to the home and running other errands. Son-in-law, Greg Cherney, drove from Georgia to spend a week with them.

When Karen reflects on the accident and the outcome, she says spontaneity is out and planning is in. "I don't want to say it's an inconvenience, but you've got to rethink how to do everything you already know how to do because using crutches doesn't allow you to use your hands as you did before. You need to plan for everything, leave a little earlier and depend on others to get anywhere."

Financially, it is still tough because there was no income coming in for over two months. It was through word-of-mouth from a friend through a Methodist church that Karen received one cart of perishables and canned goods from their food bank for her family.

While the recovery from the motorcycle accident is ongoing, Karen has returned to work although Dan has not. Jim and Irma are doing well at home. Catherine has continued in the role of loving caregiver by driving people to and fro and helping where needed.

All of these events have made the Andrews family want to do more for others since so many did for them in a time of great need. This year there is not going to be an abundance of gifts; it's a time of giving thanks. The best present they will give to each other will be that they are all still alive and able to be with each other during this Christmas season. Faith, hope and love and the greatest is love.

MANGER

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

first day we start noticing the longer, lighter daytime, the days get longer and brighter until around June 21 or 22, which almost coincides with Pentecost.

"It would be real easy for us to be tremendously pessimistic. We know the final story," said

Sister Agnes who noted that "God was so much in love with us, he gave us his Son."

"Remember the light is in our hearts. To bring his freedom from the darkness. God's love is what it is all about," said Sister Agnes who also suggested that everyone "go out into the darkness in the night and wonder about the mystery. Feel it and remember who the light is."



MICHELLE DONAGHEY

Sister Agnes Marie Regan, OSF, pastoral associate of St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend, was the speaker at St. Dominic Parish in Bremen. She encouraged those attending a soup-and-speaker event to come closer to the manger.

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Christmas TV Mass Specials



FORT WAYNE

Christmas Eve

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WISE-TV 33 & WPTA-21

Celebrant: Bishop John D'Arcy

Christmas Morning: Live 10:30-11:00 a.m.

WISE-TV 33

Celebrant: Bishop John D'Arcy

SOUTH BEND

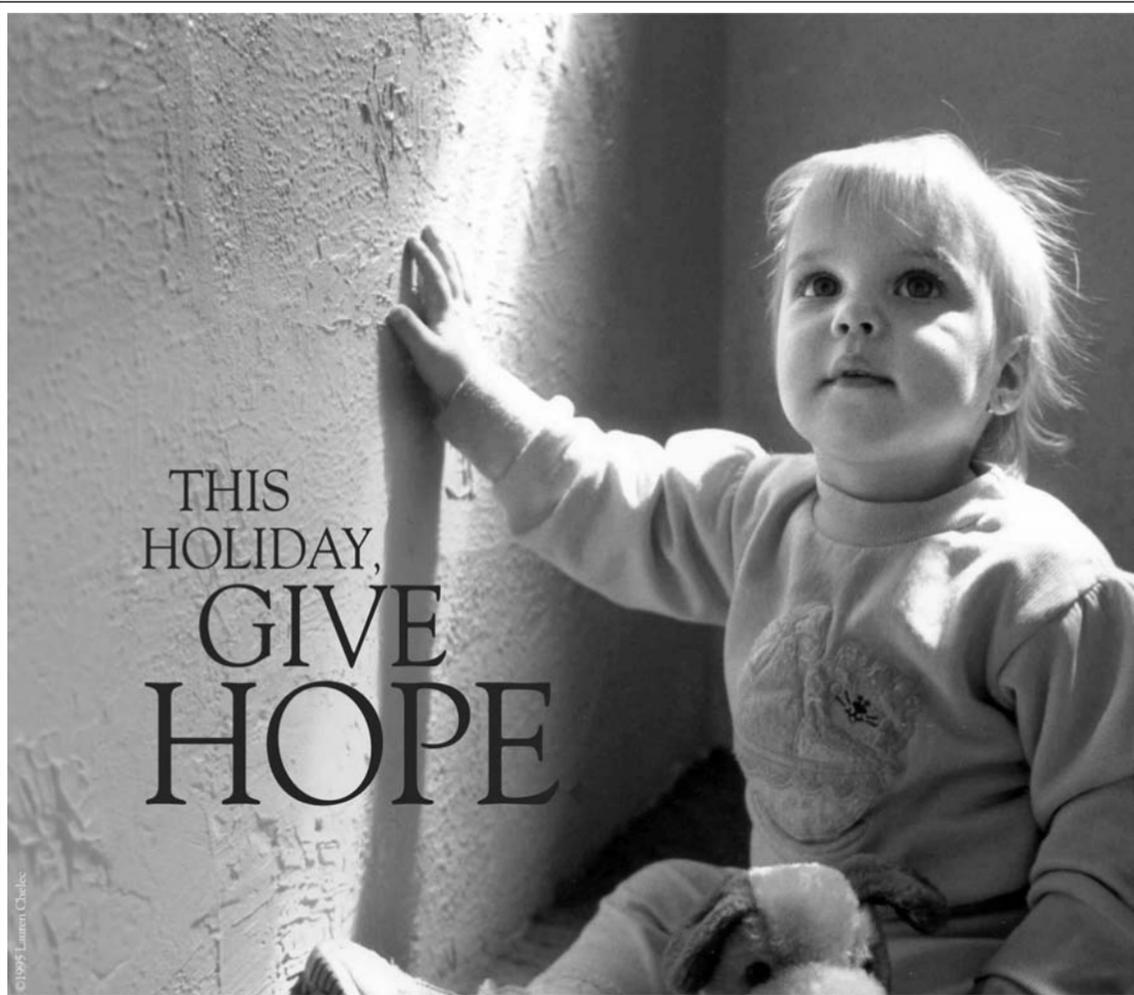
Christmas Day

6:00 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.

WNDU-TV 16

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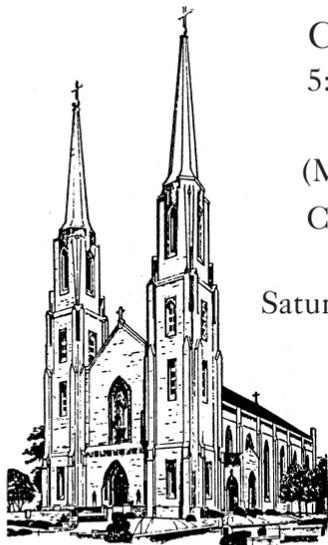
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Christmas Eve Masses:

5:00 PM (Children's Mass)

Midnight Mass

(Music begins at 11:15 PM)

Christmas Morning Masses

8:00 & 11:30 AM

Saturday, December 30 - 5:00 PM

New Year's Eve

Sunday, December 31

7:30, 9:30 & 11:30 AM

5:00 PM

New Year's Day 9:00 AM

Come to the Cathedral during this Season of Grace.

EDITORIAL

Savor our Savior's season

Visit any tree collection site on Dec. 26, perhaps as early as Dec. 25, and you may find long lines of those ready to toss the tree. Of course, if the tree went up before or the day after Thanksgiving, it may be dried out and ready to be tossed.

As much time that is preoccupied through the Advent season — finding the perfect gift for so and so — it almost seems like we can't wait for Christmas to be over and for life return to the usual rut, and onward to New Year's and Valentine's Day.

But, for Catholics, the church season of Christmas presses onward through the first week of January. It actually ends on Jan. 8, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

The vigil begins Sunday, Dec. 24. While some may be looking for a two-for-one deal with Mass, the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas must be celebrated as two separate Masses.

