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The mission of feeding the hungry
Bishop Rhoades visits Community Harvest Food Bank

FORT WAYNE — “Jesus said, ‘I was hungry and you gave me to eat,’” described Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades during a television interview after touring Fort Wayne’s Community Harvest Food Bank on Dec. 6.

Community Harvest Food Bank Executive Director Jane Avery guided Bishop Rhoades through the facility, which offers hunger relief efforts in northeast Indiana. It quickly became apparent that the need is great and many are hungry in northeast Indiana. It’s half-full warehouse shows how quickly food is distributed from the food bank on Fort Wayne’s south side.

Food from the Community Harvest Food Bank is distributed by nearly 500 churches and human service agencies in its member agency network, serving 21,200 unduplicated clients per week throughout its nine northeast Indiana county service area. The Community Cupboard offers a grocery-type outlet for referrals to the food bank.

Agencies assisted by the food bank include food pantries — such as The Franciscan Center — soup kitchens — such as St. Mary’s — homeless shelters, rehabilitation centers, and youth and senior citizen programs. The food bank provides 1,200 shut-in seniors with food every other week and relies on volunteers for distribution to homes and to stock the shelves at the warehouse. While Bishop Rhoades toured the facility, a Girl Scout troop from St. John the Baptist School in Fort Wayne came to the food bank to help stock shelves.

“This is part of our mission as a Church,” Bishop Rhoades said. “The mission of charity is essential to following Christ.”

BY TIM JOHNSON

SCHOOL CHILDREN WALK TO ST. PETER’S SQUARE
School children walk towards St. Peter’s Square as the Vatican’s Christmas tree is erected Dec. 3. The tree, from the northern Italian province of Bolzano, is more than 100 feet tall and grew for 94 years.

W. Keith Moore to urge Catholic men to ‘dig,’ ‘be real’

BY TIM JOHNSON

Early Dec. 15 registration deadline approaches for Rekindle the Fire 2011 Diocesan Men’s Conference

FORT WAYNE — When men gather Feb. 19 at the Allen County War Memorial Coliseum for the Rekindle the Fire 2011 Diocesan Men’s Conference, they will be encouraged by singer-songwriter W. Keith Moore, a convert to Catholicism, to “dig” and “be real” in their faith.

Whether he’s playing in concert halls, bars, churches or coffee houses, that’s the message that comes through Moore’s music, poetry, photography and the musings on his blog site www.wkeithmoore.com.

Tickets for the 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. men’s conference are $30 or four for $100 until Dec. 15. Thereafter, tickets are $30. Students and senior prices are $20. Information is available at the diocesan Web site, www.diocesefwsb.org or register online at www.rekindlethefire.net or phone (260) REKINDLE, PAGE 20
**Rejoice! The Lord is near!**

**IN TRUTH AND CHARITY**

**BY BISHOP KENNETH C. RHOADES**

The Third Sunday of Advent has been regarded as a day of particular joy. This Sunday is a bit unique among the Sundays of Advent. The priest may wear rose, rather than purple, vestments. We light the rose colored candle on the Advent wreath. The Third Sunday of Advent is called “Gaudete Sunday.” “Gaudete” is a Latin word meaning “rejoice.” This word is used for this Sunday because the Introit or Entrance Antiphon at Mass on the Third Sunday of Advent has the following words from the letter of Saint Paul to the Philippians: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice! The Lord is near!” (4: 4-5). In the Collect (the Opening Prayer) at Mass on Gaudete Sunday, we will pray: “Lord God, may we, your people, who look forward to the birthday of Christ experience the joy of salvation and celebrate that feast with love and thanksgiving ...” In the first reading, the prophet Isaiah writes that “the desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom ...” The joy of Christmas, we live in hope because of the birth of our Savior, because He has come to redeem the world. It is that hope that fills us with joy. Joy also comes from leading a morally good life. When we practice charity, when we help someone in need, when we are generous to others, we experience joy in our hearts. We experience more joy in giving than in receiving. There is no greater joy than that experienced when we love. The joy that comes from loving God and our neighbor is a joy that we cannot get from this world and its pleasures. It is quite a paradox, but it is true to say that joy comes from carrying the cross, from giving of ourselves and sacrificing for the good of others. Joy is one of the twelve fruits of the Holy Spirit. When we live by the Spirit and walk by the Spirit, we experience inner joy. When we are close to the Lord in prayer and receive the sacraments, we experience true joy. We receive a foretaste of the joy of heaven. We see authentic Christian joy in the lives of the saints of the Church. One of the most joyful people I ever met was Mother Teresa and she lived radical poverty! How can one be so materially poor and still be full of joy? Or think of the joyful troubadour of the Lord, Saint Francis of Assisi and his poverty! How is it that nowadays when Christmas is celebrated with so much materialism and commercialism, with material excess, so many experience “the holiday blues”? There is a lesson here: we need to get back to the true meaning of Christmas. This begins with a genuine observance of Advent: a time of prayer, a time of repentance (especially through the sacrament of Penance), and a time of charity (helping the needy in our midst). When we do, we are more joyful. Christmas then becomes more meaningful and not a superficial experience. In these last two weeks of Advent, I invite you to enter more deeply into the true spirit of this holy season. Here are some concrete ideas. Go to confession if you have not already. Stop into a Catholic church to pray before the Blessed Sacrament. Attend a weekday Mass in these last days before Christmas. Pray the joyful mysteries of the rosary. Meditate on the daily Scripture readings. Buy a gift for someone who is poor or make a donation to a favorite charity. Joy is a fruit of prayer, a fruit of charitable actions, and a fruit of God’s forgiveness of our sins. If you suffer from anxiety or depression, it may be very difficult to experience the joy of Christmas. Yet, nothing is impossible with God. Persevere in hope, Saint Paul says. Even if you are in the midst of some very difficult trial, the Lord is with you, at your side. He loves you. Your friendship with Him can sustain you and give you also a taste of the joy of His kingdom. And know that the Church and your bishop prays for you. Gaudete Rejoice! Why? Because the Lord is near. God is not some unknown Being remote from us. He is close to us, so close that He became an infant and was born in a manger. Let us rejoice in these days as we look forward to Christmas, the feast of our salvation! Jesus comes to offer everyone the joy and peace that alone fills the yearning of the human soul.
Meaning of season lost by rushing Christmas celebration, bishop says

SALT LAKE CITY (CNS) — Salt Lake City Bishop John C. Wester has urged Catholics to hold off celebrating the Christmas season until it officially begins on the Church calendar Dec. 24.

In his first pastoral letter as Salt Lake City’s bishop, he urged the state’s Catholics “to keep true to the spirit of Advent — a season of preparation which he said has been “neglected in many places” and often “overshadowed by the holiday season.”

The bishop, who was installed in 2009, addressed a diocese wide Cathoicate, noted that in the rush and busyness of the Christmas season, many miss out on its true meaning. “By the time that the actual solemnity of Christmas arrives, many of us are burned out. We are already tired of all the ‘Christmas hype.’ Christmas has become anticli-
mactic,” he wrote.

Issued Nov. 24, the letter is titled “Waiting in Joyful Hope.” It was published in the diocesan newspaper, Intermountain Catholic, which is online at www.icatholic.org.

Some read the letter or referred to it in homilies during the weekend of Nov. 27-28, the first Sunday of Advent, which this year coincidentally fell between Black Friday and Cyber Monday — customary shopping starts of the Christmas season.

In the letter, Bishop Wester described the Christmas holiday season as one where many “rush from one thing to the next,” stir-
ing momentum “to get all the decorations up, celebrate the event and quickly dismantle all the decorations” to move to the next event.

In contrast, he said, the Church’s liturgical season of Advent enables people to “wit-
ness God’s profound love and mercy to the world” and can refo-
cus Catholics and remind them that “Christ has changed the
world.”

He described the season as a "time of preparation for Christ’s coming into the world and a time to reflect on Christ’s second com-
ing — it is thus a season of joyful and spiritual expectation,” he said noting that it is “not a penitential season” but a time to “gather and quietly wait in hope for the com-
ing of Christmas.”

Bishop Wester urged Catholics to tap into this liturgical season noting that they should “celebrate Advent differently” and be less consumed with decorating and shopping than with prayer. He said the week should also be an “example of patience, silence, and joy to our hurried and anxious society.”

“I know it is an enormous challenge to remain faithful to the Advent season when we are sur-
rrounded by a society which, while claiming to be Christian, does not take the time to reflect and prepare as the Church calls us to do,” he wrote.

The bishop offered some alter-
natives to typical decorations saying schools and parishes could decorate with just wreaths and greenery and families could light Advent wreaths and hold off on decorating Christmas trees.

Postponed Christmas celebra-
tions need not be short-lived though. He said the season con-
tinues until Jan. 9, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, and should be marked during that time with parish gatherings and events with family and friends.

The bishop urged the de-
corations which are testimonies to our joy up for the entire season. There is plenty of time for us to celebrate our joy at Christ’s birth and we should make the most of it,” he added.

In his first pastoral letter to Utah Catholics, Bishop John C. Wester of Salt Lake City urged them to hold off celebrating Christmas until the season officially begins Christmas Eve. Bishop Wester is pictured in a 2008 file photo.

Pope Benedict calls for end to intolerance, violence, abduction of refugees

BY CAROL GLATZ

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI appealed for an end to situations of violence and intolerance in the world, especially in Iraq and Egypt.

He also called for prayers and solidarity for victims of human trafficking, specifically the hun-
dreds of African immigrants who are being held hostage by human traffickers in Egypt’s Sinai Desert near the Israeli border.

“I invite all of you to pray for every situation of violence, toler-
earance and suffering that exists in the world,” the pope said his Sunday Angelus address in St. Peter’s Square Dec. 5.

The pope said, “I am thinking about many difficult situations, like the continual attacks against Christians and Muslims in Iraq (and the clashes in Egypt, in which people died and were injured) when riots broke out after police halted the construc-
tion of a church. Authorities said the church was in violation of building permits. Police detained more than 150 Christians after the clashes in late November.

The pope also underlined the plight of “victims of smugglers and criminals,” specifically men-
tioning the plight of hundreds of refugees, including nearly 80 Eritreans, who were being held hostage in the Sinai desert.

Italian news reports said the kidnappers were asking $100,000 for each of hostages, who reportedly already had paid the smugglers to take them to Israel.

“The respect of everyone’s rights is the prerequisite for civil coexis-
tence,” Pope Benedict said.

He asked that people’s prayers and acts of solidarity “bring hope to those who are suffering.”

A weathered statue of a saint is seen on the colonnade as Pope Benedict XVI arrives to lead the Angelus prayer from the window of this apartment overlooking St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Dec. 5.

