

The CRITERION

Vol. XXV, No. 12, December 20, 1985

Indianapolis, Indiana



*Mother
and Child
"The Virgin and
Child with Four
Angels" is by
15th-century
Flemish painter
Gerard David.*

(NC photo)

FROM THE EDITOR

The Vatican's \$50.2 million budget deficit

by John F. Fink

In this day of federal deficits in the billions of dollars, the Vatican's announcement that it will have a \$50.2 million deficit for 1985 hardly caused a ripple, despite the fact that it is more than double last year's \$24.2 million deficit and almost 38 percent higher than was estimated just last March. These were the figures discussed by the cardinals of the church at their meeting Nov. 21-23, and which were then made available to the media.

It has only been in recent years that the public (or the cardinals, for that matter) learned anything at all about Vatican finances. Even today we don't learn much. There is not, for example, a balance sheet showing assets and liabilities. Nor does the profit and loss statement provide a detailed breakdown of income and expenses.

Furthermore, the information provided includes only the operating budget for the pope and the agencies involved in governing the church. It does not include operations of the non-church activities of the Vatican City State (such as selling coins and stamps and maintaining St. Peter's). Nor does it include the Vatican Bank or the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies.

The latter consist of three mission aid societies that collect mission funds worldwide and distribute them to about 900 missionary dioceses. Last year they distributed about \$110 million. These funds are never used to help cover the Holy See's deficit.

The Vatican Bank is not included in the Holy See's budget because it is autonomous from the Holy See. It has



clients other than the Vatican: many of the church's religious orders, for example.

The Vatican's investment portfolio is managed by the Administration for the Patrimony of the Holy See, which also takes care of the Vatican payroll and other key financial operations. The Holy See's operating deficits have been made up partly by dipping into the investment portfolio, a situation over which the cardinals expressed "strong concern."

The investment portfolio came originally from an agreement made between Pope Pius XI and Benito Mussolini in 1929 that settled the "Roman Question" created by the confiscation of the Papal States in 1871 by Victor Emmanuel II. The Lateran Agreement, executed in 1929, provided for a large financial payment (how large has never been made public) to the Vatican for the former states of the church.

AS I SAID, the government of Vatican City State, which was set up by the Lateran Agreement of 1929, is not included in the Holy See's budget. This entity, which governs most non-church activities of the 108-acre territory, seems to be balancing its budget in recent years. Both its income and expenses were estimated by the Vatican at about \$25 million in 1984.

Archbishop Paul C. Marcinkus, a native of Cicero, Ill., is now the number two man in the Vatican City government. He says that income for Vatican City comes primarily from rental properties, stamp and coin issues, sales of museum tickets and sales of commissary items such as gasoline.

The operations of St. Peter's Basilica, the other patriarchal basilicas in Rome, and several pontifical sanctuaries in Italy also are not included in the Holy See's budget. St. Peter's operations (called the "fabbrica") are

administered by Cardinal Aurelio Sabattani and Archbishop Lino Zanini. When NC News Service asked the latter about the budget for the "fabbrica," he said: "We are autonomous. We raise our own money and we spend it. We don't have debts and we don't have credits. We spend as much as we bring in and must maintain more than 100 employees. And that's all I can tell you."

SO WHAT CAUSED the large deficit and what can be done about it? According to the release put out by the Vatican, the main causes were a 15 percent salary increase for approximately 1,800 employees during 1985, greater spending for Vatican Radio, and the current nine percent inflation that Italy is experiencing. Of the employees, fewer than 800 are lay persons, and the Vatican is not known for paying generous salaries.

Vatican Radio generates no income and its deficit was \$9 million in 1984. Presumably it is larger this year. It is considered an instrument of evangelization. I toured its facilities in March of this year and found that it has very modern equipment and has greatly extended its range of broadcasts.

To make up the deficit, the Vatican not only dips into the investment funds but now also uses the money collected in the worldwide Peter's Pence collection. That collection raises funds to be used at the pope's discretion and it used to be used to fund church projects in mission lands. The collection brought in about \$26 million last year, of which the U.S. contribution was about \$10 million.

The Vatican has appealed to Catholics around the world to increase their contributions, saying that a drastic cut in expenses would seriously harm the church's pastoral activities. In practice, that means that more money must come from the United States and West Germany.

Greensburg is host for statewide Resource Day workshop in Catholic evangelization

by Barbara Jachimiak

GREENSBURG—"Evangelization is the center and the most important thing the Catholic Church does," said Father Clarence Waldon at a Resource Day in Greensburg on Catholic evangelization.

The National Council for Catholic Evangelization sponsored the workshop for Indiana, which is in Region 7 of NCEC. St. Mary Parish, Greensburg, played host for the conference. It was coordinated by Bernie Haggerty, chairman of the Evangelization Committee at St. Mary's, and Franciscan Sister Shirley Gerth, the parish's pastoral associate.

"Evangelization has been in the (Catholic) Church since the beginning," said Father Waldon, director of the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization. "Before Vatican II, the primary evangelizers in the church were the hierarchy and the communities of religious men and women who spread their faith to those who didn't have it."

Father Waldon went on to explain that we are renewed when we evangelize, so evangelization is a tool of renewal. Because

evangelization by the laity is relatively new to Catholics, he said, we have much to learn from Protestant evangelization, which is based on educational methods and taught to the members of their churches.

Father Waldon noted that Catholics offer not the historical Jesus of Scripture, but the living Jesus of the present. He went on to say that we should want others to have the love and light of God and to know his loving forgiveness; we should want to share with others the good news of Jesus Christ by witnessing our faith.

Father Waldon said that the 75 years between Vatican I and Vatican II were an abnormal period in church history because Vatican I was cut off by world conflict before it finished its work.

He concluded his talk by noting that the Catholic Church embodied the poor in the past but today is the most affluent church in the world.

"It has to find ways to attract the poor through the one-on-one process of evangelization," he said.

At his workshop, "Reaching Out to Those Who Have Fallen Away," Father Waldon used statistics which illustrate that Indiana is 16th in the number of inactive Catholics. He said, "This is one time we are high on a list."

Father Waldon defined "inactive

Catholics" as those who go to church two times or less a year, other than Christmas, Easter, weddings and funerals. He emphasized that, of the 9.5 million inactive Catholics in the United States, 15 percent say church is important to them and 20 percent say they are eager to get back to the church. This, he noted, could lead to many successful conversions if active Catholics would reach out to them.

He also commented that most inactive Catholics are between 14 and 22 years old, and most drop out for practical, not philosophical, reasons. Most do not lose their Catholic identity, unlike dropouts from other religions, he said.

"When people move into a community, they need to be met by the church, because that is one time people tend to become inactive," he continued.

According to Father Waldon, inactive Catholics are most inclined to return to church when there is a precipitating event, such as the birth or baptism of a child, a dissatisfaction with one's state in life, serious illness or personal crisis. Father Waldon closed the first half of his workshop by noting that alienated Catholics come back to parishes that have an identity, are active, and offer something to come back to.

Father Daniel Palys of Buffalo, N.Y.,

conducted a workshop on youth evangelization, "How Do We Reach Out to Catholic Youth?"