While "secular Christmas," which focuses on the commercial push leading up to the holiday, will tell us Christmas is over Dec. 25 — the Christmas music on the radio is stowed away, the lights unplugged, the trees sent to compost — we must keep in mind the real spirit of the season.

As Catholics, we can reclaim Christmas during the days that follow Dec. 25. When we sing the song "The Twelve Days of Christmas," we are actually referring to the days after Christmas, not before. The Christmas octave gives us an opportunity to cling to the Christmas spirit. It is a time to celebrate the greatest gift ever given to humanity, the Incarnate God, who graced this earth for 33 years in human form and remains with us in the Eucharist.

Pope Benedict XVI, in a Dec. 14 meeting with Roman university students, said, "Christmas gifts remind us of the gift par excellence, that which the son of God made of himself in the Incarnation." He then reminded the Italian young people that exchanging gifts at Christmas time has real meaning only if it is a symbol of "the principal gift" remembered as people celebrate the birth of Christ. Pope Benedict encouraged the young people to not only fix their gaze on the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in the manger, but also to contemplate and adore him in the Eucharist.

It is through the Eucharist that we allow Christ to enter our hearts. And as a church sign stated on a nearby highway, "If Christmas is not in your heart, you won't find it under a tree."

Politically correct verbage, bah humbug

It seems that in a world of political correctness, we often hear about wishing people "Happy Holidays" at the places we shop or work instead of "Merry Christmas." But anymore, it seems more people are offended by "Happy Holidays" than they are by "Merry Christmas." After all, sensitivity towards people of other faith should not mean watering the season down to a generic non-entity.

But that is so often the approach people take. When a rabbi in Seattle, Wash., asked authorities at the SeaTac airport to sponsor a large menorah near the Christmas tree in the international arrival hall of the airport, the authorities responded by removing the Christmas tree. The rabbi was seeking inclusion, not the removal of all religious symbols. Nevertheless, the rabbi as well as other local Jewish organizations began receiving hate mail.

To all the authorities concerned about not offending any ethnic or religious group, we encourage some reason. The editors of *Today's Catholic* would venture that a good many non-Christians are not offended by Christmas trees or "Merry Christmas" greetings. They have all but adopted the holiday as a secular one of their own. As Christians, we know that Christmas is a celebration of God entering the world in the person of Jesus for the purpose of redeeming it, and it is that good news that we are called to live and share throughout the year. So when Christians say "Merry Christmas," they are not ram-rodging their religion down someone else's throat, but sharing that good news.

Housekeeping notes

There will not be a Dec. 31 issue of *Today's Catholic*. But the Jan. 7, 2007 issue will be announcing the upcoming 150th diocesan jubilee celebration events. It will go to every registered Catholic household. Inside the fold will be a sesquicentennial envelope containing a prayer for the jubilee and a prayer for vocations on the reverse side. Also in the sesquicentennial envelope will be a vinyl decal with the jubilee image to place on your front door, your car — you choose.

Jan. 1 is a holy day, the solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God, but it is not a holy day of obligation in the United States in 2007.

Today's Catholic editorial board consists of Bishop John M. D'Arcy, Ann Carey, Don Clemmer, Father Mark Gurtner, Father Michael Heintz, Tim Johnson, Vince LaBarbera and Msgr. J. William Lester.

COMMENTARY

TODAY'S CATHOLIC welcomes letters from readers. All letters must be signed and include a phone number and address for verification. Today's Catholic reserves the right to edit for clarity and length. Address letters to: Today's Catholic • P.O. Box 11169 • Fort Wayne, IN • 46856-1169 or e-mail to: editor@fw.diocesefwsb.org

Kennedy criticism unfair

I certainly hesitate to criticize a history professor from Notre Dame who specializes in American history, but I must. Father Wilson Miscamble is quoted in *Today's Catholic* as blaming President John F. Kennedy for "succumbing to modernity's demand that religion be compartmentalized and held in the private sphere." He actually blames Kennedy for "blazing a trail that many subsequent Catholic politicians followed."

I would like to point out to Father Miscamble that in President Kennedy's famous address before a group of Protestant ministers, Kennedy actually quoted the statement of the American Bishops in 1948, which strongly endorsed church-state separation. He also

stated that if the time ever came that he would have to violate his (Catholic) conscience or violate the national interest, then he would resign. He also stated in that speech that he would never disavow his church in order to win the election.

What more could you expect him to say? But it was what he did that made us so proud of him those many years ago. On his inauguration day, he went to Mass in the morning. Since then, all presidents have church services that they attend on their inauguration day. Before Kennedy, this was not true. Kennedy did not have a big ceremony at the National Cathedral. He did what any good Catholic would do on such an important day — he went off to his parish church for the regular daily Mass. As president, he went to Mass every Sunday no matter where he was. Before Kennedy, when the president went to church it was announced on the news. The

newscasters started to do that with Kennedy but after awhile they stopped because he went every Sunday and it wasn't news anymore.

As a teacher I remember when the Supreme Court decided that we couldn't pray in public school anymore. I remember what Kennedy said at the time. He said we must pray more with our children at home. I wasn't a parent then, but now as a parent and a grandparent I realize that children learn the importance of prayer and church and God best from their parents. On the same page you even quote Bishop D'Arcy on the importance of families in fostering vocations.

I would recommend that your readers read Kennedy's famous address so they can decide for themselves.

Joan Sheridan
Needham, Mass.

Christmas Martyria:
The octave of the Word-made-flesh

BY FATHER MICHAEL HEINTZ

A striking feature of the Western Church's festal calendar is the cycle of memorials and feasts, which "fill out" the Octave of Christmas. Unlike the Easter Octave, which suffers the vagaries one would expect from a movable feast, the days following the solemnity of Christmas are fixed and chock-full: Stephen, John the Evangelist, the Holy Innocents and Thomas Becket adorn the days following the solemnity of the Nativity. Even more interestingly, with the possible exception of John the Evangelist (whose end is the subject of some dispute within the tradition), all are martyrs. How can one make fruitful use of this festal and sanctoral convergence?

The remote origins of Christian martyrdom lie probably within Second Temple Judaism, in particular the experience recorded in the canonical and extra-canonical books of Maccabees, where martyrdom becomes sacrificial, and the believer herself becomes, as it were, a temple, the locus of genuine sacrifice. More proximately, one encounters this phenomenon in the book of Revelation, where persecution induced by Christian intransigence in the face of the Imperial Cult forms the immediate context for John's visions and where a nascent theology of Christian martyrdom is perhaps first articulated.

On the heels of the Nativity, the Western Church commemorates a number of witnesses who offer fitting and elegant testimony to the Incarnation, for with their very bodies their testimony to the reality of the Word-made-flesh is itself made incarnate.

The Matthean text appointed for

the Mass of St. Stephen (10:17-22) is apposite to the day: the Christian, in the face of opposition and hostility, should fearlessly witness to the faith. Stephen's resilient conviction juxtaposed to his gentle demeanor toward his persecutors (Acts 7:60) reflects the Gospel's call to be wise as serpents and innocent as doves (Mt 10:16). Further, Stephen's act of faithful witness to Christ is set within the context of false witness about him (Acts 6:13; 7:58).

The Spirit who is promised by Jesus to direct the disciples in their encounter with hostility (Mt 10:20) is present in Stephen's greatest trial (Acts 7:55, 59). Stephen is often referred to in the tradition as the protomartyr. Yet for many of the first Christians, it is Christ himself who is the Protomartyr. This clearly is the teaching of the Book of Revelation, where Christ is referred to repeatedly as the "Faithful Witness" (Rev. 1:5; 3:14): all subsequent martyrdom is conceived of solely in terms of his archetypal martyrdom. In the very early account of the martyrs of Lyons and Vienne (c. AD 177/8), the imprisoned and tortured martyrs-to-be are adamant in eschewing the title "martyr": Christ alone is worthy of that name.