Illinois Catholic leaders call passage of civil unions bill regrettable

SPRINGFIELD, Ill. (CNS) — The Catholic Conference of Illinois, which represents the state’s bish-
ops on public policy matters, said it regretted passage of a bill legal-
izing civil unions for same-sex couples.

The legislation, approved by the House Nov. 30 and the Senate Dec. 1, provides spousal rights to same-sex partners in a civil union and grants them legal rights in sur-
rogate decision-making for med-
cal treatment, survivorship, adop-
tions and health insurance.

Gov. Pat Quinn, a supporter, has said he will sign it into law.

The Catholic conference said the measure will “explicitly grant these unions the same status as marriage in state law.

“Marriage is not just any relation-
ship between human beings. Marriage has been established by our Creator in harmony with the nature of man and woman and with its own essential properties and purpose,” the conference said in a statement. “The Church did not invent marriage and neither has any state.”

“Any ideology can erase from the human spirit,” it continued, “the certainty that marriage exists solely between a man and a woman, who by personal gift, proper and exclusive to them-
soelves, mutually commit to each other in order to cooperate with God in the procreation and upbringing of new human lives.”

The conference said that besides essentially redefining mar-
rige, the measure also “contains the potential for a serious conflict with religious liberty,” and it urged policymakers to take such con-
cerns seriously and work out “additional conscience protec-
tions” in the future.

While the bill states that noth-
ing in its wording “should inter-
fere with or regulate the religious practice of any religious body,” the conference said that its language “may offer little protection in the context of litigation religious institu-
tions may soon encounter in relation to charitable services, adoption and foster care.”

In an earlier statement, the con-
ference said that without “explicit protections for religious liberties,” it expected the General Assembly or the courts will soon:

• Require faith-based institu-
tions that provide adoption or fos-
ter care services “to place adoptive or foster children with coupled who have entered into a same-sex civil union.”

• Compel Catholic parishes or agencies that provide social services (including retreats, religious camps, homeless shelters, senior care centers and community cen-
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able to individuals in same-sex civil unions.

• Refuse “to protect small employers who do not wish to extend family benefits to employ-
ees in a same-sex civil union.”

During debate on the bill, State Sen. Heather Steans, a Chicago Democrat, told her fellow law-
makers that passing the measure “makes a statement about the jus-
tice for which we stand.”

But an opponent of the meas-
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tions may soon encounter in relation to charitable services, adoption and foster care.”
You are cordially invited to the Blessing and Dedication by Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades of the Garden of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Section Q) and the 8-foot bronze statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe at the Catholic Cemetery 3500 Lake Avenue, in Fort Wayne, on December 12, 2010, at 4:00 P.M.

Please meet in the Resurrection Mausoleum where the ceremony will begin.

This will be the largest section (nearly 5,000 graves) dedicated since the Catholic Cemetery opened in 1879. Service will be held no matter the weather.

**Grant will help repair church with Father Tolton connection**

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. (CNS) — The Catholic Church Extension Society of America in Chicago announced Nov. 23 that it will award $21,293 to the Diocese of Jefferson City to repair and maintain historical St. Peter Church in Brush Creek.

The church stands on the site where Father Augustine Tolton, a former slave who became the Catholic Church’s first full-blooded African-American priest in the United States, was baptized 156 years ago.

The Catholic Extension grant will fund repairs necessary to preserve the church and its cemetery, now the site of frequent pilgrimages to honor the life and ministry of Father Tolton. The announcement came on the heels of the groundbreaking for Father Augustine Tolton Regional Catholic High School in Columbia, which will open in fall 2011.

Earlier this year, Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago announced the Chicago Archdiocese was beginning the process whereby Father Tolton’s life and work will be examined for consideration of beatification and canonization. Formally starting the process gives the priest the title “servant of God.”

Chicago Auxiliary Bishop Joseph N. Perry is organizing Father Tolton’s cause for the archdiocese, poring through archival material to prepare a report about his life that will go to Cardinal George and then on to the Congregation for Saints’ Causes at the Vatican.

“Father Augustine’s story reminds us of the truth that is also at the heart of Catholic Extension’s work: the greatest among us emerge from the least-expected places,” said Joseph Boland, senior director of grants management for Catholic Extension.

The grant to St. Peter Church will enable the diocese “to preserve the rich legacy” of Father Tolton, so his story “can continue to be shared among Catholics and give hope to communities that face immense social and economic challenges today,” added Boland added in a statement.

Father Augustine was born into slavery in Brush Creek in 1854, according to “From Slave to Priest,” a biography by Sister Caroline Hemesath, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family.

Young Augustine, also known as Augustus, was baptized into the Catholic faith by his owners, the Elliott family, and attended church at St. Peter until he escaped to Illinois during the Civil War.

There, he began to discern his priestly vocation. Denied access to seminaries in the United States after repeated requests, he pursued his education at the Urban College of the Propagation of the Faith in Rome, now called Pontifical Urbanian University, to prepare to be a missionary priest in Africa. After priestly ordination in 1886, he was sent back to the United States to be a missionary in his own country. He ministered first in Quincy, Ill., and then in Chicago. Despite rampant racism and discrimination, he became one of that city’s most popular pastors, attracting members of both white and black Catholic communities.

By all accounts, Father Tolton worked tirelessly for his congregation in Chicago, even to the point of exhaustion. On July 9, 1897, he died of heat stroke while returning from a priests’ retreat. He was 43.

The tiny St. Peter Church, which is located off a gravel road in Brush Creek, has received renewed attention since the Chicago Archdiocese began pursuing Father Tolton’s canonization cause. The Diocese of Jefferson City expects that increasing numbers of pilgrims will be drawn to this sacred place and its cemetery because of Father Tolton’s affiliation.

The Catholic Extension grant will be used to repair the church’s leaky roof, purchase new gutters, mend broken windowills and refurbish the front door. In addition, funds will help purchase a stone sign to signify the section of the cemetery where more than 50 unmarked graves of African slaves lie.

Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers called Father Tolton “a wonderful example of the obedience of faith.”

“Father Tolton shows us how to unite our sufferings to the teachings of Jesus,” he said in a recent interview with The Catholic Missourian, the diocesan newspaper. “Everything we do out of that relationship is really a call to witness the beauty and truth of our faith.”
Southern Sudan independence vote won’t bring easy peace, bishop warns

BY PAUL JEFFREY

YAMBIO, Southern Sudan (CNS) — The people of Southern Sudan should not expect quick results from a January referendum on independence, said a Catholic bishop in the war-torn African country.

“People expect a lot. They think that independence means milk and honey, that all will be okay. And while ordinary people may think that, the politicians are only thinking of having power and the riches it can bring,” said Bishop Eduardo Hiiboro Kussala of Tombura-Yambio.

The Church should help people from both groups understand the new realities that independence — the expected outcome of the referendum — will bring, the bishop told Catholic News Service.

“The Church must help people understand that we have to take upon ourselves the noble duty of building our own nation,” Bishop Kussala said. “We are the privileged generation that is going to be voting and laying a strong foundation. We need to help instill pride in being a nation and help people understand that they have a God-given right to be free. They can only do that together with one another, not just within their own ethnic group. We are a multicultural, multireligious community, and we need to respect one another.

“For the politicians, it’s the same,” he continued. “There’s a need to engage them and help them create a vision. No one is talking much these days about vision. Most politicians don’t seem to see where we’re going. We need a group thinking ahead of us, because we’re not going to have the international community with us forever.”

The January vote on independence was mandated by the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement that ended decades of civil war between Sudan’s North and South. Southerners are expected to vote overwhelmingly for secession, and Bishop Kussala said creating a functional and effective government will not be easy.

“The people of Southern Sudan have never had a government. We’ve just practiced this for the last five years, and you can see the difficulties we’ve encountered. There’s an absence of proper laws, little respect for law and the dignity of persons. Most government personnel came from the fighting forces, and they’ve just been converted into civil servants. With independence there could be new competition among them, a new struggle for power,” he said.

The bishop warned that some of the dangerous practices of political leaders in northern Sudan, such as control of the media, limited free speech, corruption, nepotism and tribalism, have begun to emerge in the South.

“We don’t want to see dictators replaced by other dictators, so we’re designing our programs so we can keep talking to those who take power, as well as to the people of Southern Sudan, to help them see that they have to be the founding fathers of democracy, a people who will uphold the rule of law and show respect for each other,” Bishop Kussala said.

The Catholic Church in Southern Sudan played a major role during the liberation struggle, said John Ashworth, an adviser to the Sudan Ecumenical Forum, which includes the Catholic Church. The Church was the only institution that stayed with the people during the long war.

“Everything else collapsed,” Ashworth told CNS. “There was no government, no NGOs, no U.N., no civil society, and the traditional (tribal) leaders were seriously weakened and divided. The Church took on many of the roles of government, providing basic human services and aid, schools and clinics. We didn’t have guns, but the presence of the Church provided a degree of protection and safety. It provided moral and political leadership.”

Bishop Kussala said some in the government now want to forget that history and ignore the moral voice of the Church. To help prevent the entrenchment of power among a few leaders, the Church has designed pastoral work to include civic education so people understand their rights, identity and citizenship, he said.

The prelate also expressed concern that some government officials in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, will not respond well to Southern Sudan’s independence and will seek to make trouble for the fledgling nation.

“For our neighbors in northern Sudan, separation is not going to be a cup of tea. They are not happy about it. Many officials have made strong statements that if the South breaks away, then southerners who live in the North are going to be denied their rights. Such behavior will pull us toward war and cause chaos in the South,” he said.

“My mother was killed by northern government soldiers when I was just 2 months old,” Bishop Kussala said. “I don’t want to see another baby losing its mother in the same way. If I have any power to promote a culture of harmony and peace, I will do it.”

Bishop Kussala also appealed to Catholics in the United States to help their neighbors in northern Sudan.

“Especially at this moment, we need their solidarity. We need them to continue praying for us and being close to us,” he said.

“We need them to raise their voices with the U.S. government. The CPA came about in part because of the American people. The pressure that the U.S. government brought to the conflict enabled the fighting to stop,” he said.

“The Church from the U.S. and around the world has continued to accompany us for these last five years, and now we come to the most critical part of this process when we choose between unity or separation. We need their accompaniment now more than ever,” he said.
Despite threats, Pakistani minister works for religious freedom

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Despite receiving death threats, Pakistan’s minister for minorities, a Christian, said he will not give up his battle to guarantee religious freedom for all the country’s people. “Threats and intimidation follow one after the other. I think it is all seriously, however my life mission is to protect religious freedom, minority rights, justice and equality. I will continue to do so without hesitation,” said Shabir Bhatti, the minister. In an interview Dec. 4 with Fides, the Vatican’s missionary news agency, Bhatti said he believes the government also will continue to help religious minorities, despite pressure from extremist groups threatening violence. Specifically, he said he hopes for the abolishment of anti-blasphemy laws, which make insulting the Quran an offense punishable by life imprisonment or death. The minister said he trusts that the courts will prove the innocence of Asia Bibi, a 37-year-old Christian woman who faces the death penalty for blasphemy. In the interview with Fides, Bhatti commended Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari for showing care and sensitivity toward minority issues and for forming a commission to re-examine the blasphemy law and possibly end it.