An accomplished story-teller, Father Palys illustrated his method of reaching young people through examples of stories he has used in his ministry with that age group. He used humor and personal involvement to get his point across.

Father Palys noted several methods used to reach all ages of children, from Bible quizzes, story-telling, skits written and acted out by youth, meditation and imaging, and singing both contemporary and religious songs.

"Parents need to know what MTV is and watch the videos their children watch," he said. "Our children need to know we care about them." He concluded, "Young people need uplifting and an improved self-image."

The workshop was attended by about 40 members of evangelization teams from the Indianapolis Archdiocese. Sister Julia Wagner, administrative assistant in the archdiocesan Office of Evangelization, and Father John Geis, dean of the Batesville Deanery and pastor of St. Mary's, also attended.

Father Waldon and Father Palys are both members of the NCEC Board of Directors. Father Palys is pastor of Annunciation Parish, Buffalo, N.Y.

OFFICIAL
APPOINTMENT

Effective December 13, 1985

REV. WILLIAM ERNST, appointed a member of the Board of Consultors of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

The above appointment is from the office of the Most Reverend Edward T. O'Meara, S.T.D., Archbishop of Indianapolis.

Archbishop
O'Meara's Schedule
Week of December 22

MONDAY, Dec. 23—Annual Christmas gathering of Seminarians of the Archdiocese, St. Jude Parish, Indianapolis, 6 p.m.

TUESDAY, Dec. 24—Christmas Midnight Mass, St. Luke Parish, Indianapolis, 12 midnight.



12/20/85

MOVING?

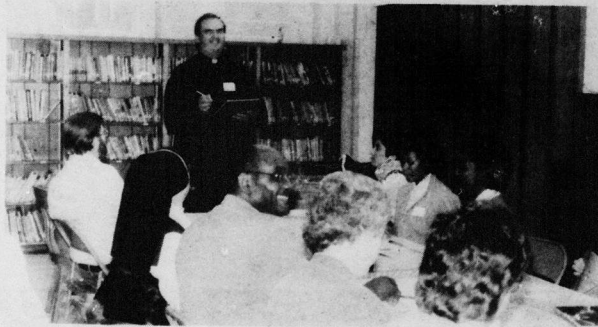
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THE CRITERION

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EVANGELIZING YOUTH—Father Daniel Palys of Buffalo, N.Y., leads a seminar on evangelizing youth at a Resource Day held in Greensburg. (Photo by Barbara Jachimiak)

In 1986 World Day of Peace Message

Pope says social, economic gaps threaten peace

by John Thavis

VATICAN CITY (NC)—The "social and economic abyss" separating rich and poor countries and the self-interest of ideological blocs have become major threats to world stability, Pope John Paul II has said in his 1986 World Day of Peace Message.

The pope called for a "new solidarity" between people of all countries that goes "beyond the barriers of ideologies and systems."

"Mental outlooks and political views contaminated by the lust for power, by ideologies, by the defense of one's own privilege and wealth must be abandoned," he said.

The 17-page text of the message was released by the Vatican Dec. 13. The 19th annual World Day of Peace will be celebrated Jan. 1. Its theme is "Peace is a Value With No Frontiers: North-South, East-West: Only One Peace."

In past years, the pope has appealed for dialogue to heal world tensions and avoid war. This year, he tied that call in a particular way to economic injustice.

The pope criticized economic exploitation by international groups and local "elites" and exhorted businessmen around the world to "examine anew your responsibilities toward all your brothers and sisters."

The poor bear an "unjust share of the burden" of today's world, largely because they are caught in the middle of economic and ideological rivalries, he said.

Blocs of nations have engaged in "excessive self-interest" and a spiral of exploitation in order to gain strategic advantages, the pope said. "In such a situation, it is the small and the weak, the poor and the voiceless who suffer most," he said.

The buildup of nuclear weapons, he said, is still "the most dramatic and compelling example" of how people can be held in "social and economic subjection" by the force of

power. "The popular imagination is often paralyzed by fear" of nuclear weapons and strategies, the pope said. "This fear is not groundless."

But he said the increasing sale and purchase of conventional arms also exploits the poor, with major powers often acting out their rivalries in local conflicts, supplying the weapons and "ideologizing" the local differences.

Finally, he said, underdevelopment itself is "an ever-growing threat to world peace. In fact, between the countries which form the 'North bloc' and those of the 'South bloc' there is a social and economic abyss that separates rich from poor," the pope said.

In many cases, he said, economic injustice exists because of "special interest groups which operate internationally or function as elites within developing countries." The plight of many poorer nations is compounded by large debts, he said.

The pope warned that economic exploitation leaves people "defenseless and disillusioned" and more prone to violence.

In outlining a solution to existing inequalities, the pope rejected models of society that try to "manage" conflicts to keep a balance for the dominant party. The result, he said, is a society "dominated by competition and antagonism, in which the strongest prevails."

The current system of blocs, the pope said, must be replaced with "new types of society and of international relations. It is above all the hearts and attitudes of people that must be changed, and this needs a renewal, a conversion of individuals," he said.

The dignity of the individual must be restored in these relationships, the pope said. Without naming individual nations, he criticized Western and Eastern-bloc societies for forgetting the "primacy of the person."

Human dignity has suffered "in countries where many individual liberties are guaranteed but where individualism

and consumerism warp and distort the values of life," the pope said. "It happens in societies where the person is submerged into the collectivity," he added.

The pope also referred to several specific ways to reduce differences between northern industrialized nations and southern developing ones. "I am thinking of the prices of raw materials, of the need for technological expertise, of the training of the work force, of the potential productivity of the millions of unemployed, of the debts poor nations are carrying, and of a better and more responsible use of funds within developing countries," he said.

The pope also praised ongoing U.S.-Soviet arms reduction talks in Geneva and other international forums as part of the necessary dialogue that must occur. But dialogue should go beyond ideologies, he said, and should involve people who meet "in the reality of their human lives."

"I am thinking of the kinds of dialogue that take place when borders are open and people can travel freely" or "when scholars are free to communicate" and "workers are free to assemble," the pope said.

In past years, the pope has appealed to politicians and statesmen in his peace message. This year, he also asked "military strategists, officers, scientists and technologists" to use their expertise in ways that promote dialogue and understanding.

The undersecretary of the Vatican's Justice and Peace Commission, U.S. Msgr. William F. Murphy, said at a press conference Dec. 13 that the message had been translated into a number of languages, including Russian and Arabic, for worldwide distribution. A Chinese translation will be made by Chinese bishops, he said.

French Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, who heads the Vatican commission, described this year's message as realistic and Utopian. "It's important that the pope be both," he said.

Editors choose synod as top religious story for 1985

WASHINGTON (NC)—The world Synod of Bishops and the yearlong debate it provoked over the state of the Catholic Church 20 years after the Second Vatican Council was chosen by Catholic editors as the major religious news event of 1985.

Editors answering the annual year-end poll by National Catholic News Service voted Pope John Paul II as top newsmaker in the world of religion for the eighth year in a row.

Following the pope in second place as top newsmaker was "women in the church," who voiced their concerns around the United States through local and national hearings sponsored by the U.S. bishops.

Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, controversial head of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, was a close third.

Among news events, the ongoing debate over the U.S. bishops' proposed pastoral letter on the economy was ranked second. Just behind it was the famine in Ethiopia and the unprecedented aid response by Catholic Relief Services and dozens of smaller relief agencies.

In 1984 the economic pastoral and the Ethiopia famine had also been ranked second and third, respectively, with the religion-and-politics debate of that election year taking first place.

The synod on Vatican II and the debate it stimulated was the editors' overwhelming choice for No. 1. It received 28 of 35 first-place votes and 317 of 350 possible total points.

The U.S. bishops' proposed pastoral on the economy received no first-place votes but was so consistently ranked second or third that it took second place with 220 points.

The Ethiopia famine, which four editors

considered the top story, received a total of 218 points.

Others in the top 10, with the point totals they received, were:

4. Supreme Court strikes down public-funded remedial programs in parochial schools; bishops protest decision while administration proposes voucher system as alternative (142).

5. U.S. crisis in family farming, bishops urge federal aid (123).

6. Abortion: "Silent Scream" film causes controversy, abortion clinic bombers convicted, administration asks Supreme Court to reverse its 1973 decision, numerous other actions and controversies during the year (115).

7. Escalating church-state tensions in Nicaragua (91).

8. South Africa: churches and church leaders seek end to apartheid as black protests against white-minority rule mount (75).

9. U.S. government takes on sanctuary movement with convictions in Texas, indictments in Arizona (71).

10. Mexican earthquakes, Colombian volcano eruption bring outpouring of aid from church agencies (57).

Barely missing the top 10 in the balloting were continuing world travels by Pope John Paul (54 points), and the controversy over some 24 nuns who were threatened with expulsion from their orders because they signed a New York Times advertisement on Catholic teaching and abortion (52 points).

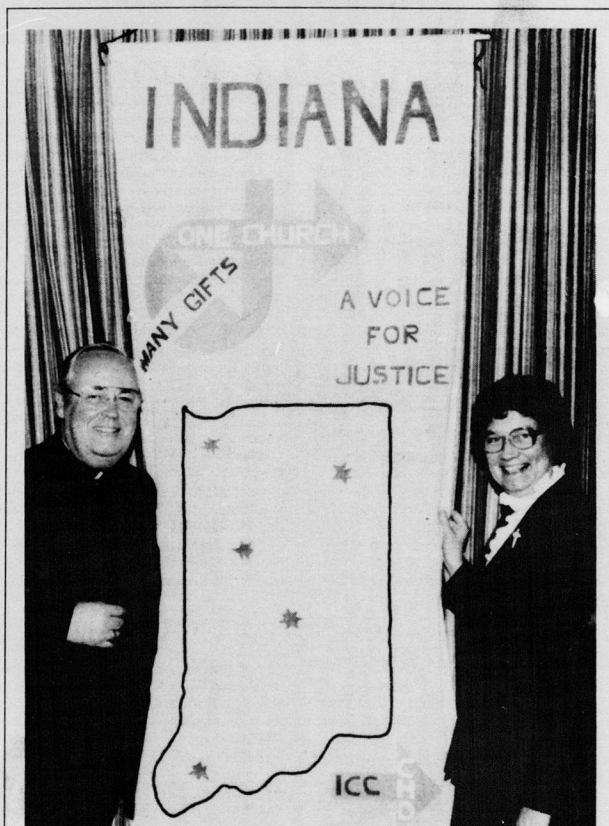
Among top newsmakers, Pope John Paul was a clear winner with 21 first-place votes and 122 out of a possible 175 points.

Seven editors thought Catholic women were the top newsmakers of the year, giving "women in the church" a total of 84 points.

Cardinal Ratzinger trailed only slightly, with 2.5 first-place votes and 81.5 points.

Fourth in the editors' votes on newsmakers was Bishop James Malone of Youngstown, Ohio, president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and U.S. delegate to the synod with 3.5 first-place votes and 54.5 points.

Fifth was Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee, head of the committee writing the bishops' pastoral on the economy, with three votes for first place and 42 points.



ONE VOICE—The church's Voice for Justice is channeled through the Indiana Catholic Conference and the Campaign for Human Development in a banner made by Sister Catherine Doherty, Evansville diocesan peace and justice director and ICC coordinator. The banner was presented to Archbishop Edward T. O'Meara, ICC general chairman, at a Dec. 6-7 state meeting of ICC advisors and board. The banner was used to represent Indiana at the 15th anniversary celebration of CHD. The ICC logo shown at the top of the banner depicts the gifts and talents of many people flowing to the cross where human efforts are infused with divine grace and go out as one voice speaking for justice.

The only other newsmaker even close to making the top five was President Reagan, who had 29 points.

THE EDITOR of The Criterion agreed with the other editors regarding all of the top four news stories and eight of the top 10. However, he did not believe that the editors' numbers 5 and 9 belonged in the top

ten. Instead, he included the stories about the nuns who signed the New York Times ad in fifth place and articles about Catholic-Lutheran talks in ninth place.

His ranking of the top five newsmakers was Pope John Paul, Bishop Malone, women in the church, Cardinal Ratzinger, and the various people taken hostage during the year.

No issue next week

In accordance with our usual practice, The Criterion will not be published the last week in December.

Because of the New Year holidays, notices of events and advertisements to be published in the Jan. 3 issue must be at The Criterion by Thursday, Dec. 26.

COMMENTARY

Work of the Holy Spirit
is real story behind synod

"Who won the synod? I think the church won the synod."

—Bernard Cardinal Law
Rome, Dec. 8, 1985

by Ivan J. Kauffman

The headlines made it sound like the bishops went to Rome for a fight. "Church in Crisis" said Newsweek's cover. "Bishops at the Rome Synod Clash" read the front page headlines in the New York Times. Hundreds of reporters from all over the world went to cover it.

Would the church go left or right? That seemed to be the question so far as the press was concerned, and as a result they depicted the synod as a sort of ecclesiastical Super Bowl with the conservatives lined up against the liberals for control of the Catholic Church, covering it much the same way they would an athletic contest or a political convention.

But what actually happened was very different from a football game or a political contest—so different the press hardly knew

how to report it. The bishops themselves described the synod as "an intense moment of communion in prayer," and in the end reporters had to agree something like that happened. The final headline in the New York Times read "Bishops From All Sides, Expressing Relief, See No Clear Victors, and No Vanquished."

Speculation about the synod's purpose had been intense ever since Pope John Paul announced it last January. Some thought it was called to repeal Vatican II. Others thought its purpose was to stop the rapid growth of national bishops' conferences, especially the U.S. conference.

Instead the synod praised Vatican II in the most positive terms possible. "Unanimously we celebrate the Second Vatican Council as a grace of God and a gift of the Holy Spirit," they said. "The church, it is our firm conviction . . . finds today in the council the light and the strength which Christ has promised to give his followers in each period of history."

Of bishops' conferences the synod said,

"There is no one who doubts their pastoral usefulness, indeed even their necessity in modern times." It asked that "a theological study of their status be made, and most of all the question of their doctrinal teaching authority be more clearly and profoundly explained."