The Holy Innocents offer yet another kind of witness to the Incarnation. Caught in the wake of Herod's murderous political machinations, these nameless children fall victim to the profound insecurity, which marks all earthly power (Mt 2:13-18).

St. Thomas Becket (+ AD 1170) is perhaps best known as the subject of T.S. Eliot's 1935 play "Murder in the Cathedral," which dramatized the events of Thomas's friendship with, estrangement from, and short-lived reconciliation with Henry II, king of England. The Gospel pericope

appointed for the fifth day of the Octave (Lk 2:22-35) is in subtle contrast to the previous day's passage from Matthew: whereas the fourth day features the young and voiceless, in the Lucan narrative, an aged and articulate Simeon offers his own witness to the newborn Child's destiny, one combining both promise and conflict.

Here another aspect of martyrdom is captured: the opposition which those who follow the Word-made-flesh are undoubtedly to encounter and indeed should expect. Becket's complexity (captured by Eliot) in his struggle to parse his obligations to his king, his church and his conscience reveals that martyrdom is not reducible simply to physically violent opposition; the beginnings of martyrdom are found within the disciple, as one strives to remain a faithful witness to the Faithful Witness. Within early Christianity, Origen (+ AD 254) and his contemporaries were fond of speaking of the Christian life as an agon, a contest of strength and resolve (intellectually and morally), in following Christ. Becket's witness, his martyrdom, was but the culmination and consummation of this struggle to remain faithful in the face of internal and external pressures.

The Christmas Octave beautifully demonstrates the organic nature of the Christian mysteries, in that the crèche and the cross can only be understood fully in terms of each other: the Word-made-flesh in Bethlehem is the Word-made-weak on Calvary, revealing the height and depth and breadth of the Love who has given himself so generously to us.

Father Michael Heintz is the rector of St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend.

'Christmas rush' takes on new meaning at Irish parish

BY CIAN MOLLOY

RUSH, Ireland (CNS) — The Christmas rush has taken on a whole new meaning at St. Maur Parish, where tickets were issued to control crowd numbers at its annual Christmas Eve children's Mass.

Last year the children's Mass in Rush, in northern Dublin County, was so crowded that one girl fainted from the heat. Many were concerned about elderly people and young children forced to stand in the aisles.

The introduction of tickets for the Mass made national headlines at the end of November after some parishioners contacted RTE radio to complain that access to the Christmas Eve Mass was being limited to regular Mass attendees. They argued that Mass should always be open to all, whether they regularly attended church or only at Christmas and Easter.

Under the ticket distribution scheme devised by the parish council, tickets were available only from the sacristy after Saturday vigil and Sunday morning Masses

the first weekend in December.

Father Kieran Coughlan, parish pastor, said numbers had to be limited for health and safety reasons, and this was the system devised by the parish council and the children's Mass committee following a review of other parishes' practices.

Despite a bad storm the weekend of the ticket distribution, the church was full.

Paula Leonard, a parishioner and mother of two who opposes the ticket scheme, told Catholic News Service Dec. 3, "I understand that numbers have to be limited, but I would prefer if another Mass could be put on."

But Father Coughlan told CNS that unlimited attendance was not possible with the parish's current manpower. Each Sunday he and his two assistants celebrate four Masses, one of which takes place in the local secondary school. On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day they will celebrate six Masses, including the children's Mass.

Angela Flynn, a mother of three, said: "I would prefer if there wasn't a need for tickets, but it was pretty uncomfortable last year. Numbers had to be limited."

Not everyone who wanted tickets got them.

As the severe storm howled outside the church, a mother zipped up the coat of her 3-year-old daughter and said: "The tickets are all gone. We're too late. There is nothing we can do, only make sure we go to the 7:30 Saturday evening Mass this time next year."

Several parishioners speaking to CNS asked not to be named; the children's Mass had become a very sensitive issue after the parish had been satirized in national media for having "the hottest tickets in town."

The lampooning was partly fueled by the obvious "Christmas rush" pun.

One mother commented that the ticket scheme was not as bad as neighboring St. Patrick Church in Skerries, where "once the church is full, they will slam the door in your face."

Father Leo Quinlan, the parish priest at St. Patrick, confirmed he sent a Christmas card to all parishioners requesting adults without small children to consider attend-

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CATEQUIZ'EM

By Dominic Camplisson

The town that comes to mind at Christmas is not mighty Jerusalem, nor Nazareth where Jesus was raised, but Bethlehem.

1. Why is Bethlehem associated with Christmas?

- It was where the angel appeared to Mary.
- It is where Jesus was born.
- It was the center of the Christian community.

2. Where was Bethlehem?

- fifty miles north of Jerusalem in Galilee
- ten miles west of Jerusalem in Samaria
- five miles southwest of Jerusalem

3. When the two Jewish kingdoms were split, where was Bethlehem?

- in Judah, like Jerusalem
- in Israel, like Judah
- in Judah, but not in the same kingdom as Jerusalem

4. An older name for Bethlehem was Ephrath, which means:

- fruitful
- town where Jesus might be born
- homestead

5. What is the commonly accepted meaning of the name "Bethlehem?"

- House of pain
- House of Usher
- House of bread

6. But some scholars suggest this more pagan etymology:

- House of Lahmu (a pagan god)
- House of the Latins (Romans)
- House of Laertes (a Hellenistic Greek)

7. This female biblical figure was buried near Bethlehem according to Genesis:

- Eve
- Mary
- Rachel

8. And Ruth's husband was from Bethlehem. He was:

- Joseph Shickelgruber
- Boaz
- Levi

9. This king was always associated with Bethlehem:

- Pilate
- Caesar
- David

10. In fact, Mary and Joseph went to Bethlehem because

- Joseph was of the house of David, and all families were to return home for a census.
- Mary was of the house of John the Baptist who ministered in Bethlehem.
- Jesus was by prophecy to be born in the city of Pilate.

11. As early as the second century, Christian tradition placed the recognized the following holy place in Bethlehem:

- Golgotha, site of the crucifixion
- the cave as the site of Jesus' birth
- the Cenacle, site of the last supper

12. We know specifically of one Christian leader who lived nearby and confirmed the site in the second century:

- Justinian
- Justin Martyr
- Jumping Justin

13. Who erected a great church, the Church of the Nativity, over this site?

- King Herod the Great
- Joseph of Arimathea
- Constantine and his mother Helena

14. This scholar and translator worked in that same site for decades:

- Jerome
- Augustus
- Justin Martyr

15. Who controls Bethlehem now?

- It is part of Israel.
- It was in the West Bank, annexed to Israel in 1945 and is now under the UN.
- It is in the area controlled by the Palestinian Authority.

ANSWERS:

- 1.b, 2.c, 3.a, 4.a, 5.c, 6.a, 7.c, 8.b, 9.c, 10.a, 11.b, 12.b, 13.c, 14.a, 15.c

Jesus brings peace and happiness



THE SUNDAY GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

4th Sunday of Advent Lk 1:39-45

This weekend the church observes the last Sunday in Advent. The first reading is from the Book of Micah.

Micah is regarded as one of the Minor Prophets. It is a relatively short book, containing 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. However nothing is known of his background.

As did so many prophets of ancient Israel, Micah saw his mission as calling the Chosen People away from indifference to God, and even sin, to piety and to loyalty to the covenant with God. He lived in a time when piety was in short supply. Greed and exploitation flawed the economy.