Theologian says papal comments on condoms reflected pastoral concern

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI’s recent comments about condoms represented a “normal and traditional” pastoral application of moral theology, according to a theologian who advises the Vatican on pastoral matters. The pope’s comments reflect the principle that there can be “intermediary steps toward moral awareness,” allowing for some flexibility in how Church teachings are applied, said Francisco Father Maurizio Faggioni.

Arsenic-loving microbe expands definition of life, says Jesuit

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The discovery of the first known microorganism on Earth to thrive on the toxic chemical arsenic will help expand scientists’ understanding of the definition of life, said the head of the Vatican Observatory. “It’s clear that if we are searching for life forms in the universe, we have to at least know what to look for: that is, to define what a living being is,” said Jesuit Father Jose Funes. The recent discovery of a life form based on a completely different chemistry “will surely contribute to expanding our conceptual horizons on the subject” of what could be life and living matter, he said in an article in the Vatican newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, Dec. 4. A team of astrophysics researchers — funded by NASA — recently discovered a microbe strain, called GFAJ-1, in California’s Mono Lake, which has unusually high levels of salinity, alkalinity and arsenic. “Carbon, hydrogen, nitrogen, oxygen, phosphorus and sulfur are the six basic building blocks of all known forms of life on Earth,” a NASA press release said Dec. 2. However, GFAJ-1 is able to thrive and reproduce using arsenic since it substitutes the toxic chemical for phosphorus in its cell components, the press release said. Father Funes wrote, “In short, it’s a microbe that breathes arsenic.”

Archbishop says Jesus’ name always should be on lips of all Catholics

SEATTLE (CNS) — The name of Jesus should be on the lips of Catholics in all parts of their lives, said Archbishop J. Peter Sartain who was installed Dec. 1 as the fifth archbishop and ninth bishop of the Archdiocese of Seattle. A standing-room-only gathering of 2,200 people packed St. James Cathedral for the installation of the 58-year-old prelate, who was appointed by Seattle by Pope Benedict XVI Sept. 16. The congregation broke into prolonged applause when he accepted the pastoral staff from his predecessor, Archbishop Alex J. Brunett, 76, who retired after 13 years of leading western Washington.

Hymnal helps members of multilingual parishes worship side by side

PORTLAND, Ore. (CNS) — Spanish- and English-speaking worship communities in the United States can celebrate their faith and culture side by side with a hymnal developed by OCP titled “One Faith, Una Voz.” An announcement from the Portland publisher said it is the only Catholic hymnal featuring bilingual songs along with original language English and Spanish titles. It offers more than 500 multilingual songs designed to fit the needs of growing Latino-Anglo communities in the Catholic Church. “The very nature of this hymnal speaks to the profound way a community comes together to pray despite differences in language or origin,” said Pedro Rubalcava, director of Hispanic ministries at OCP, a nonprofit publisher of liturgical music and worship resources. “It provides a means for culturally diverse assemblies to unite in celebration of each other’s journeys of faith through song,” he added in a statement. Greg Sendler, music director at St. John Neumann Church in Miami, said the new hymnal fits the parish’s multicultural population and “ultimately welcomes all to Mass.” Rubalcava said that multilingual English and Spanish-speaking communities were looking for a way to honor their own traditions, while sharing in the common act of celebrating Mass, and “One Faith, Una Voz” answers that need.

Pope blesses Our Lady of Loreto statue for Rome airport

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI blessed a statue of Our Lady of Loreto, which will be placed in Rome’s Leonardo da Vinci Airport at Fiumicino to mark the 90th anniversary of the proclamation of Our Lady of Loreto as the patron saint of aviation. At the end of his weekly general audience Dec. 1, the pope blessed the modern bronze statue of Mary holding the baby Jesus that is said to have flown by angels from Nazareth to Loreto, Italy and visible” location at the airport, he said. Rubalcava, director of Hispanic ministries at OCP, a nonprofit publisher of liturgical music and worship resources, said it provides a means for culturally diverse assemblies to unite in celebration of each other’s journeys of faith through song,” he added in a statement. Greg Sendler, music director at St. John Neumann Church in Miami, said the new hymnal fits the parish’s multicultural population and “ultimately welcomes all to Mass.” Rubalcava said that multilingual English and Spanish-speaking communities were looking for a way to honor their own traditions, while sharing in the common act of celebrating Mass, and “One Faith, Una Voz” answers that need.
ND professor explores historic St. Nicholas

NOTRE DAME — Though most are familiar with the Christmas lore surrounding jolly old St. Nicholas — the snow-bearded saint whose legendary generosity morphed into America’s secular Santa Claus figure — few are familiar with the origins and details of his acts of kindness.

Holy Cross Father Nicholas Ayo, professor emeritus in the Program of Liberal Studies at the University of Notre Dame, is author of “St. Nicholas in America: Christmas Holy Day and Holiday,” in which he takes a closer look at the saint whose feast the Catholic Church celebrates on Dec. 6.

Using ancient and medieval sources along with more modern and widely known poems and stories, Ayo describes St. Nicholas (who also was the 4th century Bishop of Myra as a powerful leader whose acts of kindness far surpassed the modern practice of candy in a shoe: he rescued many young women from sexual slavery; interceded on behalf of condemned prisoners; saved sailors from storms; and provided dowries to young women in the form of stockings of gold thrown into their chimneys.

So how can these gratuitous acts of kindness and generosity be proven hundreds of years later?

“Legends are not provable either way,” Ayo says. “But they tell you something about the human heart — they’re a treasure trove of what the human heart is all about. People wanted someone who cared about their needs, not because they earned or deserved it, but just because someone cared.”

All of St. Nicholas’ acts of kindness, according to Ayo, were committed without expectation or conditions, the fundamental departure from the secular Santa Claus, who only brings gifts “to good little girls and boys.”

“The conditional nature of gifts from Santa is all wrong,” says Ayo. “The meaning of Christmas is a gift without — much like the gift of someone cared.”

— Father Cyril Fitzgerald, pastor of St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, recognized as true servant

FORT WAYNE — Father Cyril Fernandes, pastor of St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne, recognized as true servant.

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Ancilla students achieve high pass rate on exams

DONALDSON — Over 80 percent of Ancilla College nursing students are passing the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX) on the first try, according to statistics released Dec. 1 by the college.

According to the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN), Ancilla’s pass rate eclipsed the national rate of 76 percent amongst all prospective nurses seeking NCLEX-RN licensure.

All boards of nursing in states and territories of the United States require candidates to pass the NCLEX-RN in order to become a licensed registered nurse.

“Our nursing program gives students an opportunity to study nursing when they may not have had the opportunity to do so at other institutions,” said Donna Weber, director of the Division of Nursing and Health Science at Ancilla College.

USF team wins $7,000 prize in business competition

Star Financial and a judge for the USF business plan competition Tuesday made by 13 business team finalists Monday. The business acumen of the presenters impressed Dennis Trazymek, a commercial banking officer for Star Financial and a judge for the competition. “I saw some business plans from the students that were as good as some I’ve seen in the market. They did the hard work to explain what the business was, how to get it out to the people and how to make it work,” he said.

The local business community combined resources to provide $10,000 in prizes for the competition. “One of the most impressive things is that last year’s first prize launched a viable business,” said committee president John Becker, president for Advocate Financial. "This gives students the tools and experience to leave here with a degree to create economic opportunities for themselves and the community. This school gets it,” said committee member and Sorboshack president and CEO Sam Simonson.

“We’re stoked,” Arthur said of the win. “We thought we might be in the top five, but not first.”

They appreciate the opportunity the business competition presents. “It’s a learning experience you can’t get without going out and doing it,” Arthur said. “We had amazing support from the business community.”

While making a pastoral visit and celebrating Mass at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Decatur on Nov. 27, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades blessed a new monument of the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes. The parish purchased the monument and the Knights of Columbus made the arrangements for the foundation and placement of the monument.

BISHOP RHOADES BLESSES MONUMENT IN DECATUR

Provided by St. Mary of the Assumption, Decatur

While making a pastoral visit and celebrating Mass at St. Mary of the Assumption Parish in Decatur on Nov. 27, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades blessed a new monument of the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes. The parish purchased the monument and the Knights of Columbus made the arrangements for the foundation and placement of the monument.

Notre Dame student wins $7,000 prize in competition

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Notre Dame student wins $7,000 prize in competition

NOTRE DAME — A team of Saint Mary’s College accounting students and their professor took first place in this year’s Indiana Certified Public Accounting Society’s (INCAPS) 2010 collegiate contest held on Friday, Nov. 19 in Indianapolis. Professor Mary Ann Merryman, chair of the business administration and economics department, led the Saint Mary’s team to victory. This year’s case study required Indiana college teams throughout Indiana to research and write a paper to assess and write recommendations for a fictional struggling CPA firm.

For 10 days, Allison Courtney, Maggie DePaola, Betsy Reed and Maureen Temchuk researched a plan for dealing with such issues as clients asking for reduced fees and updating business and marketing strategies. “Our team submitted a paper of 50 written pages and 30 pages of appendices,” said Merryman.

Their paper, chosen from 16 team entries, took them to Indianapolis where they made their oral presentation before four CPA judges. That evening, Saint Mary’s first place award was announced “Academy Award-style” at a gala of more than 600 guests from the business community. Saint Mary’s competed against finalist teams from Indiana University, Bloomington, IUPUI, Butler, University of Southern Indiana and Valparaiso University. The Indiana CPA Society’s Case Study Competition was created in 2000 as a program with the dual benefit of having a positive impact on students entering the CPA profession and helping Indiana CPAs with their firm’s or company’s recruiting efforts.

Cathedral Choir performs sacred Christmas music

FORT WAYNE — The Immaculate Conception Cathedral Choir will present a concert of sacred Christmas music on Wednesday, Dec. 15, at 7:30 p.m. Under the direction of Michael Dulac, the singers will perform music of a number of different composers and styles.

The program will be accompanied by Kathy Miller on organ and piano, and Nancy Morse on harp. Morse will also present several solo selections for the harp.

For the choir selections, both singers and audience will be joined by the Cathedral Brass Quartet. The cathedral is located on Calhoun Street at the intersection of Calhoun and Wayne. There is ample free parking in the cathedral lots and the cathedral is handicapped accessible.