The bishops who participated described the experience in glowing terms. "The synod was a success, a great success," said Bishop James Malone, president of the U.S. bishops' conference. "It provided a resounding reaffirmation of the teachings and spirit of the Second Vatican Council."

"I have come to a new understanding and appreciation of the universality of the church," said Archbishop James Martin Hayes of Halifax, Nova Scotia. "I have never had so much contact with the church in the third world." About 60 percent of the bishops attending the synod were from nations in Africa, Asia, or Latin America.

"The pope took a risk when he called the synod," said Cardinal Godfried Daneels of Belgium, "but it succeeded."

Of course there were arguments between liberals and conservatives at the synod. Personally I'm glad there were. My observation is that hastily made decisions which don't take all sides into account don't work out very well for anybody.

But the disagreements at Rome were minor compared to the agreements—and what all the bishops at Rome, from far left to far right, seemed to agree on was that the church is experiencing the leading of the Holy Spirit, not only at Vatican II but at the synod as well.

The synod's final report ends on an emotional, almost mystical note. "Just as with the apostles in the upper room with



For the holidays,
some give
some take away.

Mary, so the Holy Spirit taught us," it says. It concludes with an expression of hope for "that 'new Pentecost' of which Pope John XXIII spoke and which we with all Christian faithful await from the Holy Spirit."

Very few reporters know how to write stories which take the Holy Spirit seriously, but if you leave the Holy Spirit out of this story it really doesn't make very much sense. When we humans run things on our own there are winners and losers. But when the Holy Spirit runs things everybody wins.

Three maxims on the synod

Reports on the synod are like a spaghetti western

by Dick Dowd

Like a Roman soothsayer of old, I offer you these "beware," as you attempt to decide for yourself what effect, if any, the recently completed synod in Rome will have on you and your life in your parish church.

There is a good possibility that despite the massive strength of 500 reporters providing daily coverage to the major newspapers and wire services, the story of the special synod on the Vatican Council may come out like a "spaghetti western." That's what irreverent movie critics call the multi-lingual European horse operas (usually shot in Spain) which show up on late night cable TV.

In these "eastern westerns" each player uses his own language and when the final film is shown in each country, the native

actor alone is heard on the original sound track while the rest of the players have their dialogue dubbed in by other voices.

Much the same is likely to happen concerning the synod. The reporters reflect their own country's special interests and ignore serious concerns from the rest of the world. Unless you looked very hard, all you heard in the United States, at first, were the traditional liberal melodies of artificial contraception, divorce and priesthood for women.

There were other important themes, however, as the delegates rose to ask for justice for the poor, instruction in Christian morals, return to prayer and penance, and a balance between the Vatican "central authority" and the local churches "autonomy," as a start on their lists.

Maxim 1: Don't assume the Church Universal revolves solely around the concerns of the United States. Beware lest you confuse the Church of Home with the Church of Rome.

Jim Franklyn, the Boston Globe's doughty chief religion writer, caught the essence of the major change in his Rome

dispatches when he told proper Bostonians that "the leadership of the Catholic Church shows a different face here than it did just 20 years ago." As of 1985, the Catholic Church is no longer primarily a European based, first-world-style organization.

Unlike the Second Vatican Council which included all 2,500 bishops of the world, this special synod was limited to 165. Each bishop delegate present was a leader of his country's hierarchy, either elected by his peers (as was Bishop Malone, our delegate) or specially appointed by the pope. We were looking at top church leadership from every nation on the globe.

"The faces of the Catholic hierarchy attending this synod are predominantly brown and black and yellow. Two-thirds are men of color and 60 percent are from the Third World," Jim wrote. He cited as his authority the Cardinal Archbishop of Brussels, Godfried Daneels, the official relator (general secretary) of the synod who monitored the day to day private sessions.

This late 20th century change in church leadership is as dramatic as the 3rd cen-

tury rise from the catacombs. For the first Christian Emperor Constantine, the church was no longer seen as another Jewish sect like the Essenes, but a new faith and new way of life for Jew and Gentile alike.

Maxim 2: Don't get caught living in the past rather than for the future. Beware lest you confuse the church of the nearly-ended second millennium with the church of the third.

Because the synod was an advisory body to the pope, many writers concentrated on the effect of the events on the pope or his men in the Curia. You might think the synod speeches and public statements were directed solely at the office of Pope John Paul II.

As the delegates of Vatican II discovered, however, church assemblies often defy the laws of mathematics and the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts. The council had a life of its own, particularly in its rediscoveries of the truths of religious liberty and the importance of worship in the language of the people. So did the synod.

Equally important as the changes that may be wrought in the Vatican by what was said and heard at the synod are the changes that may be wrought in the individual churches of the world. The bishops were surely speaking to each other as well as to the pope.

Maxim 3: Beware lest you think the synod ended its work on December 8, 1985. It has just begun.

Reactions to synod overturned old categories

by Richard B. Scheiber

An extraordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops just ended two weeks ago. The purpose of the meeting, to quote Pope John Paul, was "to exchange and deepen experiences and information concerning the application of the (Second Vatican) Council at the level of the universal church and particular churches."

In other words, it's been 20 years since Vatican II, and the Holy Father thought it was about time he and the bishops of the world got together and took a look at the results of this watershed religious event. Not a bad idea. Even the owner of the corner hardware store takes a look at his business from time to time to see what needs to be changed, what needs to remain the same. If he doesn't, he runs the risk of going out of business.

Not that the local hardware store and the Roman Catholic Church are in the same category. Far from it. But when something as monumental as the Second Vatican Council happens to an institution as venerable as the church, and as complex as the church, it makes sense to look at the results from time to time.

When the topic for this extraordinary assembly was announced, namely, a review of the effects of Vatican II, a curious thing began to happen. Some people immediately began to panic. They began to worry that Pope John Paul II was calling the meeting to undo some of the things wrought by the Second Vatican Council. Then there were others who took the opposite view: that it was about time somebody called a halt, or at least a slowdown in some of the changes. Let things at least stay the same, they said. Better yet, let's go back to some of the "old ways."

Now there is a monumental switch for you! The small percentage of Catholics who seem enamored of change in the church, often simply because it's different,

were suddenly crying for leaving things the way they are, and on the other side, an equally small percentage of Catholics who have traditionally found almost any change upsetting, crying for more movement, even if it is to be backwards.

Actually, there is considerable merit on each side of the discussion. All of us have a long way to go if we are to give life to the ideals of Vatican II, and this is not the time to try to put a stop to what that council put in motion. In fact, since the Holy Spirit spoke through the council, it would be impossible to stop that movement.

Still, there have been some excesses in our attempts to implement the council. We could, for example, use a little more discipline in the ranks, a little more respect for the authority of the Holy Father and the bishops who, after all, do hold the commission given by Jesus through Peter to sanctify, teach and govern.

We could also use a little less acrimony among Catholics who disagree, and a little more emphasis on the fundamental truth that we are all members of the same body—Christ's body, the church.



the criterion

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ENTERTAINMENT

viewing with ARNOLD

'Holmes' begins well but ends up like 'Goonies'

by James W. Arnold

If you were Sherlock Holmes, would you want Steven Spielberg to make a movie about your youth? That's something like asking the local bishop if he'd like to be profiled in Playboy.