Religious practices were sparse and often insincere and poorly presented when they did occur.

This weekend's reading offers a passage from Micah in which the prophet promises that a savior will come. This savior will lead the people away from sin and to God. The savior will come from

Bethlehem.

Of course, for Micah, the reference is to David, who was born in Israel. David became the king of Israel, but his royal role was not primarily political. Instead, it was religious. As monarch, his task was the see that the nation upheld the covenant, that the people obeyed God.

When this savior becomes king, all will be well. All will be at peace.

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 as the great source of 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 travels so as to meet her cousin, Elizabeth, the wife of Zachariah. Elizabeth herself is pregnant. Elizabeth's unborn child will be John the Baptist.

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 realizes that Mary is

expecting a child, but the 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 day of Advent. Christmas Eve for most people, it will be busy, hurried day, even if a day of excitement, anticipation and joy.

Nevertheless, it is not too late spiritually to prepare for Christmas. So, in these readings, on the last day of Advent, the church calls us to Jesus. He is everything, the church emphatically and joyfully declares. It gives us the words of Hebrews. It reinforces its belief in Jesus as Lord by recalling the Visitation. And, in the writings of Micah, it reminds us that when we allow Jesus to come to us, all peace and happiness will abide with us.

READINGS

4th week of Advent

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

Monday: Is 62:11-12 Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12 Ti 3:4-7 Lk 2:15-20

Tuesday: Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59 Ps 31:3-4, 6-8, 17-21 Mt 10:17-22

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

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

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

Saturday: 1 Jn 2:12-17 Ps 96:7-10 Lk 2:36-40

Pope Benedict is not alone in addressing love

Pope Benedict last year wrote an encyclical letter called "God is Love." If Jesus came 2,000 years ago, why did it take the church so long to decide that God's essence is love?
Anonymous

While Pope Benedict devoted his first encyclical to divine love, he is hardly the first figure to make this association in the Christian tradition. In fact, we see this kind of language and this train of thought in the New Testament itself, most particularly in the three Letters of John. What Pope Benedict was perhaps seeking to do is to make clear what we mean when we call God "Love" — especially in a culture which uses the term so loosely ("I love my wife," "I love the Cubs," "I love chocolate").

The ancient Greeks, for example, had at least four words for what the English language expresses with the one word "love": *philia*, or friendship; *storge*, or familial affection; *eros*, passionate yearning and desire; and *agape*, self-giving love. Pope Benedict rightly began by discussing *eros* or the passionate desire, which can, when purified,

lead us to God (it is to this kind of love to which much contemporary, over-sexed media reduces all love). But he also rightly observes that *eros* can never complete itself — that *agape* (or love as self-donation) in fact completes and perfects what *eros* cannot of its own achieve.

What are Catholics supposed to think of environmentalism? Do animals have rights? Anonymous

Catholics believe that God has entrusted us with the care of our earthly home, drawing on the high calling of Adam and Eve to be stewards of the creation found in the first chapters of Genesis. Catholics also recognize a "hierarchy of being" or "hierarchy of goods" within creation: some goods (human life) are greater than others (animal life), which are themselves greater than still others (inanimate objects).

All of creation is good, but there are varying degrees of goodness; in fact, we all implicitly accept this hierarchy and function in a way that reflects it: for example, if your house is on fire, your first instinct is to save your chil-

THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION

dren, then perhaps your pets, and then and only then would you think of perhaps dashing back in to save your toothbrush. The whole issue of "rights" is a vexed one and often raises as many problems as it solves. Animals, if they possess "rights" certainly do not have "rights," which could trump more fundamental "rights" of persons. This, however, does not mean that humans may exploit the animal kingdom or despoil it. As stewards of creation, we must exercise prudence and care for all that is entrusted to us.

Father Michael Heintz, rector of St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend, answered these questions.

My daughter, who studies in New Zealand, is with us on holiday. She will be 21 and has a very intelligent mind. She does not believe in abortion but was debating with me that Natural Family Planning is another form of contraception.

I am afraid that I just could not convince her that it was not. She seems to have the opinion that Natural Family Planning is only good in so far as it helps couples who are trying to have children understand the best time for pregnancy. But if it was to avoid pregnancy, it was another form of contraception. So why can't other contraceptive aids, e.g., condoms, be used? Could you help me enlighten her please?
Marianne, Sri Lanka

NFP is not "Catholic" contraception. The church endorses NFP (as seen in "Humanae Vitae"), and condemns contraception as harmful. Why? Because NFP, when used correctly and for good motives, is a morally good expression of responsible parenthood. NFP is one of God's gifts to us in these times to help us space our

children. Everyone knows that there are times when couples must space, or delay, a new pregnancy.

NFP couples must practice self-mastery and self-possession for the sake of the other. They understand that real love is always self-sacrificial. They learn to express their love with a full repertoire of acts of tenderness, verbal expression and demonstrate an appreciation for the presence of the other. Contraception ignores most of these, and concentrates upon the genital dimension of spousal love.

Father Matthew Habiger, OSB, provided this information.

Today's Catholic welcomes questions from readers. E-mail your questions to editor@fw.diocese-fwsb.org or mail them to *Today's Catholic*, That's A Good Question, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne, IN 46856. Include your name, city and an e-mail address or phone number so we can contact you if necessary. Anonymity will be preserved upon request.

Books for Christmas

The past year has seen the publication of any number of books I've wanted to write about, but didn't. Here they are, as suggestions for Christmas gifts that will provoke thought and give pleasure throughout the new year.

Michael Burleigh, "Earthly Powers: The Clash of Religion and Politics in Europe, from the French Revolution to the Great War" (Harper Collins): Beginning with his monumental study of "German National Socialism, The Third Reich: A New History," British historian Michael Burleigh has been restoring religious (and pseudo-religious) passions and convictions to their rightful place in the study of modern history. "Earthly Powers" is a great, sprawling smorgasbord of a book, showing how the emergence of the modern state in Europe, and its displacement of religion from public life, opened the door to a variety of fanaticisms that laid the cultural foundations for the totalitarianisms of the 20th century (which Burleigh explores in depth in a follow-on volume, "Sacred Causes: The Clash of Religion and Politics from the Great War to the War on Terror," to be published in the U.S. in March 2007). Demanding but richly rewarding reading, and likely to change the way reasonable people think about the past 200 years.

"Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI), Christianity and the Crisis of Cultures" (Ignatius Press): Here is the pope's most succinct formulation of his proposal for a cultural renewal of the West — "Even the one who does not succeed in finding the path to accepting the existence of God ought nevertheless to try and direct his life ... as if God did indeed exist." Former Italian

Senate president Marcello Pera, himself a nonbeliever, comments in a fine introduction, "This proposal should be accepted, for one basic reason: because the one outside the church who acts (as if God did indeed exist) becomes more responsible in moral terms. He will no longer say that an embryo is a 'thing' or a 'lump of cells' or 'genetic material.' He will no longer say that the elimination of an embryo or a fetus does not infringe any rights. He will no longer say that a desire that can be satisfied by some technical means is automatically a right that should be claimed and granted. ... He will no longer act like half a man, one lacerated and divided." Like the 2005 volume, "Without Roots" (Basic Books), the Ratzinger/Pera dialogue in Christianity and the "Crisis of Cultures" opens a window into one of the most important, and hopeful, conversations underway today.