Weber recognized as true servant
BY KAREN CLIFFORD

GRANGER — As Christians, worldwide watch in joyous anticipation for the celebration of the Incarnation of the Lord, plans for friends and family gatherings during the 12-day Christmas season begin formation. But for individuals that have recently faced a loss or crisis, upcoming festivities can be fraught with anxiety or depression.

In the summer of 2008, St. Pius X parishioner Carol Swope approached Msgr. Bill Schooler and the parish council with the idea of establishing a Stephen Ministry at the church. Swope was a trained lay leader in a previous Stephen Ministry at the church. Swope personally meets with St. Pius parishioners that need a compassionate ear to listen to their concerns.

According to the Stephen Ministry Web site, “lay caregivers (called Stephen Ministers) provide one-to-one Christian care to the bereaved, hospitalized, terminally ill, separated, divorced, unemployed, relocated and others facing a crisis in life.” The program is nondenominational and has over 10,000 Christian congregations across the country participating in this ministry.

Swope personally meets with those who are interested in becoming a Stephen Minister. “I usually sit and talk to each applicant for a good hour to learn more about their skills and their life experiences. Then I have to make a determination to see if this will be a good fit for them,” she explains. A minimum of 50 hours of classroom training is required before a person becomes a commissioned Stephen Minister. After they are commissioned, they continue to meet once a month for supervisory classes to discuss the skills that are working for them. Names are never mentioned in the classroom.

“Confidentiality is a huge component of this ministry,” says Swope. “When someone is assigned to a caregiver, the only names that are exchanged are between me as the leader, the care giver and the care receiver.”

In January of 2011, St. Matthew Cathedral parishioners will join the next group of trainees at St. Pius so they can begin a Stephen Ministry at their parish. “Our goal is to incorporate a lot of jean the Catholic parishes in our community and we can be the training and supervision hub. It’s a lot nicer when you can cross reference people across congregations because sometimes you get someone who is uncomfortable with someone that they see at church. But most people are just happy to have someone who will talk and listen to them.”

Swope notes that the program has had its share of successes and challenges. “The successes of the program are when people find wholeness and when they have spent time with their Stephen Minister who has helped them not only emotionally but spiritually. The challenge is sometimes getting the word out that it is okay to come and talk about your feelings. There are so many broken people and in one way or another we are all broken. It is through the healing grace of God that those broken pieces are healed,” Swope emphasizes.

Father André Léveillé, speaks on “Forgiveness and Reconciliation” at the 12-day Christmas season opening the 12-day Christmas season as the Incarnation of the Lord, plans for friends and family gatherings during the 12-day Christmas season begin formation. But for individuals that have recently faced a loss or crisis, upcoming festivities can be fraught with anxiety or depression.

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Father André Léveillé, speaks on “Forgiveness and Reconciliation” at the November Stephen Ministry supervision meeting. Father Léveillé reports that this is his favorite picture of Jesus because it depicts the complete love and forgiveness Christ shows for us.

Stephen Ministers offer compassionate ear
Students at Saint Joseph’s High embrace opportunities to put faith into practice

SOUTH BEND — The hearts and spirits of the Saint Joseph’s High School student body are apparent throughout the year, but the month of November certainly affords the community two very special and traditional events to live their faith. The Work for Saint Joe (WFSJ) was held this year on Sunday, Nov. 21. The Annual h.o.p.e Thanksgiving Food Drive kicked off Nov. 1 and culminated with the deliveries on Monday, Nov. 22.

On Sunday morning the workers gathered in the gym for Mass before heading out with rakes, crates filled with paper towels, work gloves, and all items necessary for fall clean-up. Over 400 WFSJ students, faculty and parents divided into teams and left Saint Joe to rake leaves and wash windows for many of the elderly and disabled in our community. Real Services provided the names. Enthusiastic workers provided the labor and left behind not only a winter-ready lawn and home but peace of mind and heart for the residents.

For the past seven years, Pam Mahlie has organized and directed the Work for Saint Joe, along with help from Saint Joseph’s campus ministers, Lauren Walatka and Tami Goy.

The Annual h.o.p.e. Thanksgiving Food Drive, guided by Susan Lightcap, Tracy Gergely and former Saint Joseph’s teacher Diane Fox, and supported by the entire Saint Joseph’s family, raised $22,587.67 in just three short weeks.

Crews of dedicated students, assembled boxes, unloaded the food truck, counted money, set up the gym and packed bags and boxes, and made deliveries to 225 families in the South Bend community. After the expenses are paid from the food drive, the remainder of the money collected from the drive will be given to St. Vincent de Paul Society to help food and gifts for the Christmas holiday and used by h.o.p.e. for several Christmas projects.

Saint Joseph’s High School students in South Bend assist with the Annual h.o.p.e. Thanksgiving Food Drive. The drive, supported by the entire Saint Joseph’s family, raised $22,587.67 in just three short weeks.

Four Generations

Now in our fourth generation of service, D.O. McComb & Sons has worked hard to provide the families in this community with the very best service possible. As a family-owned funeral home, we take personal pride in every service we arrange.

Four Generations of family ownership

Make a 10 minute Advent retreat

Father Tom Shoemaker hosts “Reading and Reflections” throughout all of Advent

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Parishioner, St. John the Baptist, Fort Wayne
FORT WAYNE — St. Charles Borromeo School is one of the largest schools in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and under the leadership of Principal Robert Sordelet, who has administered the school for the past decade, and Assistant Principal Franciscan Sister of the Sacred Heart Sister Genevieve Raupp, has been providing an exemplary Catholic education for Fort Wayne area school children for 50 years.

Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades made a pastoral visit, his first to this dynamic school, on Dec. 3. He began the day by concelebrating Mass with St. Charles pastor Msgr. John Suelzer, parochial vicar Father Tony Steinacker and Benedictine Father James Kumbakkeel. Members of the student body reverently participated in the choir and as lectors, altar servers and gift bearers.

During his homily, Bishop Rhoades addressed each of the grade levels, traversing energetically across the sanctuary with an exchange of ideas on faith, hope and love. Bishop Rhoades spoke of Francis Xavier, whose feast day they celebrated, and the saint’s missionary work in India and near China.

“He was the greatest missionary in the history of the Church next to St. Paul,” said Bishop Rhoades, adding that we are all called to carry the Gospel to others. Bishop Rhoades appeared encouraged by the knowledge of St. Francis the students relayed, especially one young student who informed the bishop that there were alligators in Japan where St. Francis preached. Bishop Rhoades offered his gratitude to the students, staff and priests for the invitation to visit and a special bishop’s blessing at the conclusion of the Mass.

Enthusiastic kindergarten students waved to Bishop Rhoades as he walked with Msgr. Suelzer across the playground on his way to the school. His first stop after a light breakfast was to a seventh-grade classroom, where he engaged the attentive students in a discussion about their upcoming Confirmation. After quizzing the students on their knowledge of their faith, he opened the floor for questions. The responsive students inquired about the bishop’s ring, hat and Catholic education.

Bishop Rhoades was afforded the opportunity to meet with several grades in the parish hall where he spoke with them about their religious training and answered questions from “Do you like being a bishop?” and “How did you know you wanted to be a priest?” to the more personal “Do you eat fast food?” and “Do you watch TV?” One bold student even asked, “Are you famous?”

Bishop Rhoades cheered one first-grade student who had recently been baptized and was delighted to sing and sign a Christmas song along with the kindergartners, conducted by their own music teacher, Kate Schipper.

A luncheon was served following the classroom visits where Bishop Rhoades dined with the devoted faculty and staff of St. Charles School.

St. Charles Borromeo School first opened its doors on Sept. 15, 1958, under the leadership of Msgr. Edward Hession. The Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart taught nearly 250 students in six grades that first year. The school, located at 4910 Trier Rd. in Fort Wayne, now offers half- and full-day kindergarten and before and after-school care for the almost 750 students in kindergarten through eighth grade.

The school building itself has undergone several additions and renovations over the years including the most recent newly constructed wing for the fast-growing kindergarten program. The wing was paid for in part by proceeds from the school’s SCRIP program, one of the largest in the area.

With the dedicated faculty and staff of over 75, and an average class size of 28 students, St. Charles offers a well-rounded curriculum following the requirements of the State of Indiana, the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend and the National Catholic Education Association. In addition to the traditional subjects taught, an emphasis on math, computer training and science better prepares the students there for success in the ever changing technological world. And additional communication and language skills are developed in the seventh and eighth grades where students study French or Spanish.

The fine arts enrichment program, including choir, band and hand chimes, the outdoor environmental education, the Lego robotics teams and a variety of athletic programs offer extracurricular activities that enrich the students spiritually, emotionally and physically.

Living out the mission of the school, “To teach, live, love and learn as Jesus did,” St. Charles students participate in daily religious education, computer and science.
St. Charles Borromeo School

Parochial vicar Tony Steinacker, seated left, Msgr. John Suelzer, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and Father James Kumbakkeel listen as a St. Charles student reads Scripture at the Mass on Dec. 3.

The students gather around the Jesse tree in the main hall of the school.

Students in the parish hall

Students in the parish hall

Parishes in area Catholic education

Charles Borromeo School

St. Charles Borromeo School
4910 Trier Rd.,
Fort Wayne, IN 46815

Pastor: Msgr. John Suelzer
Principal: Robert Sordelet
Staff: 75
Enrollment: 750 students in kindergarten through eighth grade
School opened: 1958
Phone: (260) 484-3392
Web Site: www.stcfw.org

Strong prayer practices are a way of life for these students who begin and end each school day with prayer. And, said Principal Sordelet, the students have several opportunities to pray throughout the day. All classes recite a decade of the rosary each day, so by Friday they have completed the solemn prayer. And there is a team of upper classmen who regularly pray outside the area abortion clinic. “God,” said Sordelet, “permeates everything we do.”

Another strength of this dynamic school, said Sordelet, is the steadfast nature of the people involved. “It’s stabilizing. We’ve only had two pastors in 52 years. And a very supportive parish, parents and kids. We have strong teachers and staff, too.”

Service is an important part of the rich Catholic education found at St. Charles School. Each grade partners with a community charity or organization where the students provide service throughout the year. And the in-house buddy program that pairs an upper-grade class with a lower-grade class offers all students the opportunity to foster working friendships of all kinds.

This Advent season the St. Charles student council has sponsored a Jesse tree, set in the entrance hall of the school where after each day’s Jesse tree reflection reading a symbolic ornament is hung. It is a visible reminder to the students of the spiritual preparation required during this Advent season.

Mary Ann Steinau has been the school secretary at St. Charles for 19 years and said she enjoys the atmosphere at the school as well as the people involved there. Linda Nicholas, administrative secretary, agreed, saying, “It’s a great place to work, great families and the kids are a riot!”