Well, the worst happens in "Young Sherlock Holmes," and I mean the worst. For a brief time, this is a nice little, slightly bizarre but nostalgic tale about popular culture's greatest detective hero as he might have been as a schoolboy. Not a bad idea, given the penchant of today's movies to turn all of life's mystery into adolescent adventure. Sort of "I Was a Teenage Sherlock Holmes."

But then suddenly, and disastrously, young Sherlock is shocked to death. He is Spielberg-ized into Indiana Jones, and we're back in familiar territory: chanting monks in some obscene temple sacrificing helpless maidens, hairbreadth escapes from doom, wild chases into spooky cemeteries that come alive with repulsive ghouls, heroic hand-to-hand combat with assorted evil beings amid flames and crumbling sets, etc.

It might be fun in another movie, or if you hadn't seen most of it before. But it's incredible irony that Holmes—who is the virtual patriarch and symbol of the cerebral, thinking person's detective story tradition—is used as a lure to drag us into



still another mindless special effects adventure full of violence and melodramatic corn.

At start and finish, producer Spielberg inserts helpful titles absolving Sir Arthur Conan Doyle of blame, suggesting that "Young Sherlock" is only an "affectionate speculation" about the detective's tender years. A better term is "ripoff."

One of the goals, apparently, is to provide an explanation for many of the endearing themes and icons associated with the adult Holmes—from his deer-stalker cap and pipe to his personal isolation and lack of emotion. It would be easier to accept if there was keener understanding of what Holmes is all about, and what will keep him alive long after these clowns are forgotten.

The writer here is young Chris Columbus ("Gremlins," "The Goonies") who recycles ideas not only from those films and Indiana Jones, but "Poltergeist" as well. E.g., the bad guys are a fanatic cult of Egyptians who are grimly determined to get revenge on a group of Englishmen for digging up sacred ground in Egypt to build a hotel. One of the film's most unintentionally funny moments is when we hear the verbal explanation of how they manage to build and repopulate the cult and a huge underground pyramid-temple in the heart of Victorian London using "lost souls" from the city streets.

The victims are zapped with blowgun darts, which force them (and us) to endure horrific hallucinations of the kind usually imagined only by Hollywood writers poolside. Thus, the opening shocker ("Alien" revisited) is of a monster



YOUNG SLEUTH—In a daring attempt to rescue his beloved Elizabeth, Nicholas Rowe, as the budding sleuth Holmes, leaps from the altar erected by a sinister religious cult in "Young Sherlock Holmes," a Paramount release. Calling it an "utterly delightful" film, the U.S. Catholic Conference classifies it A-II and recommends it. (NC photo)

emerging from an old gentleman's Christmas pheasant, plus various other creepy-crawlies later on. Technically speaking, the best is a stained-glass window warrior who descends to chase an elderly chapel cleric into the path of a passing coach. More benevolent are a horde of Christmas pastries that come alive and try to stuff themselves down chubby young Watson's throat. Aside from these, it's strictly ickies time in Old London.

If you can ignore the occasional horror fantasies, the first half hour rather likeably sets up what might have been a pleasantly sentimental addition to the Holmes legend. The midteen versions of Sherlock (Nicholas Rowe) and Watson (Alan Cox) are warm and consistent, in looks and disposition, with the Conan Doyle spirit.

Sherlock is thin and tall, thoughtful, obsessed with intellectual challenges, and in love with a very kind girl (Sophie Ward). He engages in a war of pranks with a supercilious rival, and the aura of the 19th century London school is captured with subtlety and texture. Young Watson is timid, thick, fussy, worried about endangering his medical career, but loyal and brave in the crunch.

Once the Egyptian plot takes over, though, these three are essentially a re-run

of the Goonies. Among the ludicrous events: a chase in which the kids pursue the villain over London in a steam-propelled flying machine with flapping wings, and a climactic sword-fight between Sherlock and the heavy—where do the swords come from?—in the latelate London dock area. It's the kind of film where the producers must say, "What the heck, let's throw that in, too."

Is it conceivable such a movie will at least whet the interest of the young, and turn them from Mike Hammer to explore the real Sherlock Holmes? Perhaps. But what will they do when they discover there are no special effects beyond the baying of a hound on the moors?

(Not recommended for pre-adolescent children.)

USCC classification—A-II, adults and adolescents.

Recent USCC Film Classifications

A Chorus Line A-IV
The Jewel of the Nile A-III
Spies Like Us O

Legend: A-I—general patronage; A-II—adults and adolescents; A-III—adults; A-IV—adults, with reservations; O—morally offensive. A high recommendation from the USCC is indicated by the * before the title.

Eight-part PBS special explores mystique of Texas

by Henry Herx

Larry Hagman, the actor you love to hate as J.R. Ewing on the CBS series "Dallas," is the host of "Lone Star," an eight-part history of Texas premiering Sunday, Dec. 15, 10-11 p.m. EST on PBS.

Based on historian T.R. Fehrenbach's book of the same title, the series ushers in the Texas Sesquicentennial celebrating the

150th anniversary of the establishment of Texas as an independent republic in 1836.

The first program, "Living the Legend," examines the so-called Texas mystique by trying to separate reality from the many myths that have grown up about this larger-than-life state.

Although the approach tries for a little humor and self-kidding about cowboys and oil, it is obvious that Texans seriously

consider themselves a special breed of American. If the boastful self-image projected by these Texans—almost exclusively Anglos—is any indication, modesty is a virtue unknown within the boundaries of the state.

The second program in the series, however, is as fascinating as the first was tiresome. Describing the state's geography and early inhabitants, "A Land Untamed" airs Sunday, Dec. 22, 10-11 p.m. EST on PBS.

Beginning with a photographic tour that displays the splendor and variety of the vast terrain that makes up Texas, the program turns to the first settlers of the region. Known as the Old Americans, these people vanished as the climate changed to be succeeded centuries later by hundreds of different Indian tribes.

The first Spaniard to reach Texas brought back stories Indians told him about seven cities of gold. Setting out in 1540 on an expedition to find them, Coronado brought back nothing but his maps and descriptions of the territory.

It was not until 1731 that Spain began to colonize Texas, bringing Canary Islanders to settle San Antonio. They were the first ranchers of what was to become a mighty cattle industry. Filmed during a festival, the program offers many splendid views of the city and its people.

The historic missions, in particular, are highlighted and their role in settling the area is explained by Fehrenbach as well as other qualified historians. In converting the Indians, the missions were paternalistic but humanitarian, unlike the English colonies whose Indian policy was one of extermination.

The program ends in the 1790s with the

From the 15th-century chapel of King's College in Cambridge, England, comes this traditional service retelling the story of the nativity through readings and carols sung by the college choir.

Wednesday, Dec. 25, 10-11 p.m. EST (PBS) "In Performance at the White House." President and Mrs. Reagan join Leontyne Price at Shiloh Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., in this rebroadcast of a program of gospel music and spirituals, including "Rock My Soul," "Go Tell It on the Mountain" and "Amazing Grace."

