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TODAY'S CATHOLIC

God desires entrance into every human heart

BY TIM JOHNSON

FORT WAYNE — The heart of the Christmas feast is communion — the union between God and all humanity — and light, Bishop John M. D'Arcy said at the midnight Mass celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne. The midnight Mass was televised live on WISE-TV, 33.1.

Those gathered were first greeted with a carol prelude that included selections by the string quartet, the cathedral brass quartet, narratives and congregational participation on several traditional hymns. Judy Throm, who retires Dec. 31, directed the music.

In his homily about the desire of God for communion, union, reconciliation with every human heart, Bishop D'Arcy spoke about the Scripture passage, "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened, and I will refresh you" and mentioned a book he is reading about Mother Teresa.

Bishop D'Arcy related, "On a train one day, ... (Mother Teresa) had a profound experience with God. ... It's the experience of what Christ meant on the cross when he said, 'I thirst.'"

Bishop D'Arcy continued to explain what people thirst for: "For friendship with every person, for com-

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TIM JOHNSON

Bishop John M. D'Arcy places the image of the Christ Child in the Nativity scene at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne at the beginning of midnight Mass.

BISHOP CONSECRATES NEW ALTAR AT ST. JOHN BOSCO



JILLIAN BROSOSKY-JILLIAN MICHAELS PHOTOGRAPHY

Bishop John M. D'Arcy consecrates the new altar in St. John Bosco Church in Churubusco by anointing it with chrism in a special ceremony on Dec. 21. Altar servers are Morgan Young, left, and Benjamin Tiede. The marble altar was installed as part of a four-year plan for the building. Father Danney Pinto, administrator of the parish says, "We renovated to suit the needs of the Catholic community."

On Christmas, pope calls for peace, help for world's children

BY JOHN THAVIS

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI celebrated Christmas with a call to peace and a plea on behalf of the world's children.

In the face of violent conflicts, child exploitation and economic woes, the pope said, the birth of Jesus brings a light that "breaks through the gloom" and urges a mentality of solidarity with others.

In his Christmas message, the pope said a more generous and sharing attitude was essential to overcoming global problems, including terrorism, human rights violations and apprehension about "an increasingly uncertain future ... even in affluent nations."

"If people look only to their own interests, our world will certainly fall apart," he said.

The pope spoke from the central balcony of St. Peter's Basilica, delivering a blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city of Rome and the world) and pronouncing Christmas greetings in 64 languages. In English, he said: "May the birth of the Prince of Peace remind the world where its true happiness lies; and may

your hearts be filled with hope and joy, for the Savior has been born for us."

The 81-year-old pontiff looked fit and sounded good as he made his way rapidly through the multilingual salutations, which included Chinese, Arabic and Swahili. He had been up late, celebrating a midnight Mass in St. Peter's Basilica that ended at 2 a.m.

In his Christmas message, the pope said it was important to remember that Jesus came with saving grace not for a few but "for all: Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, those near and those far away, believers and nonbelievers."

This grace is sorely needed today, he said, in places like the Holy Land, where "the horizon seems once again bleak for Israelis and Palestinians"; in Lebanon, Iraq and the rest of the Middle East; and in many other places where "the twisted logic of conflict" reigns.

The grace of Christ is sought by the people of Zimbabwe, "trapped for all too long in a political and social crisis which, sadly,

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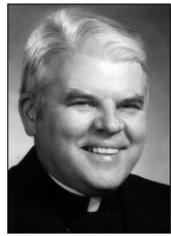
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Bringing hope during the Christmas season and beyond



NEWS & NOTES

BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

'Silent Night' in Burmese

I have to say it was one of the highlights of a beautiful Christmas. I followed the schedule I have observed each Christmas for the 24th time. Off to South Bend for the 4 p.m. Mass at St. Matthew's, our co-cathedral, with a packed church. Soup and sandwich provided, and then back to Fort Wayne, with Jim Fitzpatrick doing the driving.

I was able to rest a while and then celebrate the midnight Mass with a full church at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. As always, a moment of hope and joy, followed by some egg casserole with the cathedral priests — off to bed at 3:30 a.m. I celebrated the 10:30 a.m. Mass Christmas morning on television, as I have done these many years.

Later, I went to the Cathedral Chapel; and there for the first time, heard "Silent Night" sung in Burmese. What a joy. With the help of the Burmese Catholics and Father Schulte, we obtained a priest, who is studying theology at the seminary in the Archdiocese of New York. Father Philip concelebrated with me and the other cathedral priests at the midnight Mass, and at 1 p.m. on Christmas Day, he celebrated Mass in Burmese and English for the Burmese Catholics who are among the refugees that have come to our city.

There were 30 people at Mass. They said many of the prayers in their own language. Father Philip had made himself available for confessions earlier. I joined them for Mass, and it was a joy to be with them. How wonderful. They are 10,000 miles from home. Small in numbers, as most of the refugees are Buddhists, they gathered here with their new bishop and a priest from their homeland.

But, Catholic Charities, and quite rightly so, serves all the refugees, as that is their mission; but we have a special obligation to those that are of "the household of the faith." And we are slowly doing better in finding them and getting them help. It is the special responsibility of the bishop to see that they receive spiritual help. We have already enrolled one young man at Bishop Luers High School, and there is a young boy at Queen of Angels School. Their faith is ardent and shall help them.

The weekend at two smaller parishes

The previous weekend I drove north to Garrett on a cloudy evening for the installation of Father Andrew Nazareth as pastor. Father comes to us from faraway India with the approval and recommendation of his bishop. Although it was a cold and icy evening, the beautiful church of St. Joseph was nearly full. It was a joy to install Father Andrew as pastor and visit with the good people of St. Joseph Parish.

I am especially grateful for Tom and Patty O'Connor and Nick and Kitty Miller. Tom and Nick have served on the finance council. They have been very helpful to Father Andrew.

St. Joseph, Garrett, is a wonderful parish. It has not been easy for them to keep a strong school going; but with the help of their principal Linda Speer and the hard work of the finance council and a generous gift, they are on the road to paying off their debt entirely. I am glad we have been able to help them.

It was a special pleasure to meet Judy Morrill, who has been especially generous to the parish and to the town of Garrett. Garrett is an old railroad town and a place of strong faith, and it was a joy to be there on the Saturday before Christmas.

St. John's, Churubusco

Up the next morning and off early to St. John Bosco Parish, Churubusco, for the consecration of a new altar with Father Danney Pinto. Father Danney has been the pastor of Immaculate Conception, Ege, and St. John Bosco, Churubusco, for about 13 years. He comes from far away Sri Lanka. A very devoted priest. It was especially joyful to meet his niece who came all the way from their native country with her husband and children. Her husband works for an international airline, and they were received warmly at St. John Parish.

A time of darkness

Along with over 100,000 other Fort Wayne residents, my home was without heat and light for several days. I moved to a downtown hotel opposite my office. I was back and forth there for four nights. Later, I was preparing to move into the cathedral rectory when the electricity returned.

As you know at Christmas, one of the themes is that of light. As we read in the first reading at midnight Mass: "A people who walked in darkness, have seen a great light." I returned to my home several times during these days. It was not so much the lack of heat, but the lack of light that struck me. In my own house and throughout the area — all in darkness. How important is light. But what about the inner darkness that existed before Christ. The inner darkness that would keep people in their sins — not only unable to believe in forgiveness, but unable to get out of the habit of sin. And as Pope Benedict XVI points out in his beautiful encyclical "Spe Salvi" ("Saved by Hope"), the whole pagan world was in darkness. "We fall from darkness to darkness," he tells us, was a saying of those times.

So, it will be a Christmas to remember; but more because of Mass with the Burmese than a few days of inconvenience.

Some important announcements

The first announcement concerns this newspaper. Some months ago, our Priests' Council urged that we send the newspaper to every home in the diocese, and that we do so without charge. The question arises: How will we pay for it? More on that in a moment.

I was reluctant to do this. Our newspaper is very successful. But I am always concerned that only one-fourth of our people receive it. Then came the advice of Julie Kenny of Our Lady of Good Hope Parish. Julie works for *Our Sunday Visitor*, and she and her husband, John, are on the committee for our Annual Bishops Appeal. Julie is very conversant about Catholic press throughout the country and also about the importance of stewardship. She said one thing that struck

me: "Bishop, it is an instrument of evangelization." As I prayed over this decision, her words remained with me. In our most vital parishes, we have significant numbers who do not attend Sunday Mass. If they receive this newspaper in their home, they will be reminded of the Catholic Church, which is around them in all its vitality. It can be an instrument of bringing many back to the sacraments.

So, this will begin on Feb. 1, 2009. But how will we pay for it? The priests also helped us with this.

1. There has been a modest increase in the goal for the Annual Bishop's Appeal. This will cover one-half of the cost.

2. An envelope will be placed in the newspaper twice a year, and contributions will be encouraged.

3. With the newspaper going into 58,000 homes rather than 15,000, we believe — or at least we hope — there will be an increase in advertising revenue.

Is it a risk? Yes, but it is the kind of risk that Pope John Paul II urged upon us in his message at the end of the celebration of the Great Jubilee Year of 2000, the following words:

"Set out into the deep and lower the net for a catch."

So, our newspaper and the bishop will be visiting every Catholic home in the diocese that we know about beginning in early February. I ask God's blessing on this new effort at evangelization.

A postcard campaign

The Catholic Church in this country always responds to significant threats to human life; and now, that noble cause is calling us again. The bishops of this country are united in opposing any bill with provisions contained in the Freedom of Choice Act or any similar measure. Shortly each parish will be supplied with postcards, so that individual families can mail them to their representatives and senator in late January or early February. If the measures which are already being prepared are passed, then many of the laws limiting abortion, such as waiting periods or parental permission, would be abolished. Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, chairman of our Pro-Life Committee, has written a letter to all bishops, which contains the following:

"The new Congress includes the largest number of pro-abortion members since 1993, so holding on to these pro-life provisions will be a great challenge." He also writes, "We are concerned about this dismantling of current pro-life policies regardless how this effort is packaged."

We will have more on this later, but I wanted you all to know about it. Keep it in your prayers.

I will be off to Boston for a week's vacation visiting my dear sisters and their families, and getting some rest.

Our pro-life directors, Fred and Lisa Everett, have asked me to attend the pro-life march in Washington on Jan. 22. It is the anniversary of the painful Roe vs. Wade decision. Fred and Lisa believe that if I go, then young people will be encouraged to attend. So I will go. More on that later.

See you all next week.



Pope Benedict XVI walks near a statue of the Christ Child as he celebrates midnight Mass in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Dec. 25.

CNS PHOTO/MAX ROSSI, REUTERS

POPE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

keeps worsening," he said, referring to the African country's recent cholera outbreak and continuing political and economic unrest.

The pope highlighted what he called the "interminable sufferings" of people in the war-torn region of Darfur in Sudan and in Somalia, as well as the escalation of fighting in Congo. In a special way, children in these places need the light of Christ and the return of hope for their future, he said.

During midnight Mass the pope, dressed in white and gold vestments, accepted the offertory gifts from young children of different countries, blessing each of them as they made their way to the altar.

In his sermon, he said the arrival of the savior as a child should remind people everywhere of the suffering of children, including those denied the love of their parents and those who have been abused.

"Let us think of those street children who do not have the blessing of a family home, of those children who are brutally exploited as soldiers and made instruments of violence, instead of messengers of reconciliation and peace," he said.

"Let us think of those children who are victims of the industry of pornography and every other appalling form of abuse and thus are traumatized in the depths of their soul," he said.

He said the infant Jesus "summons us once again to do everything in our power to put an end to the suffering of these children."

The world will change for the better only when people accept Jesus and experience a change of heart, he said.

After the liturgy, the pope walked in procession down the main aisle of the basilica, smiling and blessing the faithful. At one point, the Vatican's chief security agent tackled a woman who had moved past the wooden barriers and appeared to be rushing toward the pope. The Vatican later said there was no danger to the pontiff.

On Christmas Eve, the pope lit a candle at his apartment window after the Vatican's larger-than-life Nativity scene was unveiled in St. Peter's Square below. This year's Nativity scene featured representations of domestic settings from the period, alongside Jesus' manger in Bethlehem.

Bethlehem tourism is good, but some feel Christmas spirit is missing

BY JUDITH SUDILOVSKY

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (CNS) — Cold winds did not keep tourists and pilgrims away from Manger Square Christmas Eve, but for some the Christmas spirit was missing.

Restaurants and souvenir shops enjoyed a brisk business all day. On an outdoor stage, a Spanish pop singer in tight jeans and a T-shirt shimmied, tossing her long hair.

American Douglas Dicks, who had traveled from Jordan, wondered about the Christmas character of the celebrations.

"The music detracts from the prayerful mood," said Dicks, who recently left Bethlehem for Amman after 12 years. "Christmas should be a time of carols and prayers and reflection — not rock music."

"I was expecting more people and more of a carol and candlelight atmosphere," said Australian Eliana Peters. Still, she said, it was fantastic to be in Bethlehem.

Earlier in the afternoon, while awaiting the arrival of Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal of Jerusalem



CNS PHOTO/YIN BOGU, POOL VIA REUTERS

Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal of Jerusalem celebrates midnight Mass in St. Catherine's Church adjacent to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, West Bank, Dec. 25.

into the city, cousins Emad and Ibrahim Kheir, both 18 and from the neighboring village of Beit Sahour, stood by the Peace Center and lamented the lack of Christmas spirit.

"Last year was more beautiful," said Emad Kheir, a Greek Orthodox. "I woke up this morn-

ing and looked outside and couldn't feel like it was Christmas. Maybe last year it was warmer; maybe it is that in the world situation there is no peace; maybe it is the situation in Gaza or in Iraq."

Maybe, added Ibrahim Kheir, U.S. President-elect Barack Obama will make a change.

STATEMENT FROM BISHOP JOHN M. D'ARCY

Bishop D'Arcy pays tribute to Cardinal Avery Dulles

I cannot let this time pass without a word about an extraordinary priest, who since the last publication of our newspaper has gone home to God.