Mary Habeck, "Knowing the Enemy: Jihadist Ideology and the War on Terror" (Yale University Press), and Lawrence Wright, "The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11" (Knopf): Habeck's book is the best single introduction to the ideas that drive jihadist Islam; Wright's is a brilliant piece of reportage, showing how the ideas Habeck analyzes shaped (and misshaped) the men who made 9/11 possible, ideologically and operationally. If you don't understand how an Egyptian intellectual's unhappy experience of a church social in Greeley, Colo., in the late 1940s eventually led to the deaths of some 3,000 people on Sept. 11, 2001, you should: and Wright tells the story masterfully. Both books are must reads for any friends you have in government



GEORGE WEIGEL

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

— Habeck's, to explain precisely what it is we're fighting, conceptually; Wright's, as (among many other things) a chilling cautionary tale of governmental incapacity.

Elizabeth Kantor, "The Politically Incorrect Guide to English and American Literature" (Regnery): Dr. Kantor takes no prisoners in this romp through the madnernesses of contemporary literary theory — which is, at the same time, a fine introduction to what we used to call the literary "canon." A couple of her characteristically bracing claims — "most great literature was, in fact, written by dead white males" and "Jane Austen was a fan, not a critic, of 'patriarchy'" — suggest why Elizabeth Kantor need not apply for a faculty position at most of *U.S. News & World Report's* top-tier colleges. But that's all the more reason to read and enjoy her book and to give it to your favorite high school senior or college freshman.

George Weigel is a senior fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

By Patricia Kasten

Gospel for December 24, 2006

Luke 1:39-45

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for the Fourth Sunday of Advent, Cycle C: the visit of Elizabeth by Mary, the mother of God. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

MARY	SET OUT	HASTE
TOWN	ENTERED	HOUSE
ZECHARIAH	GREETED	ELIZABETH
HEARD	HER WOMB	FILLED
SPIRIT	BLESSED	AMONG WOMEN
FRUIT	MOTHER	MY LORD
SOUND	BELIEVED	THE LORD

JOYOUS VISIT

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

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RUSH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

ing Christmas Masses other than the parish's Christmas Eve children's liturgy. The card said the church's doors will be closed once it is filled to capacity.

"In recent years, more than two-thirds of parishioners here and in other Dublin parishes go to their Christmas Mass on Christmas Eve," he said. "Part of the Christmas Eve demand is fueled by those who wish to get the Mass out of the way and then get on with their celebrations.

"It's only at Christmas and at Easter that we have problems with

overcrowding, but because of increases in population, our regular Sunday congregations are increasing in size," he said.

Father Quinlan said the population in his area of the county more than doubled in the last 15 to 20 years.

In Rush the active parish community has been boosted in numbers by the arrival of new immigrants, particularly from Poland and Latvia. St. Maur hosts Polish and Latvian liturgies for these communities during December.

"In a way, we are victims of our own success as a faith community," said Father Seamus Cullen, one of the three priests at St. Maur. "We're a very busy parish; it's a good news story."

Sports

Sioux Falls holds off Saint Francis 23-19

BY BILL SCOTT

SAVANNAH, Tenn. — No question disappointment and frustration were the two words that best described the mood of the University of Saint Francis football team after second-ranked University of Sioux Falls (S.D.) held off the top-ranked Cougars 23-19 in the NAIA Football Championship Series National Title Game on Saturday.

"Hold your heads high," USF coach Kevin Donley told the Cougars in the closed post-game locker room. "We weren't even supposed to win our league this season after losing 19 seniors. "The next few days are gonna stink because it hurts, but it will get better. Hold your heads up. Nobody in this room quit. We've got heart."

For the seniors — NAIA Player of the Year Brian Kurtz, Eric Hooks, John Wolf, Bo Thompson, Derrick Alderman, Cody Van Deursen, Eric Wagoner, Matt Millhouse, Adam Blakey, Clint Bontempo, Nate Stephenson, and Matt Wren — Donley offered special words of praise as their active football career came to a bitter end.

Donley said in a firm, proud voice. "51-4 over the last four seasons — my gosh, we all owe you so much," and the room erupted in applause. "The seniors did a tremendous job of leading this football team."

Sioux Falls scored the first 10 points of the second half to break out to a 23-13 lead after the two teams battled to a tie at 13 in the first 30 minutes. Then Sioux Falls withstood its own turnovers — a 46-yard Tim Farrell interception in the third and a fumble with 9:05 to play in the fourth quarter — to hold off USF long enough to render the Cougars final score as time ran out meaningless in determining the winning team.

"After the first quarter we still got in position to score but we didn't take advantage of it," Hooks said afterwards. "We had some good drives and got to the red zone a few more times but we shot ourselves in the foot. They had a good scheme, their secondary and linebackers played really well, and they got pressure up front. They did a good job."

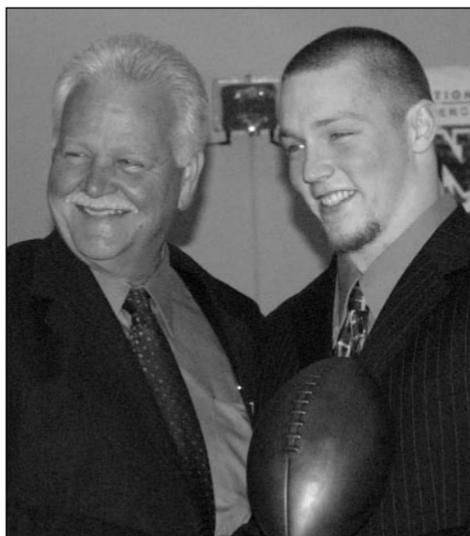
Sioux Falls took the opening kickoff to start the second half and drove to the Cougars' 6-yard line. The USF defense held and Matt Lindgren kicked a 23-yard field goal for a 16-13 Sioux Falls lead.

On the first possession of the

USF LADIES CONTINUE BASKETBALL WINNING STREAK The No. 4-ranked University of Saint Francis Lady Cougars continued their winning ways with a 72-56 victory over Tiffin on Dec. 16. Chivonn Keppeler led the way with 16 points. Nikki Lewis added 11 points, three assists and three steals. Jenny Richards led USF with 12 rebounds and added 7 points. The Lady Cougars led 64-38 with six minutes to go. The team is now 14-1 on the year and have won 12 straight games and 22 straight home games.



Brian Kurtz celebrates with teammate Ryan Atkins after the Bishop Luers graduate scored the Cougars' second touchdown of the game giving USF a 13-6 lead.



USF head coach Kevin Donley and NAIA Player of the Year Brian Kurtz pause for photos after the Banquet of Champions on Friday, Dec. 15. Kurtz was an NAIA Player of the Week twice this season and Mid-States Football Association Midwest League Player of the Year. He is just the second player from the defensive side to earn the award.

second half, USF drove to the Sioux Falls 40, where the drive stalled. On fourth and eight, Clint Bontempo was back to punt. The snap from Wren was a low line drive that whizzed by Bontempo. By the time he chased it down at the USF 15-yard line, all he could do was fall on it.

"The only second guess I have is that we should have gone for it on fourth and 10 instead of punting the daggone thing when we had the bad snap and gave them the short field," Donley said.

Sioux Falls' Trey Erickson carried around the left side of the USF defense for 14 yards on the first play after the bad snap. Mike Dvoracek scored on the next play and Lindgren added the extra point for a 23-13 lead with 7:25 to play in the third quarter.

USF freshman Marcus Rush gave the Cougars a 6-0 lead when he plowed in from the 2-yard line with 10:30 to play in the first quarter. Cale Grzych kicked the extra point for a 7-0 USF lead. Sioux Falls only needed four plays to

score, the TD coming on a Chad Cavender to Dusty Hovorka 37-yard connection, but William Knepper blocked Lindgren's extra-point try.