Thursday, Dec. 26, 8-9 p.m. EST (PBS) "A Walk Through the 20th Century With Bill Moyers: Change, Change." In a program originally aired last year, Moyers examines how much American society was changed during the 1960s by the impact of television, automation, computerization, riots, protests, political assassinations, the moon landing and the war in Vietnam.

Friday, Dec. 27, 9-10:30 p.m. EST (PBS) "Rossini at Versailles." Filmed in the Royal Opera House and the Chapel at the Palace of Versailles, this program recreates a 19th-century ball with a cast headed by Marilyn Horne and Montserrat Caballé in performance of Rossini arias.

Television programs of special interest to viewers

Sunday, Dec. 22, 8-9 p.m. EST (NBC) "Mickey's Christmas Carol." First broadcast last year, this animated holiday special features Mickey and Minnie Mouse, Donald Duck, Goofy and other Walt Disney cartoon characters in a small-fry's version of Charles Dickens' Yuletide classic.

Sunday, Dec. 22, 8-10 p.m. EST (CBS) "A Christmas Carol." George C. Scott gives a sympathetic performance as Scrooge in an excellent adaptation that is quite faithful to the spirit of Dickens' original. Beautifully filmed on location in the Victorian houses and streets of an English town, the production has great atmosphere, sincere warmth and fine acting. First aired last Christmas, this Christopher Award-winning program is highly recommended for family viewing.

Monday, Dec. 23, 8-10 p.m. EST (PBS) "Wonderworks: Box of Delights." Based on the John Masefield story, the program is about the strange and fantastic adventures of a young student on his way home for the Christmas holidays. This British production was originally broadcast in three parts last year on "Wonderworks."

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 10-11 p.m. EST (PBS) "A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols."



TV FARE—Cowboy Tom Blasingame, who has ridden the range for 71 years, is one of the Texans featured on "Lone Star," an eight-part PBS series which began Dec. 15. "Dallas" star Larry Hagman is host of the series. (NC photo)

arrival of the first Anglos in the area. They were adventurers who saw Texas as a land of opportunity and Spanish rule too weak to exercise control.

Coming the following week, of course, is Sam Houston, the Alamo and the founding of the Lone Star Republic.

Although the first program largely misfired, the visualization of the state's Spanish heritage in the second installment gets the series underway as serious history presented in an engaging and very watchable style.

TO THE EDITOR

Mrs. Evans requests corrections

Your good intent is well appreciated in the Faith, Family and Football awards article (The Criterion, Dec. 6). I hasten, however, to make two corrections to the article lest we appear to fly under false colors.

I am not a past president of the National Office for Black Catholics as mentioned in the fifth paragraph. I am the organizer, founder and past president of Archdiocesan Black Catholics Concerned (the full and proper name of the organization with the concurrence and blessing of Archbishop George J. Biskup). My relationship with the National Office for Black Catholics was

as area chairperson and archdiocesan representative to that office.

My husband is an otolaryngologist and head and neck surgeon. (Editor: the article said "surgeon.") There is a difference.

If you will be good enough to place this letter in your Dec. 13 edition, any widespread misunderstanding will be forestalled. Thank you very much.

Shirley Richardson Evans

Indianapolis

(Editor's note: The letter did not arrive in time for last week's issue. We regret the errors which were in a news release from Faith, Family and Football.)

Roncalli's football championship

I am a senior at Roncalli High School. Two years ago you printed a story about Roncalli and Chatard as they were going into the state football championship games in their respective classes. Then you printed a story about the schools the next week, after Chatard won but Roncalli lost. Given this, I fully expected to see a story about Roncalli's football team as it prepared for its Class AAA championship game on Nov. 29 in the Hoosier Dome. And certainly I had hoped to see a story about our winning our first state football championship ever.

Is it too much to ask you to cover great

moments in the archdiocesan high schools' histories or are you just biased in our rivalry with Chatard? The glory of winning a state football championship has happened to Chatard twice, and now that it has happened to Roncalli, you seem to have lost interest all of a sudden.

This lack of interest has troubled and outraged me.

Mike Murphy

Indianapolis

(Editor's note: We apologize to Roncalli's students and fans. The lack of coverage wasn't intentional, but we certainly goofed.)

Two wrongs don't make a right

I would like to respond to Ms. Ricker's letter in the Nov. 22 issue of The Criterion. She praised the pro-choice nun and rationalized abortion by saying that since men have so devalued the sanctity of life through wars, it is wrong for us to tell a woman that an abortion is wrong.

Since when do two wrongs make a right? Just because she feels men did a lousy job with wars, does not give her or anyone else the right to do a worse job on the pre-born.

More lives, precious to God, have been lost through abortion than through all of "men's" wars. These lost lives leave scars just the same. 1.5 million of God's children give up their lives each year in the U.S. So our women can prove that they can be even worse than men when it comes to devaluing life. How much better it would be if women (and men) reached out and helped these poor women so that they didn't feel the only way out was to kill their baby. When

something is wrong it is always easier to blame someone else than it is to work to correct the problem.

There is no need for random fertilizations, that lead to abortions, even in this so-called male dominated world. If a woman takes a little time to learn about her own body through Natural Family Planning, She can prevent random fertilizations. She can do this without harming her body or anyone else's. (The Pill and IUD cause early abortions and have harmful side effects on the woman's body. Abortions cause physical and mental scars to the woman besides killing another human being.)

Why not do the things we can instead of complaining about everyone else's failures. Start being part of the light instead of part of the darkness.

Mary Jean Wessel

Batesville

The meaning of evangelization

I am writing in response to your column on the decline in commitment to evangelization (Dec. 6 issue). I think several points need to be made to clarify the meaning of evangelization.

If we measure evangelization by the number of Catholic converts that are brought into the church each year, then indeed we see a decline. However, another meaning for evangelization means bringing Christ's love and his values to others with whom we associate daily—being Christ bearers to others. I think in this meaning that evangelization has grown among many Christians during the years since Vatican II. Catholics and other Christians see our mission as the same. Unite to bring Christ to others. We share the common goal.

There will always remain a place for individual Christian churches as we are at different faith development stages. However, to ignore the tremendous flow of Christian good works and example and imply that evangelization is lacking among

Catholics is hurtful to committed Christians.

Regarding the definition of evangelization that stresses church affiliation, I believe that to attract the unchurched and welcome other interested people requires some changes within our church makeup. We must study what things keep people from wanting to be part of our Catholic Church and see if we can change them.

Studies show that people today are hungry for religion and meaning to life. We must do our share to attract these people to our church. This will be the greatest challenge to our church for the future. Can bishops, priests, Religious, lay men and women work together with love and respect to make our churches relevant Christ bearing communities which can be viewed by non-Catholics with a desire for participation? Can they say of us, "See how they love one another?"

Elaine Berninger

Moore's Hill

the pope teaches 'Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might'

by Pope John Paul II
Remarks at audience Dec. 11

Continuing my catechesis on the creed, I wish to speak today about the holiness of God.

The church in every age proclaims God's supreme transcendence and perfection. At each celebration of the Eucharist, we acclaim the holiness of the Blessed Trinity with the words of the "Sanctus": "Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory."