I refer to Cardinal Avery Dulles, SJ, an extraordinary Catholic theologian, whose life and writings constitute a gift which will last.

I am especially anxious to speak about my friendship with him and his relationship to this diocese.

Sister Jane Carew invited him to this diocese in 1987, shortly after she herself was named director of our Office of Catechesis. It was the first, major catechetical meeting in my time here. Held in Warsaw, Father Dulles was the main speaker. He gave me a signed copy of one of his books, and he helped to establish the focus of catechesis and religious instruction that I wanted to be central to the renewal of our diocese.

He came again years later to a continuing education seminar to speak for our priests. Both times, he was impressive with his humility but also the clarity and soundness of his thought — a brilliant Catholic theologian.

Extraordinary conversion

He was a student at Harvard University. As a student at Harvard University, he was walking along the Charles River, a walk that I have taken countless times and which I still take during my summer vacation. But let us quote Father Dulles himself from his conversion memoir, "A Conversion to Grace" (1946):

"I was irresistibly prompted to go out into the open air. ... The slush of melting snow formed a deep mud along the banks of the River Charles, which I followed down toward Boston. ... As I wandered aimlessly, something impelled me to look contemplatively at a young tree. On its frail, supple branches were young buds ... while my eye rested on them, the thought came to me suddenly with all the strength and novelty of a revelation, that these little buds in their innocence and meekness followed a rule, a law of which I as yet know nothing. ... That night, for the first time in years, I prayed."

That was a grey afternoon in 1939. In 1940 during his first year of Harvard Law School, he was received as a Catholic. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, he joined the Navy. For his service, he received the Croix de Guerre from the French government. He came from a strong Presbyterian family who were startled that he became a Catholic and then a Jesuit. His father was John Foster Dulles, Secretary of the State under President Eisenhower; and his uncle was Allen Dulles, director of the CIA.

I knew Cardinal Dulles well, and considered him a friend. He received a copy of this newspaper every week, and often thanked me for it. I wrote an extensive article once on "Ex Corde Ecclesiae" and sent it to him for review and constructive criticism, which he graciously provided.

In the midst of the sex abuse crisis, there was much talk about ecclesial reform. I said to him, "Avery, why don't you give one of the McGinley lectures on reform." He was the kind of person that was humble enough to learn from anyone. "What a good idea," he said; and he prepared an essay on reform, rooting much of it in a well-known article by Father Yves Conger, one of the great theologians of Vatican II, entitled "True and False Reform in the Church." The McGinley lectures have been put into a book — a compilation of talks he gave on significant, theological topics at Fordham University in his declining years. Like all of his writings, they were clear, and sound, and faithful always to the magisterium of the church.

Of his many books, I was especially drawn to "The Craft of Theology." It states clearly the nature of the theological enterprise.

A very humble, highly intelligent, strong man with a keen intellect and a conversion story filled with grace. A faithful servant of the truth and of the Catholic Church. He once spent a semester teaching at the University of Notre Dame. A Jesuit priest and a good friend. Let us pray for him. A friend of mine said, "He will surely be a saint one day."

May angels receive him into paradise, and may the martyrs welcome him at his coming.

+ John M. D'Arcy

Father Bueter retires from Hispanic ministry

BY KAY COZAD

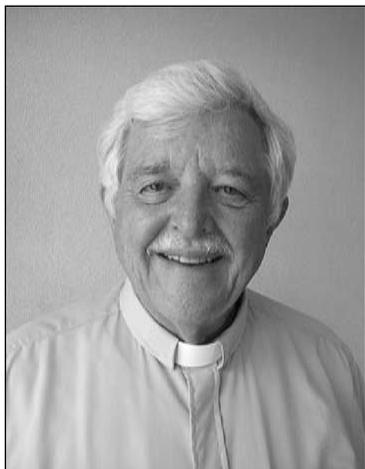
WARSAW — The new year brings the end of an era for the beloved pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Warsaw, Father Paul R. Bueter, who will retire officially on Jan. 2. But there is nothing final about his continued ministry to God's people. For nearly 50 years Father Bueter has been a mainstay for Hispanic Catholics both here in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and in Latin America as well.

A native of Fort Wayne, Father Bueter was born in 1933 to Raymond and Annette Bueter, the third of five children. He, with his parents and sisters, were parishioners of St. Jude Parish, where he attended elementary school. His family, he says, was strong in their faith, with rosary recitation and weekday Mass.

Father Bueter attended Marmion Military Academy in Illinois, a prep school, during his high school years and all the while had thoughts of the priesthood.

"I had thoughts of becoming a priest off and on. ... My parents saw my desire, but never pushed me one way or the other. I think they just quietly prayed," he recalls, adding that it was natural to have priests as guests in his boyhood home as well as his association with the Benedictine priests who ran his high school.

Following high school graduation in 1951, the young Bueter decided to investigate the priesthood and enrolled in Our Lady of the Lake Minor Seminary in Syracuse for two years of undergraduate studies. By the fall of 1953 he found himself immersed



FATHER PAUL BUETER

in philosophy and theology at St. Mary Major Seminary in Baltimore. Of his calling Father Bueter says matter-of-factly, "I never really had any big doubts."

On May 30, 1959, Paul Bueter was ordained into the holy priest-

hood at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception by then Bishop Leo A. Pursley. His first assignment was as associate pastor at St. John the Baptist in South Bend, where he began his priestly ministry, which included his role as assistant master of ceremonies for confirmations.

"I bring my love for people and love for the Lord to my vocation," says Father Bueter, adding, "I am happy to celebrate Mass and hear confession. All the priestly stuff I love very much."

By the mid-'60s, after serving at St. John for six years, Father Bueter requested to be sent to

Latin America, where priests were in high demand. So in 1965, sponsored by the diocese with a verbal agreement, the young shepherd was on his way to Panama, where he would spend the next 16 years of his priesthood ministering to the people there.

Initially Father Bueter studied the Spanish language and culture for three months in Mexico, but soon found himself assigned to a small rural town as assistant to the pastor. After two years he became pastor and describes the parish community saying, "I was right in with the people. There was one main church in town, San Francisco de Beraguos, and little villages where we would go out and say Mass and perform baptisms."

After eight years there, Father Bueter was reassigned to another peasant area and served as pastor at San Andres Church for the next eight years, until Bishop McManus called him back to the states to pastor at St. Bavo Parish in Mishawaka. He shepherded the "wonderful people" there from 1981 to 1987, when he requested that he might serve the Hispanic population in the diocese once again.

So in 1987 Father Bueter became pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Milford that met in a garage at that time and St. John the Evangelist in Goshen. By 1990, another pastor was appointed to St. John and Father Bueter focused on his Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish community.

Of the parish Father Bueter has seen many changes including the building of the Our Lady of Guadalupe Church and Diocesan Shrine in Warsaw.

"I am blessed to be able to work in Hispanic ministry. I thank the bishop and the Lord for that," says the priest.

Now at age 75 this good and faithful servant of God is retiring, but will continue his priestly work. "My reason for retiring is to do more priestly work and get out of administration."

As for the future Father Bueter says undauntedly, "I have no worries about what to do with my time. I've already got requests to cover for priests and I have no problem with helping with confessions."

And he adds, tongue in cheek, "And if the weather's nice, I'll play golf."

Father Bueter, who currently resides at Sacred Heart Parish in Warsaw, will live in Fort Wayne with his sister in his retirement and attend St. Jude Parish once again.

His final word on the priesthood, "I thank God I was chosen to be a priest — that he gave me that vocation. I hope the Lord blesses us with more priests and religious for our diocese."

"I am blessed to be able to work in Hispanic ministry. I thank the bishop and the Lord for that."

FATHER PAUL BUETER

University of Dayton grads rally to offer Christmas off Campus

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

FORT WAYNE — Echoing a 45-year campus tradition, members of Fort Wayne's University of Dayton (UD) alumni chapter brought the spirit of Christmas giving Dec. 6 to local youth at the Fort Wayne Urban League.

Christmas off Campus, run by UD's Office of Alumni Relations, is an annual event intended to benefit families and less fortunate children in various cities where UD alumni have settled. Chapters nationwide, run by UD alumni, give back to their communities during the Christmas season through various projects.

Christmas off Campus began as an extension of Christmas on Campus.

UD graduates wanted to spread the goodwill from Christmas on Campus to their own communities. It was through the work of Brian and Renai Lowry that this dream became a reality. The couple started the St. Louis Christmas off Campus chapter in 1990, and soon other cities followed suit. Chapters are now found in several states across the country, from Michigan to Georgia.

"We knew it was a good idea and thought it could take on a life of its own," Renai Lowry said. "But we did not imagine it would get to where so many chapters are involved and applying it in their communities."

And Fort Wayne is not to be left out. The Fort Wayne alumni chapter boasts about 20 active members, who range in age from a few years out of college to baby boomers. Members gather sporadically for social and service events. But perhaps the most anticipated event is Christmas off Campus.

This year, about 10 members organized the Christmas party — a big hit with the children and parents alike. About 50 children streamed in and out the Urban League, ranging in age from infants to early teens. Cookie decorating, making crafts, visiting with Santa and piñatas were among the activities.

Excitement was rife in the air as a flock of children surrounded the newly broken piñata. And no one left empty handed. Each child received an age appropriate book and a Build-A-Bear stuffed dog.

Local media came out to chronicle the event and the alumni were pleased with the community's support.

Overall, Chapter President Jeremy Reidy said the event is gaining momentum each year.

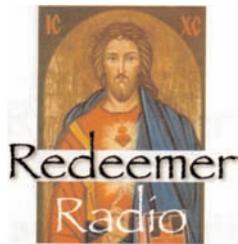
"Christmas off Campus is an opportunity for the University of Dayton alumni to extend the university's mission to 'learn, lead, serve to the community's in which they live,'" he said. "The Fort Wayne Urban League has been a great partner for the past couple of years."



LAUREN CAGGIANO

Alumni Ben Lanka, Kim Back, Jeremy Reidy, Lauren Caggiano and Marylou Hipskind participated in a 45-year tradition of bringing the spirit of Christmas to the needy.

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Conscience regulations to become law just before Obama takes office

WASHINGTON (CNS) — With their Dec. 19 publication in the Federal Register, regulations that protect the conscience rights of health care providers are scheduled to become law two days before President-elect Barack Obama takes office.

The regulations are designed to ensure “that Department of Health and Human Services funds do not support coercive or discriminatory policies or practices in violation of federal law,” according to the title of the final rule.

Deirdre McQuade, assistant director for policy and communications in the Office of Pro-Life Activities at the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, praised the regulations in a Dec. 18 statement.

“Individuals and institutions committed to healing should not be required to take the very human life that they are dedicated to protecting,” she said. “The enforcement of federal laws to protect their freedom of conscience is long overdue.”

The regulations support three conscience provisions passed by Congress as long ago as the 1970s and as recently as 2004. They stipulate that no federal funds be given to health care institutions that require providers to participate in abortions or sterilizations or discriminate against those who decline to participate because of their religious or moral beliefs.

The final rule notes that “religious and faith-based organizations have a long tradition of providing medical care in the United States, and they continue to do so today.”

“A trend that isolates and excludes some among various religious, cultural and/or ethnic groups from participating in the delivery of health care is especially troublesome when considering current and anticipated shortages of health care professionals in many medical disci-

plines and regions of the country,” it added.

McQuade said that “Catholic health care providers will especially welcome this mark of respect for the excellent life-affirming care they provide to all in need.”

But she added that Catholics are not the only ones who oppose “the deliberate destruction of nascent human life.”

“All health care providers should be free to serve their patients without violating their most deeply held moral and religious convictions in support of life,” McQuade said.

The Planned Parenthood Federation of America is organizing opposition to the rule, saying it threatens patients’ rights and would restrict health care access.

“We look forward to working with President-elect Obama and leaders in Congress to repeal this disastrous rule and expand patients’ access to full health care information and services — not limit it,” said Cecile Richards, Planned Parenthood president, in a Dec. 18 statement.

Meanwhile, in another conscience-related decision, the Illinois Supreme Court ruled Dec. 18 that individual pharmacists and pharmacy owners have legal standing to challenge Gov. Rod Blagojevich’s 2005 emergency order requiring them to dispense the emergency contraceptive marketed as Plan B or leave the profession. Two lower courts had held that they did not have standing.

Charmaine Yoest, president and CEO of Americans United for Life, called the decision “a huge victory for the freedom of conscience of all health care providers.”

“Pharmacists now have proper recourse against a discriminatory law that would force them to check their constitutional rights at the workplace door,” she said in a statement.

Vatican hopes Obama will foster peace, concern for poor, cardinal says

BY CINDY WOODEN

ROME (CNS) — The Vatican is concerned about President-elect Barack Obama’s positions on the family and on the unborn, but it looks forward with hope to his presidency fostering more attention to the poor and easing violence around the globe, said retired Cardinal Pio Laghi.

The cardinal, a former Vatican nuncio to the United States, spoke about the prospects for U.S.-Vatican relations under Obama during a Dec. 22 conference in Rome sponsored by *Limes*, an Italian political journal.

Although some pundits have said Obama’s support for legalized abortion and embryonic stem-cell research would poison the rapport the United States and the Vatican have developed under President George W. Bush — despite the Vatican’s opposition to the war in Iraq — Cardinal Laghi said, “the Vatican does not fear” the end of close cooperation.

“One must wait to see how he acts with regard to the fundamental commitments — which for us are very important — to protect the family and the sacredness of human life from conception to the tomb,” the cardinal said.

But another very serious issue is “the defense of Christians, of Catholics, who are threatened in India, in Iraq where there has been an enormous exodus and in the Holy Land,” he said.

“This situation has worsened because of the war in Iraq. If the war had been avoided, there would not have been this huge exodus, especially from Iraq, and this sense of persecution, of real persecution,” the cardinal said.

In 2003 Pope John Paul II sent Cardinal Laghi to the White House in a last-minute attempt to convince Bush not to invade Iraq.