USF took the kickoff and drove 84 yards in 11 plays. Hooks connected with Kurtz on a 12-yard pass for the TD, but Grzych kicked the extra-point attempt off the left upright. On the ensuing kickoff, Erickson dashed around the left side of the USF return coverage for an 89-yard kickoff score with 1:44 to play in the first quarter and Lindgren kicked the extra point for the tie at 13.

And that finished the first half scoring.

"It was a big ball game and we made mistakes that we haven't made all year," Kurtz said. "These were two good teams and we played our hearts out, but there were too many mistakes in too big of a game. We probably could have had a couple interceptions here or there and I probably could have returned that fumble. Little things just didn't go our way."

New Haven girls coach brings wealth of coaching to the basketball court

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — Making the switch from coaching college boys to grade school girls has been somewhat of a challenge for St. John the Baptist, New Haven, Catholic Youth Organization (CYO) Coach Mark Watts. Watts learned the art of coaching in the early 1980s first from (now head IU coach) Kelvin Sampson when he assisted him at Montana Tech.

"When I started coaching my daughter, Hilary, in fourth grade, I set three goals for myself: don't make them cry, have fun and teach them basketball." Now an eighth grader, Hilary and her seven teammates are off to a 2-0 start this season with early wins in the CYO Gold League over St. Jude and Queen of Angels.

"We had never, ever beaten St. Jude, so that was a big win for

us. And last year we only won two games in the CYO." So, the Raiders are off to a great start and hoping to meet one of their team goals this season — to win a tournament game. The team is also hoping to "improve each game and have fun this season."

The roster includes Amber Knueve, Brittany Fox, Molly Smith, Kayla Zink, Brigette Wellman Katie Leist, Hilary Watts and Olivia Perez. Karen Fox is the assistant coach for the Raiders this season.

White League Girls

St. John, Fort Wayne, 24; St. Charles 23

St. John, Fort Wayne, 27; St. Vincent 44

Gold League Boys

St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth 23; St. John, New Haven, 19

Blue League Boys

St. Therese 18; Benoit 46

Corpus Christi, St. Anthony, St. Joe Mishawaka lead first half

BY ELMER J. DANCH

SOUTH BEND — Three boys basketball teams, Corpus Christi, St. Anthony and St. Joseph of Mishawaka, remained unbeaten in their respective divisions as the Inter-City Catholic League wound up its hardwood business for the 2006 half of the season. Play will be resumed in January.

Corpus Christi of the John Bosco West coasted past Holy Family, 38-20, leading from start to finish behind the spectacular scoring of Tate Bellegrante, who poured in 20 points for top individual scoring honors of the day. Colin Skodinski put in 13 points for Holy Family.

St. Anthony of the John Bosco East easily won over St. Joseph of South Bend, 43-35, as Nick Pellegrino of St. Joseph led all scorers with 11 points.

St. Joseph of Mishawaka, pacesetter in the Martin De Porres East, swamped St. Pius of Granger, 42-21, with Tim Wilson popping 12 points for St. Joseph's.

St. Michael of Plymouth and St. Jude remain deadlocked for first place in the Martin De Porres West with 2-1 records.

St. Jude topped St. Adalbert, 39-27, with the trio of Lee Henry, Chase Parker and Corey Samuels, each cashing in 10 points for the victors. Jerry Alston scored 13 points for St. Adalbert.

St. John the Baptist nipped St. Michael of Plymouth in a 24-22 nail biter as Alex Bauters rolled in the winning points in the remaining seconds, upping his total for the day to 11 points.

Christ the King edged Holy Cross, 40-39, in the John Bosco West, as A.J. Fitzpatrick tallied 13 points for the Kings, including the last three for victory. Colton Pulaski also tossed in 13 points for Holy Cross.

St. Matthew won a nip and tuck 39-37 tussle over St. Thomas of Elkhart. St. Matthew's Hank Blum tossed in 10 points.

St. Monica of Mishawaka defeated St. Bavo of Mishawaka, 22-19, in a Martin De Porres East game as Derek Henry led the winners with 16 points. Lewie Rinard scored 10 points for St. Bavo.

Four games in the junior varsity Colors Division wound up the first half of the year.

St. Matthew Black downed St. Pius Blue, 30-12. St. Jude Green beat Christ the King Blue, 29-27. Holy Family Blue beat St. Anthony Gold, 39-26. St. Thomas Gold crushed St. Joseph of South Bend Blue, 40-15.

Christ the King Gold beat Christ the King White, 49-9. St. Anthony Maroon beat St. Joseph of South Bend Gold, 32-23. St. Thomas White defeated Corpus Christi Blue, 34-15.

Catholic actor Peter Boyle dies at age 71

NEW YORK (CNS) — Peter Boyle, who was once a Christian Brother before he pursued a career in acting, died Dec. 12 at New York Presbyterian Hospital. Boyle, 71, had been suffering from multiple myeloma and heart disease.

Boyle became familiar to U.S. television audiences as perpetually cranky Frank Barone, the father of Ray Barone, on the sitcom "Everybody Loves Raymond" (1996-2005). The show lasted nine seasons, filming 201 episodes.

But Boyle had a fine career in movies, breaking out into stardom as the title character of the drama "Joe" (1970), and reaching a zenith playing the singing, dancing monster in "Young Frankenstein" (1974).

He also had major roles in the movies "Taxi Driver," "The Candidate," "F.I.S.T.," "The Brink's Job," "Turk 182!" "Honeymoon in Vegas," "While You Were Sleeping" and "Monster's Ball," and played Father Time in all three "Santa Clause" films.

On television, Boyle specialized in playing historical figures in made-for-TV movies, including

Sen. Joseph McCarthy in "Tail Gunner Joe," Adm. John Poindexter in "Guts and Glory: The Rise and Fall of Oliver North" and David Dellinger in "Conspiracy: The Trial of the Chicago 8." He portrayed Howard Hansen in "Master Spy: The Robert Hansen Story." He also was featured in the TV miniseries version of "From Here to Eternity."

After seeing how audiences cheered when his character in "Joe" went on a violent rampage, he turned down the role of Popeye Doyle in "The French Connection" and other films that glamorized violence.

In a 2005 interview, Boyle, a Christian Brother for five years — he went by the name Brother Francis de Sales, the same name as the Philadelphia parish of his boyhood — Boyle said he was lax in the practice of his Catholic faith for much of his adult life until 1999.

That year, he said, "I had a heart attack ... and after that, I decided I wasn't going to fool around anymore, and got myself back to Mass."

A 1957 graduate of LaSalle



U.S. Catholic actor Peter Boyle arrives for the wrap party of "Everybody Loves Raymond" in Santa Monica, Calif., in this 2005 file photo. Boyle, who played the monster in the movie "Young Frankenstein" and more recently starred as the father in the TV series "Everybody Loves Raymond," died Dec. 12 at New York Presbyterian Hospital. He was 71.

College — now University — in Philadelphia, the school's communications department gave him its Shining Star award in 2005. Boyle's first stage experience was in a parish Christmas pageant. "Theater and religious ritual are very connected," he said. "It's the using of an inner process to express an outer reality, or something mysterious."

As a young actor, Boyle joked that his Christian Brothers experience was an asset. "It prepared me for a life as a struggling actor," he said. "When I first went to New York, I wasn't starving but I really got into that vow of poverty."

Boyle met his wife, Loraine Alterman, when as a reporter for *Rolling Stone* magazine she visited the "Young Frankenstein" set for a story. Through Alterman's friendship with Yoko Ono, Boyle became best friends with her husband, John Lennon, who was the best man at their 1977 wedding.