Eighth-grade religion and literature teacher Marcy Watts has been teaching at St. Charles for eight years and said, “I love teaching here. I can bring God into the classroom. The students are a blessing to me. It is like a family here. My students are my family away from home.”
Resource and referral program is a lifeline in time of need

BY BONNIE LIBERSON

FORT WAYNE — Catholic Charities is a state-licensed, accredited agency which provides a comprehensive range of social services to families in the 14 counties of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. Its major service divisions are pregnancy, adoption and foster care; community services; refugee resettlement and immigration services; and older adult services.

Within the broad range of the agency’s services, the resource and referral program can be a lifeline in time of need for families struggling with short-term and often one-time situations that threaten to create a major disruption in their lives.

Lisa Young, director of the resource and referral program, says its goal is to provide financial and/or material assistance to those families whose lives are in crisis. Help is available for utility payments, rent or mortgage payments, food, clothing and basic needs. Agency workers also provide intervention and advocacy and work with clients to identify other resources available to them.

The program serves about 20 families each week, says Young, from young couples with children to elderly adults. But emergency crises span socio-economic groups, especially in the current economy. Just this week she worked with a middle-class couple who had both been laid off from their jobs and were going through bankruptcy. Though never needing help in the past, they asked for financial assistance to keep their power from being turned off. Another single woman with a master’s degree was unemployed and asked for money to pay her utility bill.

Young explains that Catholic Charities partners with CANI by helping clients fill out the required applications to qualify for assistance with gas and electric payments through the Energy Assistance Program underwritten by NIPSCO. The utility subscribes to a policy of never turning off power due to nonpayment during the winter months and the agency helps those who fall behind in their payment. This help with utilities is available to families at 150 percent of the federal poverty level and below. Catholic Charities also works to qualify applicants for the NIPSCO Care Hardship Program which is available to families at 151-200 percent of the federal poverty level.

Emergency shelter funding comes from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for help with rent payments. Other vital funding for the resource and referral program comes from United Way of Allen County. Catholic Charities also provides basic necessities like soap, toiletries and clothing to walk-in clients at its Fort Wayne office and has two food pantries located in Auburn and South Bend.

Young’s duties at the agency are wide-ranging. She serves as assistant to Catholic Charities director Deb Schmidt, while directly supervising the resource and referral program and the Hispanic health advocacy program. In addition, she oversees the directors of the immigration, refugee resettlement and senior aides programs. She helps with grant writing and reporting and has sole responsibility for maintaining Council on Accreditation, Inc. (COA) standards.

The mission of Catholic Charities is straightforward. The agency “sees Jesus Christ in our midst,” Young said. “We are committed to helping others and that we have such great volunteers.”

Shepherd of how she thinks the agency will really get hit, said Shepherd. The little girl was delighted to learn that the pantry was able to purchase significantly reduced priced items and use her donation to fill a large area of the pantry. Shepherd added that a high school student, who returns to volunteer on her breaks, set up an account with the community foundation called Becca’s Bread Brigade that gives funds to the Auburn pantry to purchase bread.

Young is grateful for the area support and said, “We appreciate all the support of our donors. If you are interested in donating food to either our South Bend or Auburn food pantries, please contact Patti Shepherd at (260) 925-0917 in Auburn, or Barb Burlington at (574) 234-3111 in South Bend.”

Shepherd explained that the food pantry is one of the NAP (Neighborhood Assistance Program) agencies, which is a contribution incentive program offered by the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. Individuals and businesses who donate a minimum of $100 to a NAP recipient organization are eligible to claim a deduction on their Indiana state income tax.

Resource and referral program is a lifeline in time of need

BY LISA KOCHANOWSKI

SOUTH BEND, AUBURN — As the winter snow arrives and the temperature turns colder, families struggle to pay high heating bills and still find money for groceries.

There is help for families in need with the food banks of Catholic Charities. Through the generosity of monetary and food donations from the community along with United Way and FEMA funding, this special organization is able to provide several days worth of food to families who struggle to put meals on the table.

Residents of DeKalb County can visit the RSVP Community Center of Caring Food Pantry and residents in Michiana can visit the South Bend Food Pantry to get grocery items, paper items and toiletries.

“We make sure everyone in the county is served well and with respect,” said Patti Shepherd of the Auburn food pantry, who said the volunteers understand how hard it is for clients to come into the office and ask for help. They want to make sure the experience is positive for the families. “We’ve had people come in with tears because they have never had to use something like this.”

According to Shepherd, the Auburn pantry served 442 new families (1,525 individuals) and 4,232 families (15,208 individuals) total. In the month of November they saw 55 new families (194 individuals) and a total of 436 families (1,608 individuals).

“If we don’t have the extension of unemployment benefits we will really get hit,” said Shepherd of how she thinks the needs will increase in the upcoming months. “We are very fortunate that Catholic Charities and the Church feel so strongly about helping others and that we have such great volunteers.”

Shepherd said two years ago a couple who were expecting a baby came into the office before Christmas after both being laid off. They came on a day the pantry was closed but the staff put together an extra special package to get the family through the holidays and relieve the stress and tension of the situation. Items for the pantry come from donations from the community.

“One of the groups we would like to thank is the Walmart distribution plant in Auburn,” said Shepherd, who noted that the distribution center will weekly donate items that might be unable to go to the store because they can’t be sold quick enough to meet the expiration date.

“We are able to get fresh food from them. This week we got spinach, salads and bananas, which is wonderful,” Shepherd said.

According to Shepherd, sometimes farmers who have extra fresh vegetables will donate their cash donations to purchase goods from the Community Harvest Food Bank where they can stretch their funds with purchases like 19 cents a box for cereal.

“One of our donors was a 9-year-old girl who wanted to donate her allowance to the food bank,” said Shepherd. The little girl was delighted to learn that the pantry was able to purchase significantly reduced priced items and use her donation to fill a large area of the pantry. Shepherd added that a high school student, who returns to volunteer on her breaks, set up an account with the community foundation called Becca’s Bread Brigade that gives funds to the Auburn pantry to purchase bread.

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“One of the groups we would like to thank is the Walmart distribution plant in Auburn,” said Shepherd, who noted that the distribution center will weekly donate items that might be unable to go to the store because they can’t be sold quick enough to meet the expiration date.

“We are able to get fresh food from them. This week we got spinach, salads and bananas, which is wonderful,” Shepherd said.

According to Shepherd, sometimes farmers who have extra fresh vegetables will donate their cash donations to purchase goods from the Community Harvest Food Bank where they can stretch their funds with purchases like 19 cents a box for cereal.

“One of our donors was a 9-year-old girl who wanted to donate her allowance to the food bank,” said Shepherd. The little girl was delighted to learn that the pantry was able to purchase significantly reduced priced items and use her donation to fill a large area of the pantry. Shepherd added that a high school student, who returns to volunteer on her breaks, set up an account with the community foundation called Becca’s Bread Brigade that gives funds to the Auburn pantry to purchase bread.

Shepherd is grateful for the area support and said, “We appreciate all the support of our donors. If you are interested in donating food to either our South Bend or Auburn food pantries, please contact Patti Shepherd at (260) 925-0917 in Auburn, or Barb Burlington at (574) 234-3111 in South Bend.”

Shepherd explained that the food pantry is one of the NAP (Neighborhood Assistance Program) agencies, which is a contribution incentive program offered by the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority. Individuals and businesses who donate a minimum of $100 to a NAP recipient organization are eligible to claim a deduction on their Indiana state income tax.
Support for those in immigration process

BY DEB WAGNER

FORT WAYNE — Luz Ostrognai is the supervisor of immigration for Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. She has worked for Catholic Charities for the past seven years and helps those coming to the United States become permanent legal residents or prepare for their citizenship examination. She is the only one in the diocese who is accredited by the Board of Immigration Appeals to file the paperwork necessary for citizens of other countries to become citizens of the United States of America if they so choose.

In her role, Ostrognai also helps the foreign priests that Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades and Msgr. Robert Schulte, vicar general of the diocese, bring to the diocese file paperwork to obtain their citizenship when desired. She says priests have frequently come from Kenya, India and Africa. The diocese is not limited to those countries, however.

Catholic Charities offers citizenship classes with Ostrognai, her two assistants and handful of volunteers every Tuesday.

“Our almost everyone that takes the classes, passes the citizenship exam,” Ostrognai says.

The classes are offered to lay immigrants as well as the priests from countries other than the United States. It usually takes from three to six months from the time the paperwork is submitted to the Board of Immigration Appeals for immigration officers to interview the candidates for citizenship.

The Fort Wayne area candidates are interviewed in Indianapolis and those closer to South Bend travel to Chicago for the interview.

Ostrognai helps coordinate the interviews for the candidates by following the paperwork trail through the system she knows quite well.

Once in either Indianapolis or Chicago, the immigrants are asked 100 questions about the United States government and United States history by immigration officers.

“How many justices are there in the Supreme Court?” and “Who is in charge of the executive branch?” might be questions posed to the candidate. The candidates also have to pass a written test and therefore need to know basic English. This is the most difficult part of the test for some according to Ostrognai, who says the people often return to the classes to practice their oral and written English skills.

“To their credit and commendation, the priests who are chosen to minister in the diocese are highly educated men who know English well. Most priests from other countries acknowledge that their accent might make them difficult to understand at times. Ostrognai says that the priests report it is much easier for parishioners to understand them after they have been in the United States for five or six years.

The priests often come to the United States on a religious visa that is valid for a year. After five years, the priests can work with Ostrognai to become a permanent legal resident. They can return to the U.S. again in an additional five years to file the paperwork to become citizens of the United States. Immigrants are not required to apply for U.S. citizenship, but the status of U.S. citizen would allow the immigrant priests to vote and use a U.S. passport among other benefits.

While the citizenship test might be mentally challenging, the cost to apply for citizenship might be financially difficult for some as well. United States citizenship candidates must pay $675 to Homeland Security or be able to prove that they are unable to pay the fee.

Ostrognai says she can help a candidate file for a waiver of this fee with immigration officials if the person can demonstrate the inability to pay.

Ostrognai smiles as she says she is the best part of her job is the satisfaction gained by helping her clients become legal residents and eventually earning their United States citizenship.

It's Christmas! ...is his gift in your heart?

He doesn't need toys. He makes do with those he has. What he needs is comfort; the kind that comes from having a warm home, food and clothing and the feeling that things are going to be all right. You can be the one to provide that feeling by giving generously to Catholic Charities.

To donate online, visit our website http://www.ccfwsb.org and click on GIVE NOW

91% of your financial gift is for services. Only 9% is used for administration

All donations are tax deductible!