Ignoring the pope’s pleas and conducting a war that was much more complicated than foreseen, Bush’s action exacerbated anti-Christian feelings in many parts of the world, Cardinal Laghi said.



CNS PHOTO FROM REUTERS

Cardinal Pio Laghi, shown in this archive photo, greets then-U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell March 6, 2003 at the State Department in Washington. The day earlier, Pope John Paul II’s personal envoy to Washington, Cardinal Laghi, hand-delivered a message to President George W. Bush urging him to avoid war and seek a peaceful resolution to the Iraq situation.

Because the United States is considered to be a Christian country, he said, “where American soldiers go, the countries they occupy consider Christians to be their occupiers.”

Cardinal Laghi said the Vatican is hopeful that under Obama’s leadership the United States will return to acting primarily as a force for peace, especially with regard to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. It also expects Obama to act on his promise to assist the middle class and the poor, particularly with health care, he said.

“But very important points, which could lead to contrast and difficulties on the part of the Holy See and of Catholics in the United States, are the family and the defense of life,” he said.

“Obama brings with him to the White House the first Catholic vice president, Joe Biden. And I read today that Obama has put him in charge of a task force on the family. This is a

good sign, if the family will be defended as it should be,” Cardinal Laghi said.

The cardinal also said he hoped Obama would take his time and seek “good counsel” before acting on the proposed Freedom of Choice Act, which would protect abortion as a fundamental right throughout the United States, regardless of existing state laws to restrict it.

Beyond specific policy issues, Obama’s election was a sign of renewed hope in “a country of hope,” Cardinal Laghi said.

Obama’s election, he said, capped the United States’ “liberation from the horrendous original sin that for many years marred the face of America: slavery.”

“Obama’s campaign was inspired and motivated by a spirit of reconciliation,” he said, and Pope Benedict XVI, the U.S. bishops’ conference and the Vatican newspaper each welcomed his victory as an opportunity for a new beginning.



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Pope prays for families, those in difficulty

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christmas celebrations underscore the importance of the family in people's lives, but for many it also is a time when wounds caused by one's family become more painful, Pope Benedict XVI said. Reciting the Angelus Dec. 28, the feast of the Holy Family, Pope Benedict prayed for families in difficulty and for family members who are sick or out of work. "Christmas is the family celebration par excellence," the pope told visitors in St. Peter's Square. "This is demonstrated by many traditions and social customs, especially gathering together as a family to share festive meals and exchange best wishes and gifts." But, he said, it also is a time when "the discomfort and pain caused by certain family wounds are amplified." The pope prayed that all Christian families would model their relationships on those of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, working together, trusting in God and taking care of one another.

In messages, Holy Land church leaders call for peace, reconciliation

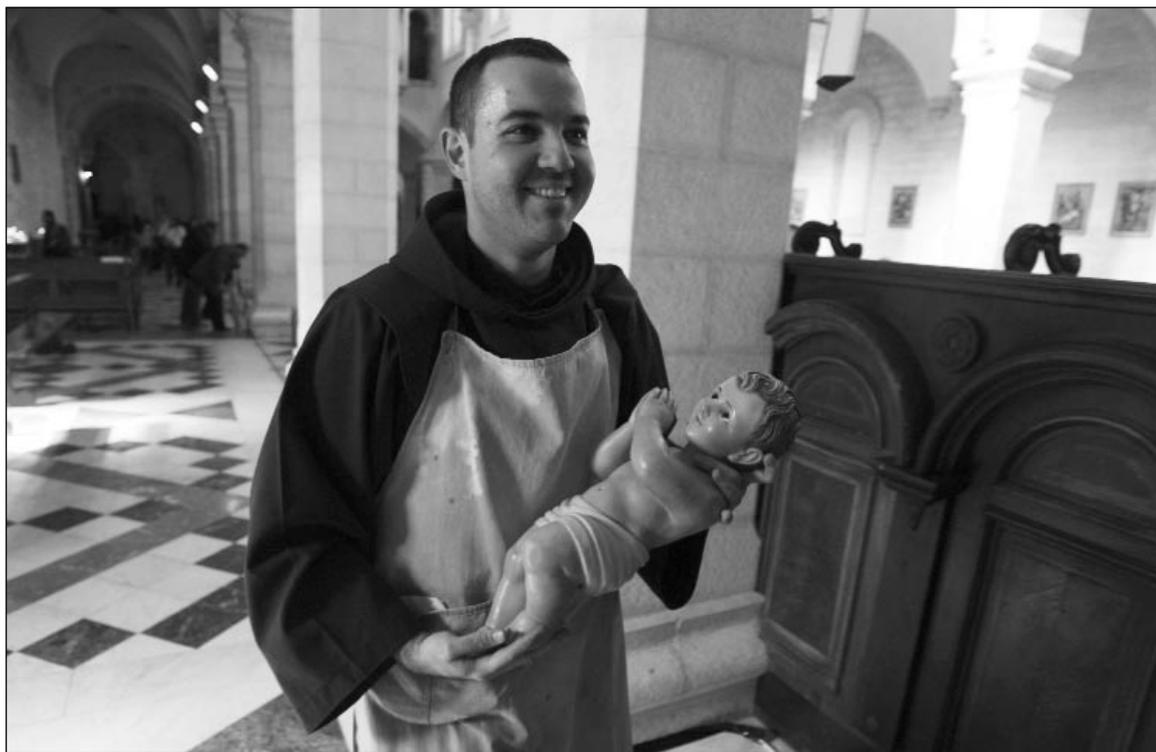
JERUSALEM (CNS) — Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal's first Christmas message as patriarch of Jerusalem was one of hope and encouragement, without ignoring the Holy Land's difficulties. "Christmas has come and so we are full of hope. We are thankful for hopeful signs around us, such as recent international encounters at the highest levels among religious leaders and among other peacemakers," Patriarch Twal said in his Dec. 23 message. He told journalists at a press conference that after his first six months as patriarch he felt "fine" in the "most beautiful and most complicated diocese in the world." In a separate Christmas message Dec. 18, Franciscan Father Pierbattista Pizzaballa, head of the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land, addressed the world financial crisis. "The torments that today most brutally afflict society are of an economic nature. Materialistic society discovers with dismay its deepest fragility. Being poor or becoming poor becomes a real possibility for everyone," he said. "But this is only the outward sign of a deeper poverty that afflicts the soul. We too discover that we are shepherds in the night."

Source: Israel, Vatican eager to finalize talks before papal visit

JERUSALEM (CNS) — Israeli and Vatican negotiators appear eager to finalize negotiations on fiscal and property matters prior to the pope's visit to the Holy Land, a source close to the negotiations said. "Both the state of Israel and the representatives of the Holy

NEWS BRIEFS

PRIEST CARRIES STATUE AT CHURCH IN BETHLEHEM



CNS PHOTO/NAYEF HASHLAMOUN, REUTERS

A priest carries a statue of baby Jesus at St. Catherine's Church adjacent to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, West Bank, Dec. 23.

See are very interested to finalize this," he said, adding that though he was unaware of any official policy, the pope's visit, reportedly in May, might be acting as an impetus for both sides to finish up negotiations. In a statement following a plenary session at the Vatican Dec. 18, the negotiators said they have scheduled another plenary session for April 23 and four meetings of their working group, which will take place starting in January with "the intent on both sides of accelerating the process and reaching an agreement as soon as possible." The statement called the December meeting "significant and useful."

People with jobs must be thankful, generous

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Those who have a job this Christmas should be thankful and should reach out to help their neighbors who are less fortunate, Pope Benedict XVI said. "With Christmas approaching, my thoughts naturally turn to the employment crisis that is worrying all humanity today," the pope said Dec. 19 during a meeting with officials of the Vatican's Central Labor Office. "Those who have the possibility of working should be thankful to God and open their hearts with generosity toward those who find themselves with employment and economic difficulties," the pope said. Pope Benedict prayed that Jesus would watch over those suffering because of the global economic

crisis and inspire new acts of solidarity among all people. Pope John Paul II established the Vatican labor office Jan. 1, 1989, to oversee the rights of Vatican employees and settle disputes between employees and supervisors. The Vatican, including the Roman Curia and Vatican City State, employs more than 4,500 people, the majority of whom are laity.

Vatican supports ending violence against homosexuals, not new rights

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican said it condemns all forms of violence against homosexuals, but does not support a proposed U.N. declaration recognizing "sexual orientation" and "gender identity" as new categories that need human rights' protections. "Despite the declaration's rightful condemnation of and protection from all forms of violence against homosexual persons, the document, when considered in its entirety, goes beyond this goal and instead gives rise to uncertainty in the law and challenges existing human rights norms," a Vatican statement said. The statement, issued by the office of the Vatican's apostolic nuncio to the United Nations, Archbishop Celestino Migliore, was submitted Dec. 18 during the U.N. General Assembly's discussion of a proposed Declaration on Human Rights, Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. The statement

said the Vatican appreciates efforts in the declaration aimed at condemning all forms of violence against homosexuals and urging nations to put an end to all criminal penalties against them. However, the declaration's wording and its introduction of new categories for human rights' protections go "well beyond the above-mentioned and shared intent," it said.

Number of Catholics in Congress edging up; more are Democrats

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The number of Catholic members of Congress is slowly creeping higher, but the Catholic contingent, like the full Congress itself, has taken a decided turn toward the Democratic Party. When the 111th Congress is sworn in Jan. 6, more than a quarter of its members will be Catholics, roughly matching the percentage of Catholics in the U.S. population and consistent with the statistical trends of the past decade. Four years ago when the 109th Congress convened, it included 153 Catholics. Two years later there were 155 Catholics in the 110th Congress. But the new group of senators and representatives has 162 members who identify themselves as Catholics. With nearly all the 2008 electoral battles settled by early December, and the Senate seat of President-elect Barack Obama still not filled, the Catholic delegation included 17 Democrats and nine

Republicans in the Senate and 98 Democrats and 38 Republicans in the House.

Cardinal Maida hails auto aid package announced by Bush

DETROIT (CNS) — Cardinal Adam J. Maida of Detroit Dec. 22 praised President George W. Bush's decision to provide \$17.4 billion in bridge loans to help General Motors Corp. and Chrysler avert a cash crisis that could have plunged the two domestic automakers into bankruptcy by the end of the year. "As a spiritual leader and resident of southeast Michigan, I'm grateful the government stepped in and stepped up to help stabilize the domestic auto industry," the cardinal said of Bush's Dec. 19 announcement about the loans. The financial aid package provides \$4 billion for Chrysler and up to \$13.4 billion for General Motors, with the first \$4 billion available this month. The automakers have three years to pay back the money, but only if they meet a number of deadlines; otherwise the loans must be paid back next spring. "What was finally put forth is a complicated plan, but these are complicated times," Cardinal Maida remarked. Among issues to be addressed are the companies' wage and benefit costs, in addition to which of their models will be offered to the public.

U.S. dioceses prepare for gloomy economic forecast

WASHINGTON (CNS) — U.S. Catholic dioceses in regions hardest hit by the economic meltdown haven't had to resort to drastic financial measures, but officials are bracing themselves for the possibility. Officials from dioceses contacted by Catholic News Service Dec. 17 said their 2008 budgets are solvent, enabling them to operate without radical cuts until the end of June. However, they haven't yet determined how the current economic climate will affect their budgets for the 2009 fiscal year, which begins July 1. In the meantime, they all have reported trimming expenses where they can and proceeding carefully into the new year. "I do think we're impacted, but it's hard to know by how much at this point," said Sister Charlotte Davenport, a Sister of St. Joseph of Peace who is chancellor of the Archdiocese of Anchorage, Alaska. "We're watching it day by day and keeping expenses at a minimum. We're being very, very cautious." With most U.S. dioceses conducting their annual fundraising appeals in the spring, officials in Detroit, Anchorage, Reno, Nev., Toledo, Ohio, and Los Angeles said they are praying Catholics will be generous this year, but are bracing themselves for the potential of smaller contributions.

Father Cox selected for Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program

CRAWFORDSVILLE — Holy Cross Father Christopher Cox has been selected to participate in the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program. Father Cox is pastor at St. Adalbert-St. Casimir Parish in South Bend.

The program targets Indiana pastors with between five and 10 years of experience following their graduate seminary studies and invites them to participate in a two-year program of leadership development and pastoral reflection.

The focus of the Wabash Pastoral Leadership Program will engage pastors in explorations of critical economic, educational and political challenges facing Indiana communities and help them develop the knowledge and skills to become stronger leaders in their congregations and communities.

Father Cox earned his undergraduate degree and master's of divinity degree from the University of Notre Dame.

"From a number of outstanding pastors who applied, we selected a representative group with very high potential for leadership from diverse churches throughout Indiana," said the program director, Raymond Brady Williams. "They have rich academic backgrounds and life experiences, and we look forward to lively discussions of important issues and challenges that face communities and churches in Indiana."

"Pastors play important roles in sustaining the vitality of local Indiana communities," said Craig Dykstra, senior vice president for religion at the endowment. "We are delighted that Wabash will create a leadership program that recognizes and honors their work, helps them understand more deeply challenges faced by Indiana, and prepares them to become increasingly effective leaders in congregations and communities."

Pastors involved in the program will meet on the Wabash College campus 10 times over a two-year period to meet with civic, government, business and religious leaders to discuss issues that affect local Indiana communities. The pastors will learn about a range of topics, such as statewide efforts to strengthen public education, Indiana economic initiatives, government responses to property tax and other issues, the impact of immigration on local communities and advances in medical research and their impact on health care.