Survivors include his wife and two daughters, Lucy and Amy.

A private funeral was to be held in New York, and plans also called for a memorial service.

'Loves Abiding Joy' released in early January

CENTURY CITY, Calif. — With the journey West behind her, a young woman looks forward to creating a home and family on the new frontier in "Love's Abiding Joy," arriving on DVD for the first time Jan. 2, from Fox Faith, a newly branded faith-based programming label.

Based on the fourth novel in the Love Comes Softly series by best-selling author Janette Oke, "Love's Abiding Joy" follows the enduring romance of pioneers Missie and Willie Lahaye as they build a new future together in the untamed frontier. With more than 30 million copies of the books sold, fans can continue to follow the inspirational love story of a more innocent time in this heart-warming sequel, written and directed by Michael Landon, Jr.

The three previous titles in the series — "Love Comes Softly," "Love's Enduring Promise" and "Love's Long Journey" — are ranked as the three highest-rated films in the history of The Hallmark Channel and are currently on the Christian Booksellers Association top 10 adult titles charts.



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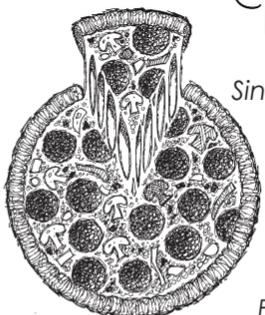
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WHAT'S HAPPENING?

WHAT'S HAPPENING carries announcements about upcoming events in the diocese. Send in your announcement at least two weeks prior to the event. Mail to: Today's Catholic, P.O. Box 11169, Fort Wayne 46856; or e-mail: fhogan@fw.diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive one free listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

MISC. HAPPENINGS

Ed Fox fish and tenderloin dinner supports music boosters

Fort Wayne — An Ed Fox fish and tenderloin dinner will be held Friday, Feb. 2, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Bishop Dwenger High School cafeteria. Adults \$7, children \$5 and children 5 and under are free.

REJOICE at the next XLT

Fort Wayne — XLT will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 2, at 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Parish. Joy, praise, adoration and even laughter in the spirit of Emmanuel.

First Saturday devotions

Fort Wayne — The World Apostolate of Fatima will hold devotions of reparation at St. Joseph, corner of Brooklyn and Hale on Jan 6. Confessions will be heard beginning at 7:15 a.m.,

meditation at 7:30 a.m. and the rosary at 7:45 a.m. with the Mass to follow. First Saturday devotions are also held at St. Patrick, Arcola; St. Rose, Monroeville and St. John, New Haven.

The Light Weigh

Fort Wayne — An orientation meeting for a daytime program is scheduled for Tuesday, Jan. 2, 9-11 a.m. at the St. Vincent de Paul Parish convent. Contact Nancy at njsimmonds@verizon.net. Evening programs are also beginning early in January at St. John, New Haven, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and St. Therese. Call parishes for details.

SAJES luncheon brings humor

South Bend — The SAJES will meet for Mass Jan. 10, at St. Matthew Cathedral at 11 a.m. Mass will be followed by a

potluck luncheon that will feature Charlie Adams humor and inspiration. RSVP to Sister Agnes Marie Regan at (574) 289-9439.

Bishop Dwenger presents Lip Sync party to support Saints Alive

Fort Wayne — The Lip Sync party will be held on Saturday, Jan. 20, in the Bishop Dwenger gym. Performers should contact Bob Tomlinson at (260) 489-9672. Guests are invited to attend the event with doors open at 6:30 p.m. Dinner served at 7 p.m. Prepaid admission of \$45 per couple by Jan. 12, or \$50 per couple at the door. Those interested in attending after the basketball game with no dinner may attend for \$30 per couple. For information contact Saints Alive at (260) 483-7001.

REST IN PEACE

Decatur

Richard L. Schnurr, 73, St. Mary of the Assumption

Elkhart

Noe Moses Macias, 1 day, St. Vincent de Paul

Fort Wayne

Ervin J. Williams, 74, St. John the Baptist

John Manuel Heredia, 58, St. Patrick

Charles Anthony Korst Sr., 78, St. Jude

William J. Slatterly, 70, Most Precious Blood

Barbara Butz, 85, St. Mary

Robert R. Luther Jr., 57, St. Jude

Granger

Stephen Nemeth, 92, St. Pius X

Elena De Arauco, 77, St. Pius X

Benedict L. Hahaj Sr., 87, St. Pius X

Kendallville

Mildred Schafer, 95, Immaculate Conception

Mishawaka

Frances C. Giacomini, 82, St. Bavo

Gertrude I. Doll, 94, St. Joseph

New Haven

Vaughn D. Moore, 74, St. John the Baptist

James A. Schmelker, 81, St. John the Baptist

Pierceton

Nancy A. Coy, 72, St. Francis Xavier

Plymouth

Dorothy C. Fehrer, 75, St. Michael

Alice Jane Ryan, 75, St. Michael

South Bend

Ernest E. Stachowski, 74, St. Adalbert

Stanley Thomas Walczak, 84, St. Hedwig

Englentina T. Salazar, 70, St. Casimir

Francis J. Scott, 83, Little Flower

Joan M. Eash, 59, St. Patrick

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TV MASS GUIDE FOR JANUARY

DATE	FEAST	FORT WAYNE CHANNEL 33 - WISE 10:30 A.M.	SOUTH BEND CHANNEL 16 - WNDU 10:30 A.M.	"Catholic Comment" airs Sundays at 7:05 a.m. on WOWO 1190 AM in Fort Wayne and at 7:30 a.m. on WSBT 960 AM in South Bend. "Radio Rosary" airs M-F at 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday at 7:30 a.m. on Redeemer Radio WLYV 1450 AM
Jan. 7	Epiphany of the Lord	Father Robert Schulte Cathedral of Immac. Concep. Fort Wayne	Father Neil Wack, CSC Christ the King South Bend	
Jan. 14	Second Sunday of Ordinary Time	Father Anthony Steinacker St. Charles Fort Wayne	Father Kevin Russeau, CSC University of Notre Dame Notre Dame	
Jan. 21	Third Sunday of Ordinary Time	Father Joseph Gaughn Most Precious Blood Fort Wayne	Father William Sullivan St. Thomas the Apostle Elkhart	
Jan. 28	Fourth Sunday of Ordinary Time	Father David Ruppert St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Fort Wayne	Father John Coughlin, OFM University of Notre Dame Notre Dame	



As we begin the liturgical year celebrating the birth of the Christ Child, we express appreciation to our readers for the privilege of coming into your homes through the year as we follow the life of our saviour with descriptions of his youth, his ministry, his healing and forgiveness, and finally his death and glorious resurrection.



MERRY CHRISTMAS

From Everyone at Today's Catholic

1857  2007

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS SESQUICENTENNIAL

THE DIOCESE OF FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND

BY MARK WEBER

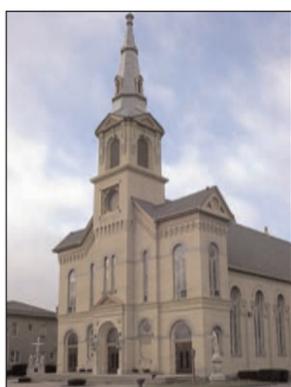
St. Hedwig, South Bend, Est. 1877

Bogdarka is a Polish word meaning God's gift and was used as a common name for St. Hedwig Parish because it was the original Polish parish, the first of four, on South Bend's west side.