Your support helps us continue to provide:

•Adoption Services
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•Immigration Services
•Hispanic Health Advocate
•Pregnancy Services
•Refugee Employment Services
•Refugee Services
•RSVP (Retire Senior Volunteer Program)
•Senior AIDS Employment
•Villa of the Woods... Senior Residential Living

TODAY'S CATHOLIC 13
DECEMBER 12, 2010
Reflections on the liturgical season of Advent

This is part 2 of an Advent commentary provided by Msgr. Michael Heintz, rector of St. Matthew Cathedral in South Bend.

By the Fourth Sunday of Advent (or on Dec. 17, whichever comes first), the emphasis has clearly shifted. The “advent” we now hear about and pray for is the coming of the Incarnate Word, the Nativity. As important as that is, the season is not about the baby Jesus; it is about God’s fulfillment of divine promises and their human fulfillment. If we rely on the Church’s liturgy (as we should) to provide us with some pointers about how we can live and pray the season of Advent in our own lives, we discover a number of profound themes: preparation, readiness, expectation, joyful hope for a new creation, transformation of life and the beauty of the Incarnation.

Two of the earliest reflections on the beauty of the Incarnation come from St. Athanasius (+ AD 373) and St. Augustine (+ AD 430). St. Athanasius emphasized the implicit link between human sinfulness and the decay and corruption all created realities (most notably ourselves) experience in this fallen world. He was not so much concerned with the “mechanics” of salvation in Christ, but rather with its rationale: Why was it so fitting for God to become man in Christ? Repentance, he contended, while necessary, was insufficient to calm the swelling storm of decay and death, which marks human existence. “No,” he wrote, “repentance does not change (our) nature; repentance alone was not enough. What, or rather, Who was required for the grace of restoration? Who, except the Word of God Himself, who in the beginning created everything out of nothing? It was His role — and His alone — to restore incorruption to what had become corruptible — He alone, who is able and worthy to suffer for all and to become an ambassador for all with the Father. — “On the Incarnation of the Word,” ? 7. For Athanasius, the Incarnate Word does more than simply offer us a model of behavior; He transforms our fallen nature and makes life with God a real possibility again. The very Word which is the instrument of creation becomes — in the Incarnation — the instrument of recreation and renewal.

St. Augustine, in one of the most moving passages from his “Confessions,” one which through literary technique artfully relates the Incarnation to the creation of the first human from the earth, describes the ironic interplay between human pride and divine humility in the drama of the Incarnation. For Augustine, it is precisely the humility of God which should move our hearts to conversion. Imitation of this divine humility, this divine weakness, is the prerequisite for genuine conversion. “Your Word, the Eternal Truth, is greater than any part of Your creation, lifts up to Himself those who are humble. He built for Himself here below a humble house of our clay. In this way, He breaks the bonds of those who are attached to themselves and makes those who are willing His own subjects, drawing them to Himself, healing their pulsing pride and at the same time nurturing their own capacity to love. No longer self-confident, they come weak. They see their own feet God-become-weak through His share in our garments of skin. In their weakness, they fall prostrate before this divine weakness, which itself rises and lifts them up.” — “Confessions.” No. 7.18. It is God’s remarkable humility in the face of human pride which offers us all hope.

The Advent season, marking the beginning of another liturgical year, is an excellent opportunity for spiritual renewal — personal, family—focus is best accomplished by focusing on the fundamentals of the faith which the season itself reveals to us.

WASHINGTON (CNS) — With more than three dozen Catholic Democrats voted out of office or choosing not to run in the November election, a decline in the number of Catholics in the 112th Congress would seem inevitable. But the decrease is not nearly as steep as might be expected, because of the 33 new Republicans preparing to take office when the 112th Congress convenes Jan. 3. With one House race still contest-ed as of Dec. 6 — between Rep. Timothy Bishop, a New York Democrat who is Catholic, and Randy Altschuler, a Republican who is Jewish — the number of Catholics in the 112th Congress will be 149 or 150, compared to the 162 senators and representatives who identified themselves as Catholics as the 111th Congress began two years ago.

The latest number is more in line with the 155 Catholics at the start of the 110th Congress or the 109th’s 153 Catholics.

The change since the last Congress means that Catholics will now make up about 28 percent of the membership — the percentage of Catholics in the U.S. population — 24 percent.

The first time in recent memory, the number of Catholic Republicans in the House — 61 — nearly equals the number of Catholic Democratic House members, at 64 or 65. That marks a dra-matic shift since the last Congress convened two years ago with a Catholic House contingent of 98 Democrats and 38 Republicans.

In contrast, the Catholic membership in the Senate has remained relativ-ely stable. Among Republicans, four Catholics left and four new Catholics entered the Senate, keeping the total at nine. The num-ber of Catholic Democrats in the Senate has remained at 48 throughout the 111th Congress to 15 now, but two of the 17 were now-Vice President Joe Biden, who resigned from the Senate shortly after the ses-sion began, and Sen. Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts, who died in August 2009.

The Congress that convenes in 2011 will be, incidentally, the first in 64 years that does not include a member of the Kennedy family, John F. Kennedy, who was elected the first Catholic president in 1960, first served in the House in 1947.
Snapshots of grace: Capturing the sacred in daily life

Funnily how a single picture can change everything.

In the tiny town of Bovey, Minn., four years into World War I, an old man peddling foot scraper shoes knocked on Eric Enstrom’s door.

Eric was 43, a Swedish immigrant who had bought land, opened a photography studio and raised his kids to speak perfect English. He led the peddler and studied him. There was something striking about the man, a gentle strength in his deep wrinkles and straggly beard.

Sitting before a loaf of bread and a bowl of porridge, the peddler closed his eyes and dropped his head into his folded hands. Eric flashed his bulb and pressed his accordion-like Bellows camera.

Proof! “Grace” was born, the picture that has been hung in kitchens and living rooms across the world, a symbol of faith that is both sturdily and hushed.

Eric long embraced its meaning, leading his family in grace before every meal. His third born, Warren, tagged along on fishing trips and photo shoots of Minnesota’s Scenic State Park. Warren watched his dad shoot panoramas, turning a slow circle that seemed to sweep in every detail.

Then Warren departed for England to serve in World War II, he packed a 116 camera, “I took quite a few,” he said, “but as usual, as Jesus have mercy?”

The photographer’s son can still see the bus he rode when the Nazis captured the machine gun fire that granted him an exit three days later.

Reflect

Advent is the season in which the Church bids us to prepare for the coming of Christ. Of course, it looks ahead to the liturgical event that is truly will be victorious.

The new translation of the Holy Mass:

The Confiteor

L ast week, we began looking at the Introductory Rites in the Order of Mass by focusing on the words in the greeting from “And also with you” to “And with your spirit.”

Now, we will turn to the Penitential Act, which immediately follows the greeting dialogue. The major changes occur in the first form of the Confiteor, which is the commonly used form called the Confiteor.

I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have sinned in thought and word and deed and by my free will. I have sinned before you and I have not loved and I have sinned against my God and my neighbor.

Most of this text remains the same as the version we presently use. However, the two key modifcations are:

1. The Confiteor is now treated as a part of the Mass. The entry replaces the current wording of “I have sinned through my own fault” with “I have greatly sinned.”

2. The second set of changes concerns the translation through the Confiteor, and it is more significant. The words removed from the first section, “through my own fault,” are being returned to their proper place here, but with the expression “through my fault, through my own fault, through my most grievous fault” is a direct translation of the Latin phrase “mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maximum culpa.” As a well-known line from the old Latin Mass, “mea culpa” has even become a familiar part of our secular parlance, by which one admits having made a mistake.

Some might wonder, why this seemingly heavier emphasis on sin in the revised English Confiteor? Looking beyond simple fidelity to the Latin, language that calls to mind our fallen human nature is actually very important in the sacred liturgy. It is good to acknowledge our sinfulness at particular times, just as we should do at sacramental Confession. This Penitential Act is akin to the Act of Contrition, whereby an individual pleads remorse for not loving God and neighbor as he or she ought.

Unlike Reconciliation, we are not sacramentally absolved of our...
What your wife really wants for Christmas

Christmas is coming. You’re spiritually ready. You took kids to Confession and went too. You have been lighting the Advent candles and doing just a bit of spiritual reading (not as much as you originally planned or hoped, but you’re doing okay). You’ve given food to the poor, and are keeping the season Christ-centered for the family. The Nativity set went up last week. And the lights are up outside to boot, they’re not up but they’re on their way up as the box in which they are stored has been pulled out and is sitting near the front door. Overall, things have been going pretty well. You even have had the foresight to purchase a few gifts, but now it’s time to think of your spouse. What can you get her that will be seen as thoughtful and sensitive (which it is). You will be perceived as a strong, loving spiritual leader. For the former, she will see the value in the latter choices. She will see the difference between these electrical appliances (which they are) and the latter as tools for her work. She wants a Christmas full of happy memories. Much of a mother’s identity comes from her family. She wants a little family meaning. Try to lead this peace in the family. It’s really a gift for everyone.

First, let’s be frank and get some “don’ts” out of the way: I know you are a helpful guy and want to assist your wife in her job at home, but please do not get her a vacuum cleaner for Christmas. I repeat, do not get her a vacuum for Christmas, nor pots and pans, nor other common household items that plug in and you think might be useful for her “work.” Exceptions to this are items that demonstrate your care and concern for her personal likes and interests — a gourmet coffee machine (if she is a coffee-drinker) or tea pot or pasta maker (if she has mentioned she wants one). The slight distinction between these electrical appliances is critical. She will see the former as tools for her work (which they are) and the latter as your assistance in her comfort and likes (which it is). You will be perceived as thoughtful and sensitive with the latter choices. With the former, she will politely say “Thank you.” And look off into the distance.

Still confused? Here’s an example: A set of practical sturdy white dinner plates is ill-advised. A set of four delicate prettily decorated tea plates (which don’t have to cost much, by the way — I know how you think) is a better idea. Choose a lovely design that is the same color of her eyes (and don’t forget to tell her this). This gift will garner gratitude and excitement reminiscent of the memories of your early dating. Remember, it’s all nuance. You know. Like the difference between a basic Verizon cell phone and Apple’s 32GB iPhone or an iPod Touch, without the cost concern. Also, please don’t even glance at the display of “pe” or “ Sophisticated” merchandise. She does not want a Snaggle from you. Not even a pink one. And never, ever, entertain the thought of purchasing for her any type of elasticated clothing, even if she just had a baby — especially if she has just had a baby — even if a salesperson guarantees that she will be thrilled with stretchy-waist, “mom” jeans in a designer style and color. No, no, no! Those will not be tears of joy you see on Christmas morning.

Other things to avoid: gift certificates to car washes, the grocery store (this should be obvious), and some place that YOU want to go but she may not (ex: pro-football game, unless she is a huge fan). Candy is fine, but not the kind from the check-out lane in the grocery store. She loves you and wants to know she is important enough to you that you took some time in selecting a gift for her. She’s with you on this — it’s the thought, not cost that counts.