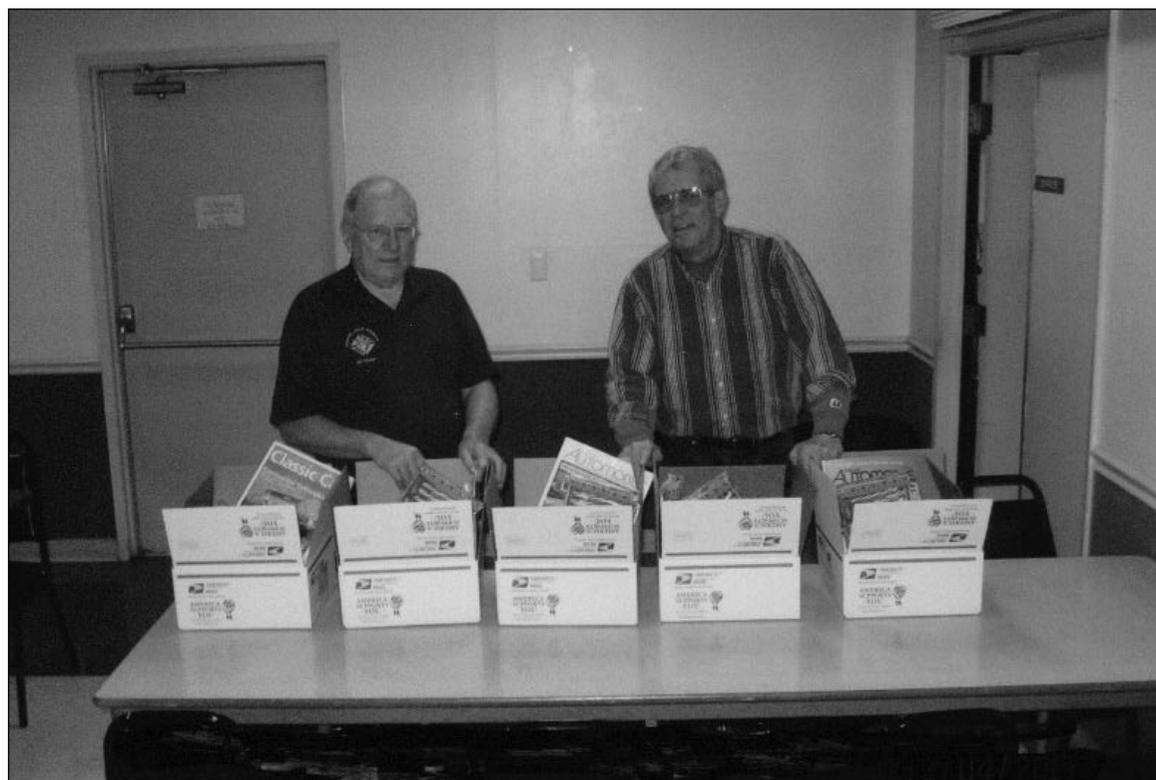
In addition, the pastors will par-



FATHER CHRISTOPHER COX

AROUND THE DIOCESE

K OF C GIFTS COUNCIL MEMBERS



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Knights of Columbus Council 451 of Fort Wayne are preparing to send boxes to members of their council serving in Iraq and Kuwait. This is the third set of boxes the council has sent since their departure. Pictured are Jim Alwine, financial secretary and John Murray, Grand Knight.

participate in a study tour in North America during the first year and an international study tour in the second year of the program to learn about transnational contexts. One group of pastors will begin in January 2009 and the second in 2011.

Professor Snead praises Vatican bioethics document

NOTRE DAME — The 32-page document on bioethical issues issued Dec. 12 by the Vatican reemphasized the Catholic Church's moral opposition to in-vitro fertilization, human cloning and embryonic stem-cell research.

The document, whose title, "Dignitas Personae," is Latin for "the dignity of a person," was issued by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith to respond to bioethical issues, which have arisen in the 21 years since its last such instruction.

According to O. Carter Snead, associate professor of law in the University of Notre Dame's Law School, "the breadth of the instruction is striking; it covers a whole host of new technologies — assisted reproduction techniques (and adjuncts), embryo research, cloning, gene therapy and the like."

Snead, having read the document closely, stressed the difficulty

of commenting briefly on such an extensive teaching.

"The most noteworthy feature to me about the new instruction is that even though it makes very strong moral claims, the arguments set forth in support of these claims fully respect public reason," Snead said. "That is, the arguments follow from premises that can be readily understood and accepted or rejected on their own merits by believers and nonbelievers alike."

As an example Snead cited the injunction against embryo-destructive research.

"The church's argument here is essentially based on two premises," he said. "The first is that the human embryo is an organism — a living, complete, integrated, whole, self-directing member of the species homo sapiens that will, if given the proper environment, move itself along a trajectory of growth to the next stage of maturity. The second is that all human beings, merely by virtue of their humanity, are entitled to basic moral respect that, at least, precludes others from destroying them for their own purposes. All human beings are owed this minimum moral respect because of who they are; it is manifestly not a function of their having a particular set of preferred capacities, their state of vulnerability or dependence, their location, or the extent to which they are useful to or are esteemed by someone else. Taken together, these

premises lead the church to conclude that human embryos should not be destroyed for purposes of scientific research."

Whether one agrees or disagrees with the argument, Snead said, it is "clearly not an argument based on revelation or dogma. It is an eminently reasonable claim that can be understood and digested by all. The premise that a human embryo is a living organism of the species homo sapiens is confirmed by modern embryology. The premise that all human beings are radically equal is an axiom that should be quite familiar to all Americans; the same concept figures prominently in the principles of classical liberalism that undergird our own fundamental laws. The church's argument about embryo-destructive research is thus well suited for public debate in a pluralistic society such as our own."

USF offers Saturday morning art classes for children

FORT WAYNE — The School of Creative Arts at the University of Saint Francis has announced spring art classes for children in grades 1-8 from 9 to 11 a.m. on Saturdays from Feb. 7 to April 25.

A variety of two and three-dimensional visual arts will be taught, including drawing, painting

and sculpture. Art materials will be provided. The cost is \$80 for one child and \$75 for each additional child. The cost includes all materials and instructional fees. Registration should be received by Feb. 4. Early registration is advised as enrollment is limited.

For more information or a registration form, please contact the School of Creative Arts at (260) 399-7700 ext. 8001. The School of Creative Arts (SOCA) is an accredited school by the National Association of Schools of Art and Design (NASAD).

Redeemer Radio celebrates three years

FORT WAYNE — Redeemer Radio, Catholic Radio AM 1450, will hold a celebration Jan. 6 from 9-11 a.m. to honor the station's third anniversary on the air. The festivities will be held at Redeemer Radio, 4705 Illinois Rd., and will include several special announcements and presentations. Friends and supporters of Redeemer Radio are invited to attend.

The celebration on Jan. 6 will recognize the work of the past and look forward to a bright future. The occasion will also serve to announce some exciting changes for the station's programming lineup. The anticipated new schedule will include: "The Son Rise Morning Show," with host Brian Patrick, broadcasting live from Cincinnati, Ohio; Father Larry Richards; "Women of Grace" with Johnette Benkovic; Father John Corapi; "The Doctor Is In" with Dr. Ray Guarendi and Colleen Kelly Mast; and an additional hour of "Kresta in the Afternoon." Long-range plans include a Spanish-language station in the Fort Wayne area and a live local daily program.

Other special events will include its thanks and appreciation to the founders of the station. Special thanks will be given to one of the founders, outgoing board chair Chris Langford, and new Redeemer Radio board chairperson, Mike Kelly will be introduced.

Father Mark Gurtner, pastor of Our Lady of Good Hope Parish, will speak on the true meaning of the feast of the Epiphany, one of the oldest Christian feasts commemorating the manifestations of the divinity of Christ.

New SJRMC auxiliary formed

MISHAWAKA — The Saint Joseph Regional Medical Center (SJRMC) Auxiliary recently elected new officers for 2009-2010 at the annual Christmas luncheon held Dec. 11, at Windsor Park Conference Center. They are Margie Dornbos, president; Barbara Books, vice president/president elect; Pat Pallo, treasurer; Theresa Mudwilder, membership secretary and Joan Bartlett, recorder/corresponding secretary.

The new hospital is scheduled to open in September of 2009 on Douglas Ave.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

Mind, body and soul

BY KAREN CLIFFORD

GRANGER — “Movement is a medicine for creating change in a person’s physical, emotional, and mental states.” — Carol Welch

Whether bicycling up the Pyrenees, lifting weights or diving for a volleyball, three members of the St. Pius X community strongly testify to the benefits of a fitness program on the mind, body and soul. Pastor Father Bill Schooler, parishioner Susan Helms and St. Pius X School seventh-grader Alexis Kleva, share the fitness programs they participate in and the positive effects of regular exercise in their daily lives.

At 60 years of age, Father Schooler’s passion and dedication for bike riding impresses even the youngest bike enthusiast. Last year he led a pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago in Spain, riding a bike for the first 600 miles of the journey. The excursion began in the Pyrenees Mountains. Father Schooler recalls, “The Pyrenees have very difficult grades with many rolling parts. We also crossed two other mountain ranges.” He adds, “When we went into Galicia, we encountered a great deal of hills, which were demanding.”

The second part of the pilgrimage involved walking the final 60 miles with the St. Pius X youth group and adult sponsors. Father Schooler testifies to the consequences of not preparing for a strenuous exercise activity. “I had not trained for the walking portion of the trip and got some pretty severe blisters on my feet and toes,” he emphasizes. In addition to bike riding, Father Schooler also plays racquetball and works out in a gym as a part of his fitness routine.

St. Pius X parishioner Susan Helms has been exercising for the past 25 years and has been faithful to a scheduled fitness routine for the last 15 years. During this time Susan has participated in aerobics, step-bosu, yoga, Pilates, spinning and various other classes for cardiac and muscle conditioning. In addition, Susan has trained and rode a tandem bike on several century rides and taken part in charity walks and fundraisers.

She finds that scheduled exercise has a profound effect in her life. “It gives me the physical energy I need to keep up with the demands of a family of five.” By working her muscles, Susan has more energy for everyday tasks.



Alexis Kleva, a seventh grader at St. Pius X is shown working out at a volleyball practice. She believes exercise gives her energy and a positive attitude for the day.

“I have the strength to rake leaves, mow, shovel, clean my house, or whatever activity that calls,” she adds.

Student Alexis Kleva is involved with several fitness activities in and out of school. She has participated in ballet, tap, jazz, gymnastics, softball, volleyball, basketball and track. Kleva also took part in the South Bend Parks and Recreation Kids Triathlon for three years and was a member of a competitive cheer leading team that won a national championship.

St. Pius X teachers reflect on the impact of Kleva’s physical well-being on her classes at school. Homeroom teacher Allison Krisch notes, “Alexis (Lexi) embodies the essence of the phrase student athlete. She is a team player when it comes to group projects and shows compassion to her fellow students.” Physical fitness teacher Marc Green adds, “Lexi is currently part of the St. Pius X volleyball team and is a true leader in this sport as well. In this world where some athletes are poor role models, it is nice to see someone who

exemplifies being a great teammate and a better young lady!”

Father Schooler, Helms and Kleva all agree that a good fitness routine affects their thinking and decision-making processes.

“Getting good physical exercise helps me deal with frustrations and provides time for thinking through problems, especially when I am working out or riding my bike alone,” Father Schooler remarks.

Helm adds, “Exercise is a great venue for emotional fatigue. My mind is sharper, clearer and more focused after I have worked up a sweat!”

And for Kleva, regular exercise has long lasting effects, “It helps me keep good energy throughout the day. When I feel better, I’m more positive and have a better attitude with others and towards doing my best in school.”

Relationships with God and other people are also improved by exercise. “When I see others less fortunate or struggling with a fragile body, I am humbled and so appreciative of the ‘temple’ that God has given to me. I



Susan Helms, parishioner of St. Pius X completes a workout with weights.



Father Bill Schooler, pastor of St. Pius X Parish in Granger, left, joins his brother Tony on a bike pilgrimage on the Camino De Santiago.

remind myself that I am required to take care of myself as our bodies are a gift from him,” Helms reflects.

Father Schooler expresses that a bond develops when exercising with others. “There is a real camaraderie developed among the groups with which I bike. Even when I compete in racquetball, my opponent and I always spend time talking to one another.”

Kleva shares that teamwork is improved with a physical fitness program. “By working hard and together as a team, I feel I’m strengthening my ability to become a better steward and improving my relationship with God.”

So what does each recommend for getting started in a fitness program? Kleva emphasizes finding something to enjoy. “If you are going to start a new fitness program make it fun, exciting and interesting. You will continue a sport if you are having fun.”

Helms encourages everyone to make a plan and get started. “Look at your calendar and build in time for you. Making the commitment to exercise will change your life forever.”

Father Schooler concludes with a reminder to begin a new exercise program gradually. “It takes time and a regular routine to build up stamina, strength and endurance. Go slowly!”

PHOTOS BY KAREN CLIFFORD

ONS

Serving needs in and outside of the church

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

FORT WAYNE — Instead of spending more time at the office this year, why not consider devoting more time to your church? St. Charles Borromeo's Father Tony Steinacker offers a few suggestions on how to become more active in the parish community, on an individual, couple and family basis.

One way to get involved on an individual basis is to become a lector or usher. Steinacker says this role can serve as a good example for children, as we are active in the Mass. Once at the proper age, children can become involved in the Mass as altar servers. The musically inclined might consider playing an instrument or singing in the choir, he says.

Group prayer is another means to enhance one's spiritual life. Some parishioners find a prayer group is a great way to devote a few hours each week to God. If your parish lacks one, approach your pastor about starting one. The Vocation Cross Program is also a great way to become more involved as a family. A family, couple or individual takes home the cross and prays each day for a week as a witness to the parish.

"This is a beautiful way for families to pray together during busy times," he says.

Sometimes we are called to simplify our lives to enhance our spiritual lives. Families can also grow closer by ridding their lives of excess, Father Steinacker suggests. Donating food to the food bank and clothes to the local shelter are ways to help the needy and simplify our lives.

"Just walk through your house and realize you don't need everything ... share your excess," he says. "Be mindful that we are called to help those less fortunate."

There are other ways to get involved "behind the scenes," Father Steinacker says. Such ways include volunteering to clean the church. A crew at St. Charles currently devotes one Saturday a month to cleaning the church, he said.