The same term could be applied to St. Hedwig's founding pastor, Holy Cross Father Valentine Cryzewski, whose influence on South Bend's religion, culture, politics as well as the Congregation of Holy Cross's Polish-American ministry, although dimmed by time, is not yet fully measured.

In today's terms, his achievements would be measured at the superstar level; but first, he had to be fired as gold in the furnace as one who would lose his father at age 10, be an oppressed seminarian, and finally at age 22, one of the many winding up at Ellis Island and then LaPorte, Ind., as a railroad laborer.

Led by Providence, he became the first Polish-American vocation of the Congregation of Holy Cross, and within two days of his ordination was assigned by his superiors at Notre Dame to organize a parish for South Bend's Poles, who worshiped at St. Patrick with Irish and Germans without benefit a Polish speaking priest.



Although Father Cryzewski was well prepared to handle the spiritual needs of his people, raising \$3,500 for a church building was a daunting task when the average worker earned about 15 cents an hour in an unsteady economy.

Against these odds, the church called St. Joseph became a reality with a small school next

door. Within two years, a tornado destroyed the church and heavily damaged the school.

Another fund drive was necessary, and by 1883 a new church was up at a new location and it had a new name; St. Hedwig. By 1896, St. Hedwig School had an enrollment of over 1,000 and was the largest grade school in the diocese.

Thus began the glory years of the South Bend Polonia as it grew to occupy one third of the city's geographic area with one third of its population.

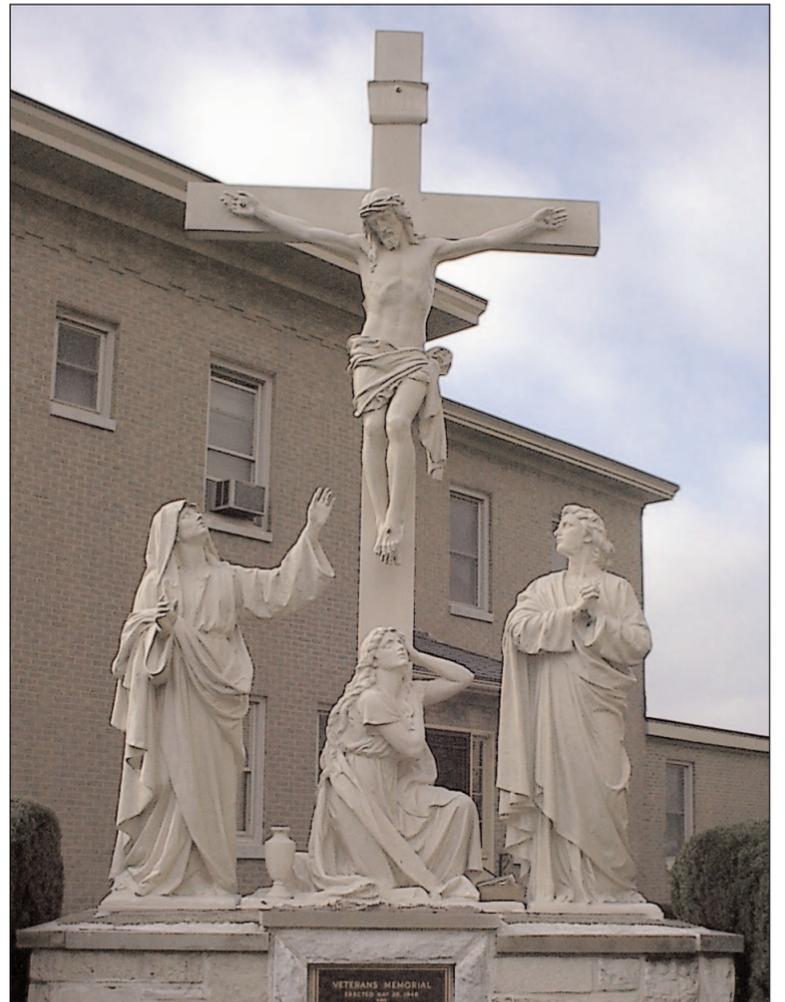
Within 25 years of the establishment of St. Hedwig Parish, it was necessary to spin off other Polish parishes; first St. Casimir, then St. Stanislaus and St. Adalbert, all under the guidance of Father Valentine Cryzewski.

With this growth, came many religious vocations; young men and women who grew up in the Polish neighborhoods, joined Congregation of Holy Cross and returned to the West Side as pastors and teachers.

In the postwar years of World War II all of this changed. The suburbs beckoned, the Polish blood thinned and new families went to new parishes.

By 1964, after 87 years of service, Congregation of Holy Cross was forced to withdraw its personnel from St. Hedwig because it could no longer supply Polish speaking priests.

Since July 1, 2001, St. Hedwig has been a combined parish with its neighbor St. Patrick. The parish mission statement points out that both parishes, founded for immigrants are now blended as one — to proclaim the Gospel, to celebrate Eucharist to strengthen our resolve, and to seek to live the Gospel message enriching our lives and the lives of others, in our families, neighborhoods and workplaces in Michiana.



MARK WEBER

This statue honors St. Hedwig parishioners who served in the armed forces and who made the supreme sacrifice.



MARK WEBER

Original stained glass windows at St. Patrick, now 150 years old, were provided at great sacrifice by the original Irish founding families. The log cabin home, upper right, of Kyran Devery is where the first Mass was celebrated in Walkerton in 1856.

St. Patrick, Walkerton, Est. 1856

Four years before the Civil War, a priest with his Mass kit in a saddle bag, made the trip from Notre Dame to Walkerton where Mass for the first time would be said in the log cabin home of Kyran Devery.

How the Latin Mass before a handful of grateful souls went can be visualized; it's the rider on horseback who captures the imagination. The trip on the old wagon trail would take hours. Did Father Paul Gillen pack a gun for predators? Did he have lunch on a log while resting his horse? Did barking crows disturb his reverie? What were his thoughts as he heard only slowly measured hoof beats and the squeak of leather on that summer day?

By 1870, the faithful in Walkerton were attended to by Father John Flynn, of Chesterton, who arrived every two weeks by train. At the time, the parish of about 19 families was known as St. Henry. Finally, when a 45x22 foot church was built for \$800, the members, registered as Quirk, Quinn, Murphy, Muldoon, Finnegan, Fitzgerald and Frank



Krankowitz, who got one vote, were inspired to rename their congregation in honor of St. Patrick.

In 1899, Bishop Joseph Rademacher appointed Father Henry Kappel as the first resident pastor. He purchased a home belonging to the Quirk family and it became the first rectory. Records for that year show Sunday

collections in January as \$1.89, 89 cents, \$1.49 and 88 cents. By September of the next year the yield was up to \$2.01.



In 1947, St. Patrick was blessed by the arrival of a new pastor, Father Anthony Letko, who endeared himself to everyone in the parish and, as an advanced agent of ecumenism, many in the the community.

Finding only 26 families on the parish register, Father Letko evangelized with energy and good will, finding lost sheep, revalidating marriages and winning converts. He organized a Women's Club, bowling and ball teams, a religious instruction group for teens and introduced the first outdoor Mass in the area for nearby lake residents. The beloved Father Letko served the parish for 42 years and retired to his Koontz Lake home in 1988.

Today, 150 years after that first Mass in a log cabin, more than 2,000 baptisms have taken place, and the parish has 287 registered families.

Although we live in an era of televised Masses and cybertype "miracles," one step inside the quaint St. Patrick Church creates interest, a few more steps deepens the feeling, and finally at the foot of the cross near the sanctuary, where light is filtered by century-old stained glass windows of rare beauty, an aura prevails that almost makes it possible to hear the plodding hoof beats of the horse bringing Mass in a saddle bag.