To describe the holiness of God, the sacred Scriptures use various images, such as a consuming fire or a shining light. These images symbolize the radiance and glory of God, his power and transcendence; they fascinate us, they fill us with both wonder and holy fear. They remind us that God is separate from us and, unless he helps us, he is beyond our reach.

The prophets, however, reveal to us that God has desired to draw near to the human race, to make himself accessible. The fullest expression of this "drawing near" is found in Jesus Christ, the word of God made flesh, the second person of the Holy Trinity who, in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, assumed a body like our own.



Thanks to the loving kindness of God, who did not limit himself to speaking through the prophets but actually came to live among us as a man, we can proclaim with humble and joyful faith: "You alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the most high, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen."



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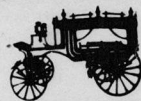
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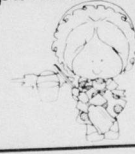
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CORNUCOPIA

Sing a song of Christmas

by Cynthia Dewes

Remember the silly song about the nerd who only wants two front teeth for Christmas? Surely he jests. Modest requests are simply not part of the Christmas culture. With Santa Claus, all things are possible. Ask any kid.

So let's sing with pizzazz and get a little wishful thinking going around the fire. How about:

God rest ye merry,
Gorbachev,
Let nothing you dismay,
Remember if the bomb goes off
There'll be no second day,
So save us from your paranoid,
unreasoning distrust,
O, send tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy.
Send us tidings of comfort and joy.

Or maybe:

O little land of Lebanon,
How still we see thee lie,
Above thy neat and silent streets
No warshots whistle by,
For from thy depths peace shineth
When others stop their fight,
O Israel, O Arab states,
Lay off, and set things right.

And listen to this:

Hark! The President is speaking,
Glory to the tax reform,
Peace on earth and balanced budgets,
Full employment be the norm,
Joyful, all ye states arise,
Laud the freedom of our skies,
Congress, you old sons of earth,
Join me in a great rebirth,
Hark! To terror we say Nuts!
Glory to no ifs, ands, but.

Maybe this carol is more to your taste:

We three kings of Middle East are,
Ghadafy, Khomeini, Yasser,
Smiling, trying to be charming,
Sorry we've been such pains,
O-o-o, now we wonder why we fight,
Why we kept you all up tight,
Westward leaning we're proceeding,
Liberty our Guiding Light.

And closer to home we hear:

Larry Flynt looked out one day,
On his feast of porno,
Saw that what he did was wrong,
Bid it all buon giorno,
Brightly bid his past goodbye,
Though the cost was cruel,
Turned to kiddie stories then,
Milk and cookies and gruel.

And one more for the road:

What child is this, who, laid to rest,
Oh, Mommy's lap is sleeping?
Who smiles all day and never cries,

Who reads before he is creeping?
This, this, is the special child,
Who drives his doting Daddy wild,
This, this, is Grandma's pet,
The Babe whose life is welcomed.

check it out...

✓ The Parish Growth and Membership Committee and the Parish Council of St. Joan of Arc Parish, 42nd and Central, will sponsor a **School of Evangelization** on 12 Sunday afternoons from 1:30 to 3 p.m. beginning Sunday, Jan. 5 in the parish center. Classroom presentation will be coupled with field practice. A registration fee of \$10 will cover books and materials. Register by calling St. Joan of Arc or John Persinger, chairman, at 283-6055 (home) or 783-2355 (work).

✓ The Office of Worship will sponsor four **Winter Programs** on "Lent/Easter Planning," "Liturgy Committees," "Communion Ministers: Ministry to the Sick," and "Cantors." "Lent/Easter" will be held on Saturday, Jan. 11, at St. Pius X Church, Indianapolis, and on Saturday, Jan. 18, at St. Anthony Church, Clarksville. Registration deadlines are Jan. 3 and Jan. 10, respectively. "Liturgy Committees" will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 4 at St. Michael Parish, Greenfield, and on Thursday, Feb. 6, at St. Paul Parish, Sellersburg. The Catholic Center in Indianapolis will host "Communion Ministers" on Saturday, Feb. 15 and "Cantors" on Saturdays, March 1 and 15. For more information on fees and deadlines, contact the Office of Worship at P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, Ind. 46206, 317-236-1483.

vips...



✓ Joseph T. Meehan, a member of the Kevin Barry Division #3, Ancient Order of Hibernians, has been named Hibernian of the Year. The award was made Dec. 7 at the Division's annual Irish Christmas Party.

✓ Recent winners of the Annual Catholic High School Art Exhibit at Marian College include: **Kathryn McCann**, Chatard High School, Best Technique Award; **Michelle Ruyicka**, Roncalli High School, Best Creativity Award; and **Michelle McNamara**, Chatard High School, Best Overall Award. A total of 36 entries for the exhibit came from the four participating schools: Roncalli, Chatard, Ritter and Shawe Memorial.



✓ Mr. and Mrs. Arthur J. Beck will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary with a Mass of Thanksgiving at 1 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 28 in Holy Name Church, Beech Grove. Their children will sponsor a reception afterward in Valle Vista Country Club. Arthur Beck and the former Marguerite Field were married Sept. 26,

1935, in Sacred Heart Church, Indianapolis. They are the parents of five sons: Joseph A., Donald A., Arthur F., Charles A. and Robert L.; and they have 17 grandchildren.

✓ Dramatist Nancy Eddy will spend one semester at St. Thomas Aquinas school in Indianapolis under a grant from the Indiana Arts Commission. St. Thomas Aquinas was one of three schools in Marion County chosen to receive an artist-in-residence grant.



✓ Robert Green, a student at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Cincinnati, recently participated in the seminary's Rite of Admission to Candidacy. Green is studying for service to the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

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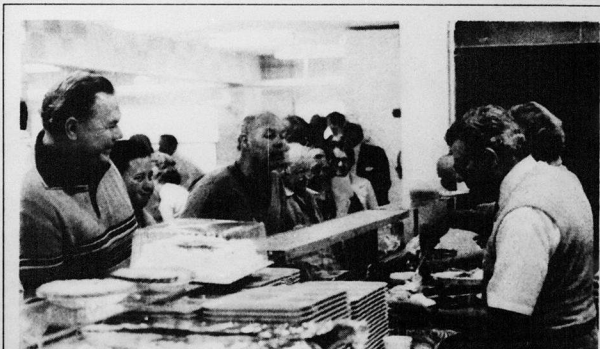
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HOLIDAY DINNER—Lou Ferrara of St. Patrick Parish, Terre Haute, helps serve dinner to 200 people from the Terre Haute area on Thanksgiving Day. The dinner was sponsored by the parish and held in the school cafeteria. Many of those served would not otherwise have had a traditional Thanksgiving meal. (Photo by Bob Poynter)

QUESTION CORNER

On what day was Jesus born?

by Fr. John Dietzen

Q I just finished reading the November copy of a magazine with an article titled "Jesus' Birth: The Untold Story." It says that Jesus was probably born in late September or early October and not on Dec. 25. I always assumed that we celebrate Christmas because that is his birthday. According to this article, it is actually a pagan holiday. I would really like to know. (Massachusetts)



A Various theories, none of them really convincing, have been put forward attempting to pinpoint the day of Christ's birth. Perhaps strange to say, the truth is that we have no idea about the date when he was born.