As Catholics, we should live our faith outside the confines of the church. Becoming active in civic and school organizations is a means to live an example of our Catholic faith and values. Parents can volunteer to be Boy or Girl Scout leaders, den mothers, youth leaders, coaches and school volunteers.

"These programs do help to form the attitude and disposition of a young person in the line of service," Father Steinacker notes.

The success and future of these organizations depends on collaboration among all units of society.

"All of these things depend on the collaboration with school principals and the pastor," he says. "Be aware of what's going on in the community."

Overall, Steinacker wishes to remind families that these acts of service are timeless, not just Christmas season appropriate.

"This time of year we're overwhelmed," he says. "But any day is a good day to do a charitable act and examine our lives."

BY LAUREN CAGGIANO

FORT WAYNE — Being in good health means more than fending off the flu.

When our mind, body and spirit are in tune, we are in optimal health and have healthier relationships. The following activities are ways to enhance all three aspects of our health.

Meditation

Most people are born into a religion and grow up in it. Meditation, however, is a path of life, which we can choose freely. The great thing about meditation is that members of all religions can meditate without having to leave their religion.

By definition, meditation is a mental discipline by which one attempts to get beyond the conditioned "thinking" mind into a deeper state of relaxation or awareness. Meditation often involves turning attention to a single point of reference.

In our prayer lives, we can incorporate meditation on a daily basis. As with any prayer, it can always be done kneeling. It can also be done sitting, ideally with feet flat on the floor, slightly back; hands on the lap, palms down; shoulders a little bit forward and head slightly bowed.

Your meditation can begin with a prompt, such as a recent Gospel or homily. You could also use a mystery of the rosary or a Station of the Cross as a topic for meditation. Some people prefer to focus on a mantra, a word or phrase, to begin their practice and then let their thoughts free flow at their own pace. This is called guided meditation. Meditation contributes to overall spiritual health because it allows for "me time," time to ponder one's life and relationship with God.

Yoga

Yoga literally means "yolk" and is a practice that encourages a union of the mind, body and spirit. This ancient art has been

practiced for more than 5,000 years and it's easy to see why close to 11 million Americans practice it.

Most Westernized yoga classes focus on learning physical poses, which are called asanas. They also usually include some form of breathing technique and possibly a meditation technique as well. Some yoga classes are designed purely for relaxation, but there are styles of yoga that teach you how to move your body in new ways. Choosing one of these styles offers the greatest health benefits by enabling you to develop your flexibility, strength and balance.

Yoga is offered locally at health clubs, yoga studios, YMCAs and even churches and schools. Some Catholic local churches have recognized yoga's healing powers. For example, Christine Hill offers an all-ages beginning yoga class in Fort Wayne's St. Jude Parish basement 6:30 to 8 p.m. Monday nights.

Hill, who has been practicing since 1997, said she felt a calling from God to teach yoga. She started a class at the church in June and the response was "overwhelming," so she has continued the class.

Hill has discovered that yoga can be a spiritual practice, or "prayer in movement," as she described it. The mother of two said practice helps her focus on the "here and now" and is a complement to her prayer life.

Hill said all are welcome to try out her class. Wear comfortable clothes and she will provide the rest. Call St. Jude Church at (260) 484-6609 for more information.

The Light Weigh Diet

Forget the Atkins Diet, South Beach Diet, etc., the Light Weigh Diet is unique because it's rooted in prayer and self control.

The diet is the result of founder Suzanne Fowler's struggle with weight.

"I was trying to figure out how to free myself from being overweight," she explained in an e-mail interview. "I used to weigh 100 pounds more than I do now and I felt like food controlled me. I had no peace with myself or food at that time."

Fowler tried every diet known to man, but found no success. And starting a family did not help her cause and she fell further in despair.

But God works in mysterious ways.

"When I was pregnant with my sixth child it occurred to me that God had to have the answer for me," she recalled. "At that point I turned to God in desperation and asked him to help me and lead me."

Fowler continued doing weight loss research supplement-

ed with research on the teachings of the saints who spent their lives learning to overcome temptation. The result of the fruits of her labor was the Light Weigh Diet.

According to her Web site, lightweigh.com, the diet is a 12-week video series Bible study in which participants learn a "new approach to eating and to prayer." Light Weigh members learn to eat the foods they enjoy in moderation. The Light Weigh is international and is done throughout the United States, Canada, Ireland and Australia.

All Light Weigh groups use the same format. Meetings last about 90 minutes, once a week. People meet at their parish or in a home and do a Bible study for 15 minutes, followed by a Light Weigh DVD.

The series is designed to be done in small groups in your parish or in your home. The Light Weigh is Catholic, and so it is able to draw upon the fullness of the truth found in our faith that Jesus himself founded personally and designed.

The diet quickly gained momentum, as she started a Light Weigh group at her church 10 years ago. Fowler attributes the lasting weight loss to her participation in the group.

And Fowler is not alone in her success.

"The Light Weigh has definitely changed my life and the lives of thousands of other people since I wrote it," she said. "For me, I never thought it would be possible to lose my weight, keep it off and eat the foods I enjoy, but it is possible through Light Weigh."

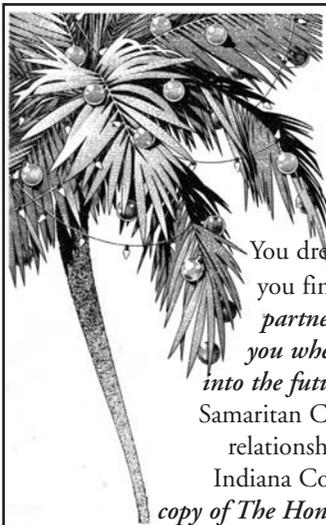
Fowler said she regularly receives testimonial stories from Light Weigh members who claim the diet has changed their lives, lowered their blood sugars, helped them lose weight and brought them closer to God. A young woman in St. Louis used Light Weigh to lose 150 pounds, she noted.

Fowler said her diet yields physical and spiritual results.

"When we approach physical health from the Light Weigh spiritual perspective we experience a transformation from the inside out," she said.

Through using the tools provided by the diet, we are able to learn detachment from food and peace with food. Peace with food is when you still enjoy food, but you are no longer controlled by it and do not turn to food to satisfy emotional needs, she said.

For more information about the diet, see www.lightweigh.com.



The Honeymoon Habit

Lessons for Renewing Romance

and Reconnecting with Your Spouse

by Tony Garascia

You dreamed of being lovers, partners, companions, and friends...always in love...yet you find your passion fading and wish for a new energy. *The four images of lover, partner, companion and friend can be re-dreamed and restored. They can sustain you when the going gets tough and your dreams are tested. They can propel you back into the future you once dreamed.* Tony Garascia is currently the Clinical Director of the Samaritan Counseling Center in South Bend. His areas of specialty include marriage and relationship issues. Tony is a member of the American Counseling Association and the Indiana Counseling Association. He also is EMDR, Level II Certified. *To order your*

copy of The Honeymoon Habit (price \$15.00) go to www.amazon.com or www.booksurge.com and key in "The Honeymoon Habit" in the search bar.

Oh what a year this has been

Elections, economic crisis top stories of 2008, pope top newsmaker

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The election of the first African-American president and controversy surrounding the role of Catholic voters in the U.S. campaign topped the religious news stories of 2008, and Pope Benedict XVI and President-elect Barack Obama were the top newsmakers, according to the annual poll conducted by Catholic News Service. The global economic crisis took second place among the 31 news stories on the ballot. Pope Benedict's six-day visit to the United States in April came in third. Most first-place votes on the newsmakers list went to either Obama or Pope Benedict, with the pontiff edging out the president-elect by a small margin. Catholic voters were a distant third. The poll was the 47th annual survey conducted by CNS. This year's ballots were distributed Dec. 5 and the deadline for returns was Dec. 11.

Looking back in the diocese

Parish anniversaries

St. Robert Bellarmine, North Manchester — 50 years
Immaculate Conception Church, Auburn (church building) — 50 years
Christ the King, South Bend — 75 years
St. Mary of the Presentation, Geneva — 125 years
St. Patrick Parish, South Bend — 150 years

Rest in peace

Father William G. Hodde, 81, Jan. 17
Father Robert J. Hoevel, 92, March 5
Msgr. William M. Faber, 99, July 7
Father Elden J. Miller, 80, July 26
Deacon Louis "Mac" McDougall, 90, July 26
Deacon Fred J. Larson, 92, Sept. 23

Building projects

- Holy Cross School addition blessed in January
- St. Thomas broke ground for \$3.1 million addition in June
- Bishop John M. D'Arcy blessed Educational Center at St. Pius X, Granger in August.
- St. Vincent de Paul School, Fort Wayne, dedicated its kindergarten wing in September
- St. Jude, Fort Wayne, broke ground for an addition
- St. Charles broke ground for a kindergarten expansion in November

2008



Top Stories

1. ELECTIONS

Illinois Sen. Barack Obama defeats Arizona Sen. John McCain to become first African-American president in U.S. history. Delaware Sen. Joe Biden becomes first Catholic vice president.

2. ECONOMIC CRISIS

3. PAPAL VISIT

4. ABORTION

5. GLOBAL TENSIONS

Top Newsmakers

1. POPE BENEDICT XVI

Makes first U.S. visit as pope, travels to France and Australia, opens year of St. Paul and leads world Synod of Bishops on the Bible.

2. PRESIDENT-ELECT BARACK OBAMA

3. CATHOLIC VOTERS

4. ST. PAUL

5. IRAQI CHRISTIANS

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CNS photo

Pope Benedict XVI's activities as the head of the Catholic Church made him the top newsmaker of 2008.

Parishes

- Father George Gabet, a priest of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, assigned to Mother Theodore Guérin Community in March. The community celebrates Mass in the Tridentine Rite. The community consists of parishioners from Sacred Heart in Fort Wayne and St. John the Baptist in South Bend.

Diocesan

- Mary Glowaski became the director of the Campus and Young Adult Ministry department in the summer
- Young people from Warsaw and the South Bend area participated in World Youth Day activities in Sydney, Australia
- Eleven men partook in permanent diaconate candidacy



JOE KOZINSKI

Dedication of new school at St. Pius X.



Bishop John M. D'Arcy ordains Fathers Kevin Bauman and Andrew Curry to the priesthood in October.



DON CLEMMER

Pope at youth rally during visit to U.S. in April.

blessing in August

- Day of Grace for Women, with speaker Johnnette Benkovic, welcomed over 300 guests at Grace College at Winona Lake on Sept. 27

- Red Mass celebrated at the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Fort Wayne, Oct. 5
- Bishop John M. D'Arcy ordained Father Kevin Bauman and Father Andrew "Drew" Curry to the priesthood in October
- Bishop John M. D'Arcy met with Catholic Burmese refugees on All Saints Day

- Catechetical Institute Day celebrated at Syracuse in November
- Hispanic lay ministry catechetical day celebrated in Warsaw in December

Milestones

- Bishop Luers High School netted a state basketball IHSAA Class 2-A state championship March 22; and a third "state crown" championship in baseball in June

- Sixteen youths from the diocese and adults attended events associated with the papal visit to New York City in April

- Bishop Luers began a year-long 50th anniversary celebration in August
- Blue Mass celebrated at Notre Dame in October
- Judy Throm, organist and music director at Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception, retired Dec. 31

Mergers:

- Bishop John M. D'Arcy announced in October the creation of St. Catherine of Siena Parish, which involves the merging of St. Jude, South Bend, and Sacred Heart, Lakeville
- Msgr. Julian Benoit Academy merged with St. John the Baptist School, Fort Wayne, in the 2008-2009 school year
- St. Patrick School, Walkerton, merged with St. Michael the Archangel School in Plymouth in the 2008-2009 school year

EDITORIAL

Announcing events of 2009

Epiphany has long held a tradition of announcing the events to come in the following year.

We'll start with some exciting news about *Today's Catholic*. The newspaper has been subscription based; however, beginning Feb. 1, Bishop John M. D'Arcy has generously offered to distribute the paper weekly to all registered Catholics in our diocese 47 times per year.

Throughout the month of January, we hope to answer all your questions on how this will work in block ads in *Today's Catholic*.

As always, we continue to offer Today's Catholic Podcast, a 15-minute newscast that can be found on our diocesan Web site, www.diocesefwsb.org, or downloaded for free on iTunes. Listen to it whenever you wish on your MP3 player. We are also on the airwaves on Redeemer Radio — Catholic Radio 1450 AM — every Sunday afternoon.

Also, for those who wish to receive their Catholic news each week electronically, we can e-mail *Today's Catholic* as a PDF or you may access the most current issue on our diocesan Web site beginning in February.

You may notice a few "tweaks" to the design of the paper this week. This is to accommodate some labeling changes instituted by the U.S. Postal Service.

Here are some additional dates to note

Catholic Schools Week is celebrated nationally and in the diocese the last full week of January. This includes the popular All-School Mass at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum on Friday, Jan. 30, and then again in South Bend at the Joyce Athletic Center on Feb. 4.

Lent begins Wednesday, Feb. 25. Good Friday is April 10.

Catholics are encouraged to embrace Lent as a time of prayer, fasting, almsgiving and repentance. Please check your parish bulletin for opportunities to partake in the sacrament of reconciliation.

Easter is April 12. Ascension is celebrated Sunday, May 24; and May 31 is Pentecost Sunday.

In August, the feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary falls on a Saturday and is therefore not a holy day of obligation this year.

All Saints falls on Sunday, Nov. 1.

The feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary falls on Tuesday, Dec. 8. It is a holy day of obligation.

And Christmas falls on Friday, Dec. 25.

This year, with prayers and the grace of God, three men will be ordained to the priesthood. They include Gabriel Hernandez and Fernando Jimenez and Jacob Runyon. Please keep our seminarians and vocations in your prayers.