Now let’s look at what your wife really wants for Christmas:

1. She wants everyone to get along. Really. She wants no bickering among siblings, no arguing when she reminds children of their kitchen duties. She wants a Christmas full of happy memories. Much of a mother’s identity comes from her family. She wants calm, harmony, Peace. Call a little family meeting. Try to lead this peace in the family. It’s really a gift for everyone.

2. She wants to be thought of. She wants to know she is special. Think back to the days you dated. I’m sure you’ll think of something.

3. She wants you to be a strong, loving spiritual leader. In a tumultuous world, this is a year-round gift.

4. She wants help. Pitch in. Chances are pretty good that if there are children in the house, then she is sleep-deprived. Offer her a Saturday morning to sleep in. (Don’t worry, “sleep in” for moms probably means she will wake up at a leisurely 8:01 a.m. But that’s heaven to her this time).

Were you looking for a more physical gift suggestion? Well, I don’t want to say “mom” jeans in a designer style or aursed mourning for every — even if a saleslady has promised her she simply wants you — your time and your devotion. Any token of your love and any action that is family-building is sure to be a winner. You know what to do. Now go be Santa.

Theresa Thomas can be reached at TheresaThomas@EverydayCatholic@gmail.com. Her book *Stories for the Homeschool Heart* can be ordered on Amazon.com.
South Bend — The Inter-City Catholic League kicked off its boys’ basketball season Sunday with traditional division matchups. In the St. John Bosco Division, St. Thomas the Apostle of Elkhart started the season with a victory against St. Pius X, Granger, 39-31. The Comets of the St. Monica Academy defeated the Queen of Peace Pumas, 40-18. Patrick Coulter and Alex Ganzer netted 10 and 10 respectively in the win as the Pumas were paced by Schuyler Crull’s 14. Our Lady of Hungary again looked like the team to beat in the West as Boniface Mugaro and Makal Henderson led the Bulldogs with 14 and 11 in the victory over the Falcons of St. Jude, 43-20. The final contest of the day saw a St. John the Baptist squad hang on to upset Corpus Christi, 29-26. St. John was led by Max Harrison’s 10 points.

The ICCL schedule will continue on Sundays at Marian and Saint Joseph’s high schools starting at 1 p.m. The complete schedules, standings and scores can be found on the Web at www.icclsports.org.

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Most Precious Blood coach Chad Kahlenbeck instructs his team in a pre-game briefing.

When PB faced conference foe, Hessen Cassel, Cameron Kahlenbeck led the scoring attack for PB with 11. “We need to work on being more aggressive, rebounding better and getting after loose balls,” the coach summarized. In the win for the Squires (4-2, 1-0), Bradley Scott also chipped in 11.

Most Precious Blood coach Chad Kahlenbeck instructs his team in a pre-game briefing.

Sarah Hart nominated for 2011 ‘Best Gospel Song’

PORTLAND, Ore. — (Christian Newswire) — Spiritandsong.com artist and songwriter Sarah Hart has been nominated for a 2011 Grammy Award. “Better Than a Hallelujah,” co-written by Sarah Hart and Chapin Hartford and performed by Amy Grant, is among the Grammy Award nominated songs in the “Best Gospel Song” category. “Chapin and I talked about the things in our lives that have driven us to seek hope in despair; to heartache; to tears,” said Hart. “We wanted to express how much knowing God loved us meant in all that brokenness.” Featuring lyrics like, “We pour out our miseries/ God just hears a melody/Beautiful the mess we are/ The honest cries of breaking hearts/ Are better than a Hallelujah,” the song touches on the universal human need for redemption and love in times of darkness.

“As soon as Chapin told me her idea my heart said ‘amen.’ I knew it was something I believed, something real; and something I knew about intimately,” said Hart. “Better Than a Hallelujah” in its original recording is available on Sarah Hart’s latest album, “The Give and Keep” available at spiritandsong.com.

Known for her lively blend of folk and pop that delights listeners of all ages and backgrounds, Hart writes music that explores the transforming power of faith. Sarah is a staff songwriter for spiritandsong.com and the contemporary music division of OCP. She currently lives in Nashville, Tenn. with her husband and two daughters. The Grammy Awards will be handed out at the Staples Center in Los Angeles on Feb. 13, 2011. Tune in to the 53rd Annual Grammy Awards telecast, which airs that night on CBS at 8 p.m.
Neeson: Narnia’s Aslan represents all great spiritual leaders

BY SIMON CALDWELL

LONDON (CNS) — Catholic actor Liam Neeson said he thinks the magical lion of C.S. Lewis’ “The Chronicles of Narnia” series not only represents Christ but also symbolizes other great spiritual leaders.

Neeson is the voice of Aslan the lion in “The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,” a 20th Century Fox film premieres for journalists in London Nov. 30. It will open in U.S. theaters Dec. 10.

At a Dec. 2 news conference, Neeson explained what the character meant to him.

“As we know, C.S. Lewis, who wrote the books, was a famous atheist who then became a famous convert to Christianity. I have read quite a lot of his books other than “The Chronicles of Narnia.”

“Yes, Aslan symbolizes a Christ-like figure, but he also symbolizes for me Mohammed, a Christ-like figure, but he also symbolizes for me Buddha and all the great spiritual leaders and prophets over the centuries,” he said.

“They’re all trying to get the same message across, and that’s the message that Jesus brought — the Kingdom of God, and a desire to be “very multicultural,” adding: “I don’t know Lewis would have simply denied that,” said Hooper, an American Catholic who lives in Oxford, England.

“C.S. Lewis wrote that the ‘whole Narnian story is about Christ,’” he told Catholic News Service in a Dec. 2 telephone interview. “It’s nothing whatever to do with Islam. Lewis could not have been clearer.”

Hooper said that Lewis, an Anglican, had offered Aslan “as an answer to the question: What would Christ, the Son of God, be like if he had been born in the land of Narnia instead of being born in Bethlehem?”

He attributed Neeson’s remarks to “political correctness” and a desire to be “very multicultural,” adding: “I don’t know how Liam Neeson or what he is thinking about ... but it was not Lewis’ intention.”

But Georgie Henley, 16, who has played the character of Lucy Pevensie in the “Narnia” movies, defended her co-star.

She said Neeson had not discussed his interpretation of Aslan with any of the cast, but they were “very excited” to hear his remarks during the news conference.

“I can see where he is coming from,” said Henley. “Aslan represents more than Jesus or God for a wide range of people,” she told CNS in a Dec. 2 telephone interview.

“He can be the epitome of wisdom or the epitome of courage, for instance, and it is very important that people can have their own interpretation of what he represents rather than have something forced upon them,” she said.

Georgie Henley is pictured with a lion named Aslan, voiced by Catholic actor Liam Neeson, in the movie “The Chronicles of Narnia: The Voyage of the Dawn Treader.” Neeson said he thinks the magical lion of C.S. Lewis’ film not only represents Christ but also symbolizes other great spiritual leaders.

Deadline approaches for film contest on Catholic faith

Goodness Reigns will send winners to World Youth Day 2011 in Madrid, Spain

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Filmmakers, from beginners to experts ages 14 on up, have just weeks left before the Jan. 10 deadline when their videos on the Catholic faith may choose to receive travel packages to World Youth Day 2011; or they may select a video equipment package worth up to $15,000.

Contest winners will choose either substantial computer/video equipment packages or all-inclusive travel packages to World Youth Day 2011 to be held in Madrid, Spain, Aug. 16-21.

Geared specifically to reach youth and young adults, the competition presents an opportunity for the young church to grow in and share the Catholic faith through their own videos, which will become available to the public online at www.GoodnessReigns.com once contest winners are announced in April 2011.

It’s not too late to enter. Films should be no more than seven minutes in length and pertain to one of four categories:

• Church history (including Bible stories and lives of the saints)

• Sacraments of the Church

• Church teachings

• Present-day missionary spirit of an individual or ministry of the Church

The global contest offers awards in three divisions. Individual category awards (Open to anyone age 14 and up) — One winner will be selected from each of the above categories. The winner and one guest/parent will receive free travel packages to World Youth Day 2011; or winners unable to travel may choose to receive video equipment packages each valued at $4,000.

• Young Adult Group Award (Ages 18-30) — One group of four young adults will be selected from all entrants to receive free travel packages to WYD 2011; or the group may select a video equipment package worth up to $8,000.

Registration for the contest is free and will provide participants with contest updates. To register and to find out about submission details, visit www.goodness-reigns.com. A downloadable guide to filmmaking is also available at www.goodnessreigns.com/contest-tips.php.

Goodness Reigns Executive Director, Suzanne Haugh, was a guest on EWTN’s “Life on the Rock” on Dec. 2.

Clive Staples Lewis, a native of Belfast, Northern Ireland, wrote the seven books of “The Chronicles of Narnia” between 1949 and 1954 and the books have since sold millions of copies around the world.

The series is infused with Lewis’s thinly veiled Christian beliefs. The climax of “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe,” first of the books, sees Aslan sacrificing his life to save Narnia from the grip of the evil white witch before rising triumphantly from the dead.

The themes of “The Voyage of the Dawn Treader,” the third of the books to be made into a film, involve the Christian themes of temptation, sin and redemption.

The story follows the adventures of Edmund and Lucy Pevensie and their obnoxious cousin, Eustace Scrubb, as they sail to the end of the world in search of seven missing Narnian lords.

Throughout their journey, the mysterious Aslan, guides the children, helping them to avoid evil and to do good, and heals them on the occasions when they succumb to temptation.

Neeson, who comes from Ballymena in County Antrim, Northern Ireland, also gave his voice to Aslan in the earlier two Narnia movies: “The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe” in 2005 and “Prince Caspian” in 2008.

He has spoken publicly of his admiration for “The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola,” written by the founder of the Jesuits.

Neeson also has starred in the roles of such historically significant Catholics as the Irish revolutionary leader Michael Collins, the Scottish rebel Rob Roy MacGregor, and Oskar Schindler, the German entrepreneur who saved scores of Jewish lives from the Holocaust.

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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: fhsqan@fw.diocesefwsb.org. Events that require an admission charge or payment to participate will receive first listing. For additional listings of that event, please call our advertising sales staff at (260) 456-2824 to purchase space.

FUNDRAISERS

Fish fry
Warsaw — The Knights of Columbus Council No. 4511 will have a fish fry on Friday, Dec. 10, from 4:30-7 p.m. at the council hall. Tickets are $8 for adults and $4 for children 6-12.

Cookie walk announced
Plymouth — St. Michael’s Altar Rosary Society will have a cook- ie walk Saturday, Dec. 11, from 8 a.m. to noon at St. Michael School. Cookies may be purchased for $5 per pound. Contact Kathy at (574) 936-4935.