We will also celebrate the anniversaries of several of our diocesan pastors. Included are Father Stephen Colchin, Father Jeffery Largent, Father Paul McCarthy and Father Bruce Piechocki — 25 years; Father Laurence Tippmann and Msgr. James Wolf — 40 years; Father Paul Bueter, Father Matthew Sienkiewicz and Father Camillo Tirabassi — 50 years; Father Raymond Balzer and Father Thomas Doriot — 60 years; and Father Robert Traub — 70 years.

Parishes celebrating anniversaries include St. John the Baptist, New Haven, and St. Aloysius, Yoder, both celebrating 150 years. And St. Stanislaus Kostka will celebrate 125 years.

Also, parish missions will offer the opportunity to deepen and renew our faith. There are several Lenten missions scheduled by the diocesan Office of Spiritual Development. They include St. Louis Besancon, March 1-4; St. Mary, Culver, March 1-4; Sacred Heart, Warsaw, March 8-12; St. Michael, Plymouth, March 8-12; St. Joseph, Roanoke with St. Catherine, Nix Settlement, March 15-18; St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, March 15-18; and St. Mary of the Assumption, Avilla, March 22-25. St. Dominic, Bremen, will host Advent and Pentecost Evenings of Prayer. St. Joseph Parish, Fort Wayne, will have a Lenten Enrichment March 22 and April 5.

So as we continue to celebrate the Year of St. Paul, a year of evangelization based on one of the greatest evangelizers, we pray that this is a year of graces and that *Today's Catholic* will be an ever present resource for the great happenings of our diocese, our universal church and a teacher of the faith.

Today's Catholic editorial board consists of Ann Carey, Don Clemmer, Fred and Lisa Everett, Father Mark Gurtner, Father Michael Heintz, Tim Johnson and Vince LaBarbera.

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

Treat God's gift of animals with kindness

Once again my holidays have been ruined by neighbors who have dogs living outside. I get so upset when I see dogs trying to keep from freezing, sometimes standing, because the ground is too cold to lie down on. Some have no dog house. The lucky ones that do, usually have no straw. It amazes me that people think that dogs don't get cold. They get just as cold as we do. They can get frost bitten, and some die in extreme temperatures.

Imagine yourself outside right now with no heat at all and no blan-

ket. Imagine yourself spending your entire life on a short chain or in a pen surrounded by feces. You can't generate any heat, because you can't get any exercise. You get weak. You are thirsty, but your water is frozen. Imagine dreaming that you are running, playing, living in the house with your family (and they love you). Then you wake up to realize that it was just another dream. You're really outside for a miserable lonely life of solitary confinement getting no love or attention, and your family doesn't care. You cry and they never notice. Your neighbors pity you and try not to look at you because it makes them too sad. But, they don't know what to do about it.

Dogs are totally dependent on humans, and they need our help.

You may always regret it if you do nothing. You can help them by calling Animal Control or the Humane Society when you see a dog living in these or any other unacceptable conditions.

To all pastors, preachers and priests: You, as well as I and many others, know that dogs are a gift of unconditional love and companionship from God. To treat this gift with any disregard saddens him. Perhaps a reminder from the pulpit around this time each year would enlighten many pet owners about the love and loyalty that is wasted out in the yard.

To all dog lovers — pray for resolve.

Patricia Clodi
South Bend

Christ bids us to come and go

BY SISTER MARGIE LAVONIS, CSC

I have a ritual I practice on New Year's Eve or day, depending on what is going on in my life. I take some quiet time to review how God has worked in my life over the past year.

Last year I recalled a journal entry that summarized a talk I still remember. It was given during a day of prayer. The presenter, a wonderful Holy Cross priest, made a simple but profound statement. He said that Christian discipleship can be summed up by two words — "come" and "go."

Jesus first invites his disciples to come, to come and be loved and nourished by him. "Come to me all you who are heavily burdened and I will give you rest (or whatever else you need)!"

Disciples are centered in their master. As faithful disciples of Christ we must come to him frequently to deepen our relationship. Disciples must sit at the feet of the master and learn all they can about him. To know, in the biblical sense of the word, means to have an intimate relationship, a special friendship.

True disciples must also be steeped in the master's values. Jesus says, "Come," and we respond in prayer, reading Scripture and, by just being in God's presence, allowing God to

love and nurture us.

Christian discipleship, however, does not stop there. Jesus has a follow-up command. He tells us to "Go!" It is a blessing to experience God's love and care and to bask in the knowledge that we are special, but that is not enough. Jesus calls his disciples to go and bring this experience of God's love to others. Like Jesus, we too are sent to reveal God's love to the world. This was the focus of Jesus' ministry and is also of all who call themselves

ing our eyes down and trying to get away from the person as soon as possible. Or maybe we find ourselves in the middle of a large traffic jam and we can allow another driver to move into our lane.

We can show love by a simple smile at people who cross our paths. A kind smile from another person can make someone's day. It is a way to recognize and tell someone they matter.

Inviting someone who rarely gets out to a game or show or offering to work the weekend for a fellow employee so she can attend a family reunion are also ways of showing God's love.

Every day presents us with multiple ways to show love but often we do

not put them in the category of actions of a disciple, but they are. Every act of kindness we perform carries out the good news of Jesus and the mission he gives to us.

There is more than one way to preach the good news. Actions often speak louder than words. As I have said many times before, for some people we may be the only Bible they ever exposed to.

So let us answer the Lord's invitation to come and be loved by him, so we can go and show God's love to others every day. Not just during the Christmas season!

It is not enough to have love as an ideal.

We must make love
a concrete reality in our daily lives.

his disciples. It is our Christian mission.

It is not enough to have love as an ideal. We must make love a concrete reality in our daily lives. Opportunities to show this love in profound ways do not come often, but every day we are presented with multiple little ways to show God's love.

A responsible disciple must examine how well he or she follows this command. Each evening, or sometime during the day, it is important to reflect upon the concrete ways we showed or neglected to show love.

Some small examples of opportunities to show God's love are reaching out to someone who is visibly upset rather than keep-

Paul and the Eucharist: Food for life

When Paul describes the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians, he is giving them a reminder. He had already given them the Lord's Supper when he founded the church at Corinth. In this letter back to them, he is reminding them of how the Eucharist is to function in their lives.

This letter is written only between 15 and 20 years after Jesus' death. In this early period, it seems the Eucharist was celebrated within the context of an evening meal. It had not yet become customary to celebrate it Sunday morning.

Look at the problem that Paul sees there. "When you meet in one place, then, it is not to eat the Lord's supper, for in eating, each one goes ahead with his own supper, and one goes hungry while another gets drunk." (vs 20-21).

The Corinthian Christians would gather in the evening for a



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The Year of St. Paul

common meal. Before or after that meal, there was a blessing of bread and wine, as Jesus had taught. This is what Paul had handed on for their practice.

But at the meal some were eating before all the others arrived. And the rich people were not sharing their more sumptuous food with the poor. And some were apparently drinking too much, as they might at other banquets.

So Paul is quite stern. "Do you not have houses in which you can eat and drink? Or do you show

contempt for the church of God and make those who have nothing feel ashamed? What can I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this matter I do not praise you." (v 22)

If the Eucharist does not open Christians up to each other, in charity and compassion, then the Lord's Supper has failed, Paul seems to say. The Eucharist is food for life. And the life we live is Christ's life. And Christ is love.

There is a social dimension to

PAUL, PAGE 13

Hope for all who seek the Christ child



THE
SUNDAY
GOSPEL

MSGR. OWEN F. CAMPION

Epiphany Mt 2:1-12

In Greek, "epiphany" means God becoming visible before humans. In celebrating the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord on this weekend, the church offers us the lessons to be drawn from a great feast, commemorating the event when Jesus, the Son of God, the almighty and infinite, was recognized by sincere and honest strangers.

The first reading is from the third section of the book of Isaiah. When this passage was written, the attitude of many, maybe most, of the Jews was quite bad. The pagan Babylonians, without any relationship with God, had invaded the Hebrew kingdoms several generations earlier.

As a result of this conquest, these two Hebrew kingdoms, Judah and Israel, had collapsed. Never again in ancient times at least would God's Chosen People govern themselves.

In addition, in the conquest, many of God's people had been killed. To compound the misery, the Babylonians took many survivors to Babylon itself where the Hebrew refugees, and their descendants, languished for many years.

Freedom finally came, and with it return to the homeland. But, it was a hollow achievement.

The Jews came back to what was their ancestral homeland only to find conditions quite bleak. After all the enthusiasm that God at last had spared them and was liberating them from their misery in Babylon, they came home only to find a sterile and unhappy place.

So, many must have been very disappointed, to say the least.

Nevertheless, this prophet literally sings his promise that Jerusalem, the ancient heart of Jewish life, will rise again in majesty and in prosperity.

The Epistle to the Ephesians furnishes the second reading. This reading reveals the circumstances that prevailed in the first decades of Christianity.

Jesus was Jewish, as were all the apostles. The first followers of Christ were Jewish. The Lord's message rested very much on the revelation of Moses and the prophets.

Yet, Paul and others took the Gospel far and wide, in the process finding many gentiles who yearned to know the Lord Jesus. Obviously, Christianity was not exclusively for Jews. It was for all who earnestly search for God's peace and mercy.

St. Matthew's Gospel supplies the last reading. It is the story of the visit of the magi to Bethlehem where they paid homage to the newborn Christ. (Matthew's Gospel is the only one of the four Gospels to recall this event.)

Scholars still debate exactly who the magi were and from where they came. At times, they are called "wise men." At other times they are called kings.

Regardless, they were learned, as learning was measured at the time. They came from a place far away. They longed to know God. They found God in the infant in Bethlehem.

Their discovery was not acci-

dental. God led them to Bethlehem by showing them a great star in the sky and by protecting them from the treachery of Herod.

Reflection

This Epiphany of the Lord recalls one of the most expressive, and best known, stories of the infancy of Jesus. However, it has a message for us today.

The lesson is that we are incomplete unless God is in our lives. If we realize our need for God, and earnestly seek God, God will guide us.

Separating us from God is our own sin or indifference. Serious sin distances us from God, but it also dulls our realization that we need God. Without God, we cannot have eternal life.

All is not lost, however. We can bridge the distance between us and God by admitting that we have sins, and by asking God's forgiveness for sinning.

If we repent, then the light of hope will shine in our hearts, just as the star guided the magi to the Lord. The shadow of death will drop away.

READINGS

Sunday: Is 60:1-6 Ps 72:2, 7-8, 10-13 Eph 3:2-3A, 5-6 Mt 2:1-12

Monday: 1 Jn 3:22-4:6 Ps 2:7-8, 10-11 Mt 4:12-17, 23-25

Tuesday: 1 Jn 4:7-10 Ps 72:2-4ab, 7-8 Mk 6:34-44

Wednesday: 1 Jn 4:11-18 Ps 72:2, 10-13 Mk 6:45-52

Thursday: 1 Jn 4:19-5:4 Ps 72:2, 14, 15bc, 17 Lk 4:14-22a

Friday: 1 Jn 5:5-13 Ps 147:12-15, 19-20 Lk 5:12-16

Saturday: 1 Jn 5:14-21 Ps 149:1-6a, 9b Jn 3:22-30

THE CATEQUIZ'EM

By Dominic Camplisson

Although the economy has soured, some folks may still hope for fancy gifts at Christmas, such as the subject of this week's quiz — pearls.

- One thing that Leviticus 11 makes clear is that the Jews could never do this with an oyster, as it belongs to the class of "water creature that lacks fins or scales...":**
 - Eat it or touch a dead one
 - Mention its name
 - Use words that rhymed with its name, which is why they never had a cloister
- But as Matthew 13 makes clear, an oyster's pearl held a different value to the actual shellfish. Jesus refers to it in the parable of the Pearl**
 - of India
 - of Great Price
 - of the King of Kings
- Also the value ascribed to pearls is clear when we learn**
 - a pearl jam is better than butter.
 - truly good people have pearly white teeth and skin.
 - when one finds a worthy wife, her value is far beyond pearls.
- In Esther 1 we learn that King Ahasuerus decorated his pavement with**
 - mother-of-pearl
 - gilded clam shells
 - pearly dust (ground oyster shells)
- According to Job 28, what surpasses pearls in value?**
 - amber
 - gold
 - wisdom
- 1 Timothy 2 specifically cites pearls as being something that women should**
 - wear to show the success of the faith community.
 - not adorn themselves with.
 - offer as a sacrifice by dissolving them in wine then drinking it.
- The 20th century Catholic convert and writer Pearl Mary Teresa Craigie has an unusual name, but this, her penname was stranger:**
 - John Oliver Hobbes
 - Pearl the Girl
 - Friar Muck
- Where, allegedly, are the pearly gates?**
 - In St. Peter's in Rome
 - At the entrance to hell
 - At the entrance to heaven
- Where did this idea come from?**
 - From the pearl industry
 - From the Book of Revelation, which says new Jerusalem's 12 gates, " ...were 12 pearls"
 - It was a personal revelation to the sixth pope (Sixtus)
- According to legend, who guards the pearly gates?**
 - Satan
 - St. Peter
 - the Supernatural Guard
- According to Revelation, why will the possession of pearls not make the merchants happy?**
 - Because the beast will establish the Euro as the only currency.
 - Because only gold and silver will have value.
 - Because there will be no markets for these and other valuables.
- The "Pearl of Great Price" is also the name of a text held sacred by these folks:**
 - The Orthodox
 - The Muslims
 - The Mormons
- According to Psalm 112, people will gnash these; know colloquially as "pearly whites":**
 - teeth
 - sea shells
 - pieces of manna
- No longer worn, these headdresses included one from Kaiser Wilhelm, which had 1,000 pearls in it:**
 - Bishops' miters
 - Papal Tiaras
 - Archbishops' pallium
- Pearly kings are Cockneys (Londoners) who dress up in suits decorated with mother of pearl. True Cockneys are those born within the sound of Bow Bells. What are these?**
 - "Bow Bells" is a corruption of the phrase "bovine smells" and refers to the farmland formerly found around London
 - The bells of St. Mary-le-Bow formerly Catholic, now an Anglican church in London
 - It is a mistranslation of Mere La Belle, and refers to the Church of the Beautiful Mother inside Buckingham palace, London.