Breakfast with Santa
Fort Wayne — Knights of Columbus Council 12417 of Our Lady of Good Hope Parish will have a pancake and sausage breakfast with Santa Sunday Dec. 19, from 8 a.m. to noon in the church hall. Cost is $5 for adults, $4 for children 11 to 6 years old and children under 6 free. Santa will be handing out bags of treats to all children.

Knights plan spaghetti dinner
South Bend — The Knights of Columbus Council 5521, 61533 S. Ironwood Dr., will have a spaghetti dinner on Friday, Dec. 17, from 5 to 7 p.m. Adults $7, children (5-12) $3. Carry-out available.

Sunday breakfast at St. Pius X
Granger — The Knights of Columbus Council 4263 will have a breakfast Sunday, Dec. 12, from 8 a.m. to noon at St. Pius X. Adults $5, children 6-12 $2.50.

Cookie candy sale
Monroeville — The St. Rose Ladies’ Guild will have a Christmas cookie and candy sale Saturday, Dec. 11, from noon to 3 p.m. in the school basement. Items will be sold by the pound.

Rosary Society plans cookie walk
Mishawaka — The St. Monica Rosary Society will have a cook- ie walk Saturday, Dec. 11, from 9 a.m. to noon in the lower level of the church, 223 W. Mishawaka Ave. Cost is $5 per pound for cookies of your choice.

Breakfast with Santa
Fort Wayne — The St. Vincent Scouts will have breakfast or lunch with Santa Saturday, Dec. 11, at 9 a.m. or noon at the Scout Lodge. Doors open 15 minutes before event. Cost is $5 per per- son by Dec. 6. For more infor- mation or to register call or email: svboyscouts@gmail.com or (260) 489-1765.

Pancake breakfast
Fort Wayne — The St. Joseph Hessen-Cassell Knights will have a pancake, egg and sausage breakfast Sunday, Dec. 12, from 8 a.m. to noon in the hall. Proceeds will benefit the Women’s Care Center. Free will donations accepted.

MISC. HAPPENINGS

Looking for alums
Mishawaka — Saint Joseph’s High School alums from the class of 1973 will have an infor- mal gathering Sunday, Dec. 26, at 6:30 p.m. at the Hacienda restaurant on Grape Road. Contact Eileen (Frederick) Guyton at guytoe@yahoo.com for information.

Choir to perform cantata
Fort Wayne — The Christmas cantata, “Rejoice in His Coming,” will be presented by Our Lady of Good Hope, 2715 St. Joe Rd., on Sunday, Dec. 19, at 6:30 p.m. The choir perform- ance will be accompanied by a string ensemble and feature music by the children’s choir and handbell choir. The free event will be followed by refreshments and a visit from St. Nick.

Las Posadas planned
Huntington — Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters will host the event “Las Posadas: Who is Knocking at the Door?” at 7 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 19, in the Archdiocesan Noll Memorial Chapel on the Victory Noll cam- pus, 1900 W. Park Dr. There is no cost or registration required.

Christmas concert
Fort Wayne — Most Precious Blood Parish, 1515 Barthold St., will present “A Christmas Concert” Sunday, Dec. 26, at 7 p.m. in the church. Presented by Jim Didier, choir director, and Kathy Schall, bell choir director. Admission is free.

St. Pius X announces senior group
Granger — St. Pius X has a senior group (55+) that meets the second Tuesday of the month at noon starting with Mass. On Dec. 14, the topic will be “Advent Preparation” with entertainment by the Bells of St. Paul’s. For information call (574) 271-7853.

Mass and A Meal for young adults
Fort Wayne — Office of Campus and Young Adult Ministry invite young adults 18-39 to Mass and A Meal Sunday, Dec. 12, at the St. Mother Theodore Guérin Chapel. Advent Reflection at 4 p.m. by Msgr. Robert Schulte with Mass at 5 p.m. in the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception. Meal to follow at Hall’s Gas House, 305 E. Superior St. For information visit www.diocesefwsb.org/ CYAM or call Mike or Allison at (260) 422-4611 ext. 3384.

WESTERN SECTION

Angela
Joseph Foley, 88, St. Anthony of Padua

Donalb
Sister Loreta Volk, PHJC, 88 Catherine Kasper Home Chapel

Elkhart
Carmelina R. Fortino, 89 St. Vincent de Paul

Fort Wayne
John M. DelValle, 77 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Mary E. Becker, 84, St. John the Baptist
Bette I. McNamara, 84, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton
Neva M. Maraldo, 80, St. Charles Borromeo
Michael John Skordos, 56, St. John the Baptist

South Bend
Ronald A. Simmons, 44, Corpus Christi
Paul J. Wisniewski, 58, St. Adalbert
Mercedes Gassenreith, 83, St. Anthony de Padua
Donna M. Hellinga, 79, St. Jude
Alice Ann Raab, 70, Christ the King
Richard J. Bidlake, 78, St. Anthony de Padua
David Peter Koehler, 84, Holy Family
Helen Georgina Voll, 83, St. Patrick
Lillian M. Baloun, 80, St. Vincent de Padua
Isabelle Beatty, 96, Christ the King
Maria D. Sandoval, 82, St. Casimir

Living Nativity at St. Therese, Fort Wayne — St. Therese Parish will have a Living Nativity Saturday, Dec. 11, at 6:15 p.m. Small groups will enjoy a sheep- herd-guided tour through the first Christmas after a simple dinner of chili, hot dogs and drinks by the Knights of Columbus with a free will donation accepted. Call (260) 747-9139.

Dedication Special
Considering your burial needs now will save your loved ones from making those difficult decisions.

The Garden of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Section Q) and the 8-foot bronze statue of Our Lady of Guadalupe are scheduled for dedication in December 2010. For a limited time the Catholic Cemetery is offering a Dedication Special: All grave spaces in the new Section Q are 15% off regular price.

We invite you to consider your burial needs thoughtfully and without pressure now, before the need arises, relieving others of those difficult decisions.

Call Larry Fisher at 260.426.2044 for an appointment or visit the Cemetery Office at 3500 Lake Avenue from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

www.catholic-cemetery.org
Promotion ends January 31, 2011

Visit www.diocesefwsb.org for a complete calendar.
Vincentians gather; award good works

BY MARK WEBER

FORT WAYNE — Telling 400 members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society that their work mirrors the example of Christ and that as Vincentians they are distributors of hope and that Christ is their source of hope, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades launched these friends of the poor and downtrodden on another year of feeding the meek and poor.

St. Mary Church, Fort Wayne, where the soup kitchen is an embodiment of Vincentian work, was the site of the Saturday morning Mass and annual District Council meeting and breakfast. Vincentian President Cheryl Mowan assisted Bishop Rhoades in presenting four Top Hat awards recognizing the deeds and the required practical approach of the society’s mission in delivering friendship as well as food, clothing and other forms of assistance.

Paul Helcamp, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, was recognized for his personal leadership in construction of an 8 by 12 foot addition to the parish food pantry and the follow-up work in supply and maintenance required. Jerry and Sheila Johns, of St. Peter Parish, were also recognized for their endeavors in the food pantry work, with emphasis on the personal shopping required for lowest food pricing. Sheila received special thanks for taking the time to send greeting cards to the sick and families of the deceased.

At St. Therese Parish, Sue Rockstrom’s management of the food pantry includes paperwork, scheduling volunteers and stock- ing the shelves. Through her efforts, the St. Therese pantry has received federal commodities and has grown from serving 25 households a month to 125 a month.

Donna Brooke, immediate past president of the Fort Wayne area District Council, received a Top Hat award for past administrative assistance as well as her continued work at St. Patrick Parish involved with a food bank.

Concluding his remarks, Bishop Rhoades reminded members that “Perhaps you proclaim that Christ is our hope and sent them forth with Jesus’ words that ‘without cost you can receive; without cost you are to give.’”

Moore said he also struggles with this complicity. “I don’t come to this retreat and say, ‘Hey, I got this all figured out and let me tell you what to do.’ I’m a stumbler and a bumbler just like anybody else.”

“But the greatest message I hear in my own soul and my own heart is ‘Don’t stop digging,’” Moore continued. “If you’re not restless, find out why you are not. There is a reason. Sometimes you’ll find out because there is sin in your heart that you’re not confessing, or you find out that there is more to the rosary or the Liturgy of the Eucharist.”

Moore said he became good friends with the father for Catholic men to dig deeper and deeper and say to the Lord, “Look Lord, here I am. You’re up to something, aren’t you? Let me in on it. Let me be that light today for somebody. Let me be honest in this journey. Let me be real with people.”

The other message Moore will share at the men’s conference is to be real. So much in the culture, in the world, so much of Christianity, Moore said, is fake, people putting on a front.

Moore said, that as Catholic men, “The voice we hear from God comes through the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. And the word He always says to us is apologetic. ... There’s so much of the Church that we don’t even tap into that would give us purpose, that would give us meaning, that will give us hope.”

Musical roots

Moore’s love of music goes back to growing up in Mississippi. His grandfather was a Hank Williams Sr., and Johnny Cash fan. At the age of 12, Moore’s parents divorced, but his mother’s boyfriend at the time taught him to play the “House of the Rising Sun” on the guitar. At the age of 14, Moore wrote his first song, which his mother insisted had to be recorded in a studio. “You’ll never hear that song. It was horri- ble,” Moore quipped.

By the age of 15, he had a band that played a lot of high school parties. “Immediately I saw that music got me in doors that nothing else could,” he said.

Moore’s band played mostly the rock music of Lynyrd Skynyrd, REO Speedwagon and other popu- lar bands of the time. He knew the choruses of songs of other rock bands and even made up the verses to the songs he played. That helped him journey into songwriting.

Journey to Catholicism

Moore said his teen years were rebellious years after his parents’ divorce. But he had a “Damascus Road” conversion at the age of 15, and was asked to attend a Bible study the very next day by a friend. There, Moore met his future wife Reneé, the daughter of a prominent Mississippi Methodist minister. They have been married 25 years.

Moore’s music writing led him to writing country and Americana or folk music in Nashville. His music, he said, is secular but has always been influenced by his faith. Although he never wrote Christian music — calling his music more dimensional than Christian music — he said, “I want anybody to listen to my songs and find what they need in the song.”

Moore became good friends with Christian music performer Phil Keaggy and produced an album in which Moore’s poetry was set to music. Keaggy invited Moore to be on EWTN’s “Life on the Rock,” and introduced him to Jeff Tipton, the show’s host at the time, and the two became close friends.

Moore’s interest in the early Church Fathers soon led him on a journey to Catholicism. He tells his conversion story to the faith in a series of YouTube videos under the name “W. Keith Moore, ‘The Journey Home’”.

Additional information about the Community Harvest Food Bank is available at www.chfb.org.