ANSWERS:

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

Herod's passions were wild, ungoverned, led to brutality

What was King Herod really like?

Herod the Great, the king of Judea in southern Israel from 39-4 B.C., was the son of Antipater from Idumea or Edom, south of Israel. Idumea was conquered by the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus (135-105 B.C.), who forced the Idumeans to accept the Jewish religion. Eventually two of John Hyrcanus' grandsons, Aristobulus II and John Hyrcanus II, battled for the throne and then the Roman general Pompey stepped into the fray in 63 B.C. Antipater, the chief minister of Hyrcanus and a Jewish convert of Arab descent, was appointed procurator of Judea and held the political power. John Hyrcanus II was named ethnarch of the Jews and was restricted to religious affairs. The mother of Herod the Great was Cypris, an Arabian princess.

Antipater named his son Phasael prefect of Jerusalem and his son Herod governor of Galilee in 47 B.C. at the age of 25. Antipater then died of poisoning in 43 B.C. caused by the supporters of Aristobulus II. In 41 B.C. Antigonus, the son of Aristobulus II, besieged Jerusalem and execut-

ed Phasael (d. 40 B.C.).

Herod first fled to Arabia, but was not welcomed there, so he escaped to Rome where surprisingly Marc Antony and Octavian, the future Roman emperor Augustus, made Herod king of Judea. Herod then proceeded to capture Judea, Idumea, Samaria, Perea (east of the Jordan River) and Galilee. After three years of war, Herod defeated Antigonus and established himself as king of the Jews in 37 B.C.

To raise his social position, Herod ditched his Idumean wife Doris and married the Hasmonean princess Mariamme, granddaughter of both John Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II. Mariamme's brother Aristobulus III was murdered by Herod in 35 B.C. on suspicion of conspiracy. J. Pritchard says this tie to the Hasmonean line, along with the patronage of Rome, helped secure Herod's power.

Father John McKenzie describes Herod as a man of unusual powers: physical vigor, extreme astuteness, masterful political maneuver, boundless energy and ambition. But his passions were wild and ungoverned. In later years Herod became tyrannical and brutal.



FATHER RICHARD HIRE

HIRE HISTORY

King Herod is called "the Great" because of his political astuteness and his achievements in building. His building efforts included the new Temple at Jerusalem, the town of Samaria (renamed Sebaste), the port city of Caesarea where Pontius Pilate was headquartered, the town of Aphek on the Yarkon River that flows into the Mediterranean Sea which was renamed Antipatris after his father. To keep the peace, Herod built fortresses that also served as palaces at Herodiam south of Bethlehem, Masada on the Dead Sea, and Machaerus on the Dead Sea where John the Baptist was imprisoned.

Herod did kill many members of his own family. Father McKenzie says the envious slander

of Salome (d. A.D. 10), Herod's sister, moved Herod to execute his brother Joseph in 38 B.C., John Hyrcanus II in 40 B.C., and even Mariamme in 29 B.C. on charges of plotting against Herod's life. Joseph and Costobar, the first and second husbands of Salome, were also executed. Herod sent the sons of Mariamme, Alexander and Aristobulus, to Rome to be educated, but when they returned, they were executed.

Antipater, the son of Herod's first wife Doris, then became his

favorite, but he, too, was executed on a charge of conspiracy.

The last will of Herod, made shortly before his death, gave his son Archelaus, whose mother was Maithace the Samaritan, the title of ethnarch of Judea, Idumea and Samaria. Archelaus ruled for 10 years (4 B.C. to A.D. 6) and then was deposed by the Romans and sent into exile.

Father Richard Hire is pastor of St. Martin de Porres Parish, Syracuse.

SCRIPTURE SEARCH

Gospel for January 4, 2009

Matthew 2:1-12

Following is a word search based on the Gospel reading for Epiphany Sunday, Cycle ABC, the visit of the Magi to Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The words can be found in all directions in the puzzle.

WAS BORN	BETHLEHEM	KING HEROD
EAST	WE SAW	STAR
RISING	HOMAGE	PRIESTS
PROPHET	JUDAH	RULERS
SHEPHERD	ISRAEL	SEARCH
CHILD	ENTERING	TREASURES
GOLD	MYRRH	A DREAM

IN BETHLEHEM

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

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Born in the midst of daily life

The Roman basilica of Ss. Cosmas and Damian tends to elude the casual tourist and the hurried pilgrim, although it's right off the Via dei Fori Imperiali between Trajan's column and the Coliseum. A visit at any time is worthwhile, as the apse mosaics are among the most spectacular in Rome — sixth and seventh century work that somehow anticipates 20th century art deco. Ss. Cosmas and Damian is particularly striking during Advent and Christmastide, though, because it's also home to one of the world's most colossal crèches.

Six yards long, four yards high, and three and a half yards deep, the Nativity scene is Neapolitan in inspiration and execution, and dates from the 18th century. Buildings and bridges are made of cork; human and animal figures are carved wood or ceramic. In addition to Mary, Joseph and the baby Jesus, the crèche includes the three kings (with five camels and three horses), 29 angels of various choirs, and some 75 men and women — among them, a chestnut vender, a fruiterer, a miller, a man harvesting grapes, a piper, an innkeeper, a fisherman, a butcher, a hunter, a soldier, and a blind man, plus the usual array of shepherds. Two people are sleeping and one family is caring for another newborn child. The animal kingdom is represented by five cows, one calf, two donkeys, a mule, a dog, two goats, and 23 sheep, in addition to lambs, doves, birds in their nests, and hens with newly-hatched chicks.

Il Monumentale Presepio

Napoletano is more than just a display grander than anything on New York's Fifth Avenue, however. Its composition makes an important, if subtle, theological point, in that the cave of the Nativity is not in the center of the scene. The point? This is not a Redeemer who comes as we might expect a Redeemer to come, with trumpets blaring and everything pointing to the expected Messiah. No, this Redeemer comes into the world in the midst of everyday life, the life he will transform by the witness and sacrifice of his own life.

Pope St. Leo the Great, in a reading prescribed for the Liturgy of the Hours on Dec. 17, made the same point, a millennium before Neapolitan artists created the Cosmas-and-Damian crèche:

"The divine nature and the nature of a servant were to be united in one person so that the Creator of time might be born in time, and he through whom all things were made might be brought forth in their midst. For unless the new man, being made in the likeness of sinful humanity, had taken on himself the nature of our first parents, unless he had stooped to be one in substance with his mother while sharing the Father's substance and, being alone free from sin, united our nature to his, the whole human race would still be held captive under the domain of Satan. The Conqueror's victory would have profited us nothing if the battle had been fought outside our human condition. But through this wonderful blending the mystery of



GEORGE WEIGEL

THE CATHOLIC DIFFERENCE

new birth shone upon us, so that through the same Spirit by whom Christ was conceived and brought forth, we, too, might be born again in a spiritual birth; and in consequence, the evangelist declares the faithful to "have been born not of blood, nor of the desire of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The Redeemer comes, not to fetch us out of ourselves but to unite our humanity to his divinity so that we might be called children of God. This Christmas, the church in America anticipates at least four years of grave challenge in its living of the Gospel of life. The best response to that challenge is for each of us to become the saints our baptism calls us to be. The Neapolitan crèche at Ss. Cosmas and Damian is a reminder that, for most of us, that sanctity will be achieved amidst the quotidian realities of daily life — which just happens to be where the Redeemer of the world was born.

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

PAUL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

the Eucharist. The Catechism of the Catholic Church says this very plainly in paragraph 1397: "The Eucharist commits us to the poor. To receive in truth the body and blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest, his brethren."

Sometimes people have the idea that they must choose between liturgy or social justice, as if we must make a choice between contemplation or action. On the campus at Notre Dame, for example, some students are more active in ministry retreats, and others are more active in service projects.

It is a false choice. It is a choice that needn't be made — that must not be made.

Paul is saying that the gift of grace we receive in the Eucharist opens our heart so that our neighbor's concerns can fit in. He is saying that the life we receive in the Eucharist strengthens us for service. He is saying that service is an outcome of the Eucharist.

We do not ask our children to choose between eating dinner at the family table or being active in school. The home, and its meals, give us energy for our activities. So also, the Lord's body and blood give us his energy for doing his work in the world.

Bishop D'Arcy is very clear on this any time he speaks about it. He always couples the sacrifice of the Mass, Communion and eucharistic adoration with outreach — St. Vincent de Paul and service to the poor.

In so doing, we are following Paul's understanding of the Eucharist as our food of life.

New Haven holiday tourney helps fans, teams find warmth

BY MICHELLE CASTLEMAN

FORT WAYNE — Despite the horrible weather conditions for their holiday tournament, St. John the Baptist, New Haven, the athletic director, Kelly Mouch, reported a successful four days.

“On that Friday evening of the ice storm, many fans were happy to have a place to go with heat and electricity,” said Mouch. The competition, which sported three overtime performances, was divided into boys and girls, seventh and eighth grade round-robins with each of the four school groups playing each other once. The two teams with the best record advanced to the championship game.

For the seventh-grade boys, the final game came down to St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth vs. Central Lutheran with St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth winning 39-25. The coaches for St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth were Brian Cook, Dave Schultheis, Craig Baker and Shaheed Koury.

A pleased Cook summarized, “The tournament was a lot of fun. We had a balanced attack and were able to play all 14 of our players. In our first round game

everyone made the score book. I believe it was our best team effort so far this season.” The Panthers are now 7-4 overall after moving on to play in the Saint Francis/Queen of Angels holiday tournament where they finished a strong fourth place.

In eighth-grade boys’ action, the host team finished on top pulling ahead of New Haven Middle School in the end 24-20. Steve Pepe’s Raiders saw intense competition against three non-CYO teams.

The host school was also victorious at the seventh-grade girls’ level with St. John, New Haven downing Central Lutheran 12-3 in the championship game. Jeff Lickey and Karen Fox are coaching the Raiders this season.

Finally, in the eighth-grade girls’ four-team round robin, St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, beat Central Lutheran by a narrow margin of 19-18. St. John, Fort Wayne, head coach Tony Georgi has coached four years with the girls after three years coaching boys. He has a combined team of seven players with two seventh graders and five eighth graders on his roster.

Tanya Syr is the assistant coach this season for the 6-2

Lady Eagles. Georgi’s girls are a “good unit and get along well together.” The Lady Eagle leader also states that his team plays solid defense for the eighth-grade level.

In the tournament, Kathleen Welling led her team in overall scoring with 16 points in the 40-29 victory over St. John, New Haven, with 15 in the loss to Central Lutheran and with 10 against New Haven Middle School. In the championship game, Welling was held to five points, but had the game-winning free throw with two seconds on the clock. Mason Whitman and Schrae Hammock also scored double figures for their team in the holiday event.

Georgi feels his team has a good shot at winning the 2009 CYO tournament. “We come close every year, but maybe this year we can do it,” said a hopeful Georgi. The Lady Eagles are 1-1 in conference play with a loss to St. Vincent. Georgi lists St. Jude and St. Charles as other stiff competition to get by. St. John, Fort Wayne, will face off against defending champions, St. Jude, when CYO league play resumes on Jan. 10.

High scoring Our Lady of Hungary wins Dec. 21 game

SOUTH BEND — After a week off, Inter-City Catholic League (ICCL) basketball will resume Jan. 4, but that didn’t inhibit the challenge of spirited games on Dec. 21.

In varsity boys basketball, Our Lady of Hungary defeated St. John the Baptist 65-32 in a game that included double-digit barges by Tyron Ottbridge with 17 points, Jeremiah Johnson with 12 points, Carlton Crockett and Dominique Sanders, both with 10 points, for Our Lady’s team. St. John’s Jesse Horvath had 17 points, and Justin Crawford dropped in another 10 points.

Holy Cross edged Christ the King, 46-43. Holy Cross led with Anthony Douglas, Mike Maddena and Pat Connors, all contributing 14 points each. Connor Edmonds had 13 points for Christ the King.

St. Joseph, Mishawaka, outpaced St. Pius X, 51-17. St. Joseph’s was paced by Michael Whitfield with 18 points, Vince Ravotte with 12 points and Joseph Walter with 10 points.

Queen of Peace beat St. Monica, 44-29. Nick Johnson had 22 points for Queen of Peace, and Neal Eakins tossed in 13 points for St. Monica.

St. Anthony defeated St. Matthew, 29-21, with St. Anthony’s A.J. Smith tossing in 13 points for the win.

In other games St. Jude beat St. Michael, Plymouth, 24-20; St. Joseph, South Bend, beat St. Thomas, Elkhart, 28-19; and Holy Family defeated Corpus Christi, 33-29. Dylan Hensley of Holy Family tossed in 14 points.

In the ICCL seventh-and-eighth-grade Colors Division, Christ the King Blue edged St. Matthew Black, 33-31. St. Matthew’s Luke Gaboury had 21 points.

St. Joseph, South Bend, Gold beat St. Matthew Black, 39-19. The winners were paced by Sam Hosinski with 14 points. Luke Gaboury had 15 points for St. Matthew in the loss.

In other games, St. Thomas Maroon beat Christ the King White, 27-25; St. Joseph, Mishawaka, Green defeated Christ the King Gold, 33-13; St. Joseph, South Bend, Blue beat St. Monica Purple, 30-19; and St. Pius X Green defeated St. Pius X Gold, 26-17.

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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

'The Poetry of Prayerful People' series begins Jan. 6 at Victory Noll Center
Huntington — The 12-part series begins Jan. 6 and runs through June 16. Programs will be held the first and third Tuesdays of each month with two sessions from which to choose. One session meets from 10-10:30 a.m., with a second session from 6:30-8 p.m. The cost for the series is \$120 and payment plans are available. Handouts and materials are included in cost. The schedule of the poets to be explored are: Jan. 6, Psalms of David; Jan. 20, Prophet Isaiah; Feb. 3, John the Evangelist; Feb. 17, Hildegard of Bingen; March 3, Francis of Assisi; March 17 Mechthild of Magdeburg; April 7, Thomas Aquinas; April 21 Julian of Norwich; May 5, Teresa of Avila; May 19, John of the Cross; June 2, Therese of Lisieux; June 16 Thomas Merton

Family New Year's Eve celebration
Elkhart — The Knights of Columbus Council 1043 and the St. Thomas Altar and Rosary Society will have a family celebration Wednesday, Dec. 31, from 7 p.m. until 2009 at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 112 E. Lexington Ave. Cost is \$10 per person or \$35 per family and includes pizza, snacks, desserts and pop. The bar will be open for those who wish to purchase alcohol. Tables will set up for card and board games. There will be music and a child care

area with activities and videos. Prizes to be awarded for best decorated table. Tickets available after Masses or by contacting Mark or Julie Malenda at (574) 522-2132 or themalendas@me.com. Tickets must be purchased by Dec. 28.

Fish fry
Warsaw — The Knights of Columbus Council No. 4511 will have a fish fry on Friday, Jan. 9, from 4:30-7 p.m. at the Knights Hall on Bell Drive. The cost is \$8 for adults and \$4 for children ages 6-12. Fish, baked beans, green beans, cole slaw, apple-sauce and beverage are included.

Knights plan fish fry
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a fish fry on Friday, Jan. 2, from 5 to 7 p.m. Adults \$7.50, children (5-12) \$3. Chicken strips for \$7.50 and shrimp for \$8.50 will be available.

Little Flower Holy Hour
Fort Wayne — Father James Seculoff will celebrate the holy hour Tuesday, Jan. 6 at 7:15 p.m. at MacDougal Chapel. Father Jim is pastor of St. John the Baptist in New Haven.

Scripture study on Paul
South Bend — A Scripture study on the letters of Paul by Father Eugene Hensell, OSB, will be Monday, Jan. 12, through Thursday, Jan. 15 from 7-9 p.m. in the Keller Room of St. Catherine of Sienna at St. Jude Church. Cost is \$20 per person or \$30 per couple. RSVP to the parish office at (574) 291-0570.

Knights plan fish fry
Fort Wayne — The Knights of Columbus Council 451, 601 Reed Rd., will have a fish fry on Friday, Jan. 2, from 5 to 7:30 p.m. The cost is \$7 for adults, \$3 for children 12 and under. Fish, two sides and beverage are included.

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Mary Ann Inskeep, 81, St. Mary/Assumption

Elkhart
Rose M. Karasch, 91, St. Vincent de Paul

Fort Wayne
Raymond E. Knight, 70, St. John the Baptist

Mary Ann Kissner Army, 87, St. Jude

Deanna M. Bickel, St. Peter

Maurice E. Nix, 77, Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception

Joseph A. Henry, 76, Most Precious Blood

Clare M. Gorman, 83, St. Vincent de Paul

Louise M. Bonahoom, 98, St. Jude

Joellen D. Denner, 76, Queen of Angels

Richard A. Lauer, 85, St. Patrick

Ronald L. Lehman, 70, St. Peter

Hedwig Marquardt, 99, Our Lady of Good Hope

Charles A. Stuck, 92, St. Joseph-Hessen Cassel

Frank E. Wirges, 94, St. Vincent de Paul

Alvah J. Olry, 91, St. Jude

Thelma G. Powell, 89, Sacred Heart

Donald Eugene Campbell, 73, St. Jude

Granger
Stephanie Lindorf, 90, St. Pius X

John C. Garboden, 65, St. Pius X

Dorothea R. Reihl, 91, St. Pius X

Huntington
Sister Mary Ruth Kramer, OLVN, 84, Victory Noll

Mishawaka
Mary A. Ferraro, 97, St. Monica

Virginia B. Lisek, 90, Little Flower

Raymond J. Piechocki, 80, Queen of Peace

New Carlisle
Ben A. McMillen, 18, St. Stanislaus

New Haven
Velma L. Bacon, 82, St. Louis Besancon

Notre Dame
Sister M. Margaret Denyse, CSC, 99, Our Lady of Loretto

Sister M. Rosaleen Dunleavey, CSC, 95, Our Lady of Loretto

Margaret A. Minczeski, 91, St. Joseph Chapel

Raymond Gorzynski, 81, Basilica of the Sacred Heart

Thomas R. Manak, Sacred Heart

South Bend
Patricia A. Rans, 75, St. Anthony de Padua

Gerturde M. Van Laere, 88, Holy Cross

Dorothy J. Boyer, 85, St. Jude

Eugene J. Wozny, 86, Holy Family

Eugene J. Mikita, 91, Sanctuary of St. Paul

Anna M. Ryon, 87, St. Matthew Cathedral

Eleanor M. Stoeckinger, 76, Corpus Christi

Mary A. Cones, 101, St. Anthony de Padua

Eugene M. Nowak, 80, Corpus Christi

Marie A. Mezzei, Holy Family

Charmaine M. Zwierzynski, St. Casimir

Dorothy D. Moorman, 75, Little Flower

Mary A. Palus, 75, St. Jude

Mary Shiprek, 79, St. Anthony de Padua

James D. Allen, 82, Holy Cross

Rachel Beserra, 78, St. Adalbert

Robert J. Fox, 85, St. Joseph

Ethel M. Pishnoff, 92, Holy Family

Wabash
Irene Lee, 93, St. Bernard

Daniel (Augie) Rauh, 35, St. Bernard



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MIDNIGHT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

munion with each human heart.”

He continued, “And so profound was it that it drove her to the streets and alley ways and gutters of Calcutta — that most painful city where there was so much poverty and people dying untended, to pick them up, so that to them, many never baptized, that they might know how God loved them.”

“And so this is the great meaning of Christmas — the hunger of God to know every person as a friend,” Bishop D’Arcy said.

Gestures of friendship are expressed in phone calls, cards, an embrace, a visit — “this is the gesture of God, the infinite one, perfect in wisdom, that he would come to us in a very humble way, as a baby, and that all his life would be a picture of humility — washing the feet of his disciples.

“Slaves washed the feet of the elegant ones — professors and the learned,” Bishop D’Arcy said. “Jesus took that stance to show us the face of God. ...”

That is what happened to Mother Teresa of Calcutta, and that is what has happened to the saints throughout the ages. And this is what we are all called to, Bishop D’Arcy said: “A communion with the Divine One — who is perfect,

in every way God, in every way a man except with sin — desires entrance to every heart. For this is the first moment of Christmas. We would miss its meaning if we left this beautiful midnight Mass without welcoming him, making of our heart a Bethlehem, a crib, a place for the Eternal One, who gave himself on the cross for our salvation.”

The other great theme or moment for Christmas is light.

“So many of you like myself these days have homes in darkness,” he said, referring to the ice storm Dec. 19 that caused power outages leaving many homes in the dark in the Fort Wayne area. “But I went into my home a couple of times during this period. And it wasn’t so much a lack of warmth that was difficult. The house was dark, and the neighborhood was dark, and there were no Christmas lights and it was lacking in something warm and beautiful — light.”

Bishop D’Arcy spoke of hope as expressed in Pope Benedict XVI’s second encyclical “Spe Salvi” (“on Christian hope”).

The pope “speaks about the hope that is within us ...,” Bishop D’Arcy said, “the hope to see Jesus Christ in the end, the hope of eternal life, the hope of leading a good life. And how often we hope for other things and get them and they are fine, but insufficient.”

Bishop D’Arcy spoke of Sister Josephine Bakhita who was a 19th century African slave in Sudan and mentioned in the “Spe Salvi.” She

was sold to a rich man in Italy and went to Venice poor and suffering.

“Somehow, in Venice where she lived, she heard of Jesus Christ, the perfect master,” Bishop D’Arcy said. “No longer was she hoping for a better human master who would be less cruel. She learned that this Master waited for her at the end of life, came to her as food, transformed her through the pouring of water at baptism, would even live in her, and came first as a baby.”

Sister Josephine Bakhita was baptized, later became a religious, and was canonized a saint by Pope John Paul II a few years before his death.

“She was transformed from darkness to light,” Bishop D’Arcy said. “The darkness within her was transformed by the presence of God.”

He added, “But God always waits for our freedom to say ‘yes.’ This was what was meant in the first reading (Is 9: 1-6) that ‘the people in darkness who walked in darkness have seen a great light’ — the light is Jesus Christ. The beauty tonight is that light is within us, giving us hope, giving us forgiveness, giving us love. The call for us is to welcome him. And if we welcome him and accept him, we welcome everybody because he died for everyone.

“That’s the internal darkness turning into light,” Bishop D’Arcy said, “by prayer, by love, by forgiveness — it’s our vocation.”

The best example of this,

TV MASS NATIVITY



VINCE LABARBERA

Sister M. Carol Meyers, a Sister of St. Francis of Perpetual Adoration, and TV Mass musician Theresa Lamping look at the Nativity scene at the chapel at the University of Saint Francis, where the Mass was aired live Christmas morning on WISE-TV, with Brendan and Katie Nix.

Bishop D’Arcy said, is the Blessed Mother and her Magnificat. The source for her joy was: “she listened for God and she said, ‘yes.’ And she accepted her vocation of holiness and goodness and to be the mother of the Redeemer.”

Bishop D’Arcy said, “So we hear tonight the word of God. Let us say ‘yes’ to it. You are the Savior of the world. You are the eternal God. I welcome you into

my heart. I will do your will with my spouse, my children and my grandchildren, my neighbor and the poor. ... Thus we make of our heart a Bethlehem and his life and his peace. ...”

“... Christmas becomes not just something we observe, but it transforms us,” Bishop D’Arcy said. “To observe Christmas without it being transformative is not to observe Christmas at all.”

Today's Catholic

BOOK OF THE MONTH CLUB

This month's featured selection:

“The Secret Cardinal” by Tom Grace

Reviewed by York Young

Americans’ consumption of entertainment media makes us look, as a lot, not very open-minded. In our movie choices (action, lowball comedy) and music selection (rap, country), a couple of genres dominate the landscape.

The book fiction market seems to take this to an extreme. You will almost always find several mystery books in the top 20 list. The books that are not necessarily of that genre will be familiar because of the author’s name — King, Crichton, Grisham. We buy what we like, and we like what we buy. Therefore, it is very difficult for fiction outside of that circle to get noticed.

This all preface to encouraging you to pick up “The Secret Cardinal,” by Tom Grace (Vanguard Press, \$24.95). Oh, there are some flaws in this novel, but it has one saving grace (pardon the pun): The Catholic Church is the backdrop for this suspense novel, and those who believe in the church and its teaching are the good guys for a change.

Grace has written three previous novels, and this one picks up with a recurring character, Nolan Kelkenny, who is working through the recent loss of his wife and child, yet trying to keep the faith.

But our focal point is the cardinal, in pectore, which is a bishop of the church who has been named a cardinal in secret by the pope because publicly announcing it could endanger the person so named. Here, it is a Chinese bishop in prison, in a country that still does not

recognize the Vatican’s authority to oversee the local church.

Grace’s novel is well-written, filled with suspense and usual hijinks of adventure stories, focusing on the rescue of Cardinal Yin, while the Vatican is busy electing a new pontiff. The recently deceased pontiff, around for the first 50 pages or so, is clearly based on Pope John Paul II, but is named Pope Leo XIV here and makes one pronouncement on his death that our beloved Pope John Paul, as far as we know (I’m jesting), did not.

That’s where the suspense ratchets up, so I don’t want to give too much away here.

Kelkenny and his cohorts use plenty of high-tech equipment and subterfuge to perform heroic acts. The bad guys — Chinese communists — are presented with a fairly broad stroke, though every once in awhile, in the real world, a news story comes out that makes you realize it is difficult to know how really bad it is in China — forced abortions, an underground church still not recognized, no ability to publicly pray or to talk about Christ.

The biggest flaw in Grace’s presentation, however, is including a torture scene in which all members of a family are eventually martyred. Martyrdom may be an important component of any oppressed faith finally getting a chance to be accepted, but here the severity of his prose will make many readers unsettled. It seemed out of place.

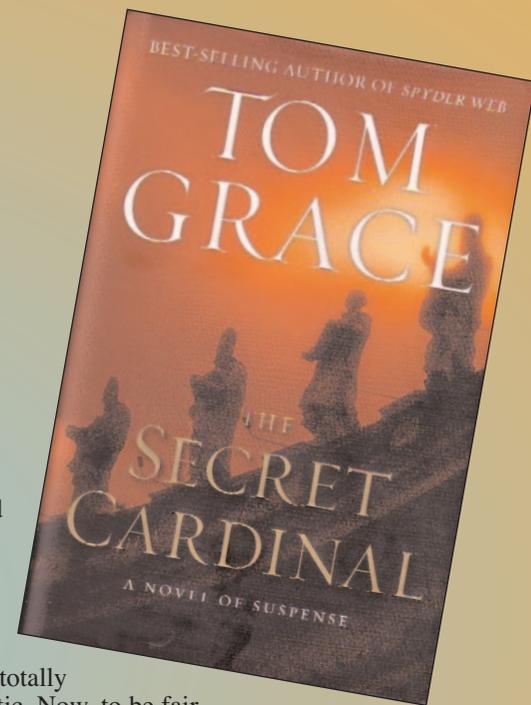
The emotional depth of some of the characters

seemed superficial, and the happenings at the conclave seemed totally unrealistic. Now, to be fair,

none of us can claim to know what a conclave is like — except for those cardinals who have participated in one.

Here, though, the carmelengo (who temporarily oversees basic church business during the interim of popes), a focal character, comes and goes from the conclave, basically at will. In real life, it would seem that that type of activity would be quashed immediately. The cardinals are to have no outside influence during the conclave. Leaving for the slightest reason is bad form, at the least, and wouldn’t be allowed.

Nevertheless, it’s nice to see Catholics in a novel cast in a positive light. “The Secret Cardinal” has enough positives to make it worth your time.



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