From information given, especially in the Gospel of Luke, scholars generally believe that Jesus was born between what we now call the years 8 and 6 B.C.

Why do we celebrate Christmas on Dec. 25? The most likely explanation, the one most generally accepted today, is that the birth of Christ was assigned to the date of the winter solstice.

This date is Dec. 21 in our calendar, the first day of winter. In the Julian calendar, however, which was used by Western civilization from the time of Julius Caesar until about 400 years ago, the date of the winter solstice was Dec. 25.

It is, incidentally, on Jan. 6 in the

Egyptian calendar, still followed by some Eastern Rite Christian churches, which is why they celebrate Christmas on that date.

The solstice, when days begin to lengthen in the northern hemisphere, was referred to by ancient pagans as the "Birthday of the Unconquered Sun."

During the third century, Emperor Aurelian proclaimed Dec. 25 as a special day dedicated to the sun god whose cult was very strong in Rome at that time.

Even before this time, Christian writers referred to Jesus as the Sun of Justice. It seemed quite proper, therefore, that as Christianity began to dominate the religious scene in the Roman Empire, the date of the "newborn sun" should be chosen as the birth date of Christ.

Apparently, as you indicate, it startles some people that the date for Christmas has its roots in a pagan feast.

It seems to be, however, the real reason we celebrate the birth of Jesus on Dec. 25.

Q What can we do with old blessed pictures and statues that we don't want to keep and can't be given away? (Florida)

A They may be burned, broken or otherwise destroyed and then discarded. Such items are no longer considered blessed once they lose their identity.

(A free brochure outlining the basic prayers, beliefs and precepts of the Catholic faith is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father Dietzen, Holy Trinity Church, 704 N. Main St., Bloomington, Ill. 61701.

(Questions for this column should be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address.)

FAMILY TALK

Christmas meditation: How our God loves us!

by Dr. James and Mary Kenny

Some months ago I returned to Chicago to visit my parents. While there, I stopped at the parish where I grew up.

Kneeling in church, relaxed, allowing my mind to wander, my eyes were captivated by the magnificent mosaic of Mary, queen of all the saints. Standing like a Greek goddess atop the world, crushing the serpent's head, radiating light and glory, she was the image of everything holy and heavenly.

Suddenly I felt: It's all wrong! This is not how she was. Mary was a frightened 15-year-old girl, nine months pregnant, traveling across a subjugated country at the whim of a politician. There was no motel reservation waiting for her at the end of her journey, no family ready to take her in, no hospital and physician prepared to help her give birth. Just a scared young girl and, except for Joseph, all alone.

I thought of all the unmarried pregnant young girls today, scared, perhaps afraid to tell their families of their condition. Perhaps they told their families and were thrown out. How strongly they must be tempted to say "no" to life and get an abortion.

Mary said "yes" and gave the world its first Christmas present. A small gift at the beginning, off to a most unpromising start, born in a barn, not much family, no money, not even food stamps or a welfare program. Unlike Greek goddesses, she was poor; she was scared. But she found the courage to say "yes" to life, and we are all the richer.

Then I began to think of God our Father. You see, I am a father too. I have had four 15-year-old girls of my own. Would I have



chosen to be human, entrusted myself to the womb of a 15-year-old without any family or financial support? Are you crazy? Don't get me wrong. I love my daughters. But 15-year-old girls are not my idea of responsibility and maturity.

Why didn't God choose to come down as a religious leader? An outer-space visitor in full glory? A political leader? Why would he ever choose an unmarried and poor 15-year-old? How vulnerable and little can you get? How much must our God love us!

The more I thought, the more I liked the idea of a frightened immature girl and a vulnerable God, accepting all the human frailties of poverty and isolation. From that very ordinary and troubled start, they teamed up to give us all an extraordinary gift.

What a story! About saying "yes" to life. About taking a big risk. About being young and scared. About giving up the "wealth" of heaven to be with the creatures you love. This story needs to be broadcast throughout the entire world. What a story about love.

(Reader questions on family living and child care to be answered in print are invited. Address questions: The Kennys, Box 872, St. Joseph's College, Rensselaer, Ind. 47978.)

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The Welcome Wanderers

By Father David K. O'Rourke, OP
NC News Service

This is a Christmas story about a country parish. Today this parish marks its Christmas holidays in its own beautiful church. Pin oaks, stripped of their leaves by the winter's winds, and acres of frosty fields surround the church. A pond by the front door, home to dozens of mallards and Canada geese, reflects the church's white Georgian steeple.

At Christmas time the children gather before the church doors and huddle together in the cold to laugh as the ducks and geese skid crazily across the ice of the frozen pond. The New Jersey setting is more reminiscent of the English countryside than the outskirts of a major urban area.

There is a feeling of permanence and stability. But it was not always this way.

A generation ago, this parish was only a community in the making. Its members had been looking for a place to gather for Mass and set down roots but with no success. An offshoot of an older parish six miles away, they were looking for land but found none that was for sale to them.

With the approach of Christmas they had not been able to find a place to celebrate their Midnight Mass.

Then a local farmer, a Presbyterian, heard of the plight of this fledgling parish. With a strong sense of hospitality and an equally fine sense of biblical history, he offered them the use of his stable for Christmas Mass.

In the midst of the animals, the community celebrated its first Christmas. St. Luke's familiar words about the birth of Jesus were heard where the smell of sweet hay mixed with the pungent odors of the stalls, and iron shoes struck against the ground.

In the dead cold of mid-winter

people gathered to re-enact the ancient rite of welcome, warmed by the steaming breath of the skitish horses.

Because of its ability to appeal to our hearts and the family traditions that we associate with it, Christmas is a celebration that we surround with custom. We give to its rituals, both in the church and in the home, a sense of permanence.

We take tree ornaments and table decorations out of the boxes where they have lain stored and if they are beginning to show some of the wear of years it doesn't matter. They will go to their usual places because they have always gone there.

We put the Christmas tree in the corner by the window because that's where the tree always goes. For a society so much on the move, we manage, for a few weeks at least, to come up with some signs of permanence and stability.

□ □ □

There is, of course, nothing wrong with this desire. Stability is a human need and God entered into human history so that our longing for permanence might be fulfilled.

The tragedy of the modern world is that this desire is fulfilled for so few people. So many seem condemned to live as wanderers.

•There are the many poor, who float on the margins of our otherwise stable communities.

•And there are the spiritual wanderers, many of them within our communities, who do not have the sense of purpose and direction that makes lives hold together.

Perhaps one of the greatest gifts to be given the people in our world is a share in our own stability.

Perhaps the church's work of evangelization would be more understandable if it were presented as a welcome to the wanderer.

□ □ □

The first Christmas in Bethlehem took place in a setting that had little permanence or

stability. A young couple on the road was finally invited into a place of rest.

This New Jersey parish's first Christmas celebration bore many obvious similarities to the very first Christmas.

In each case, an act of welcome made the difference.

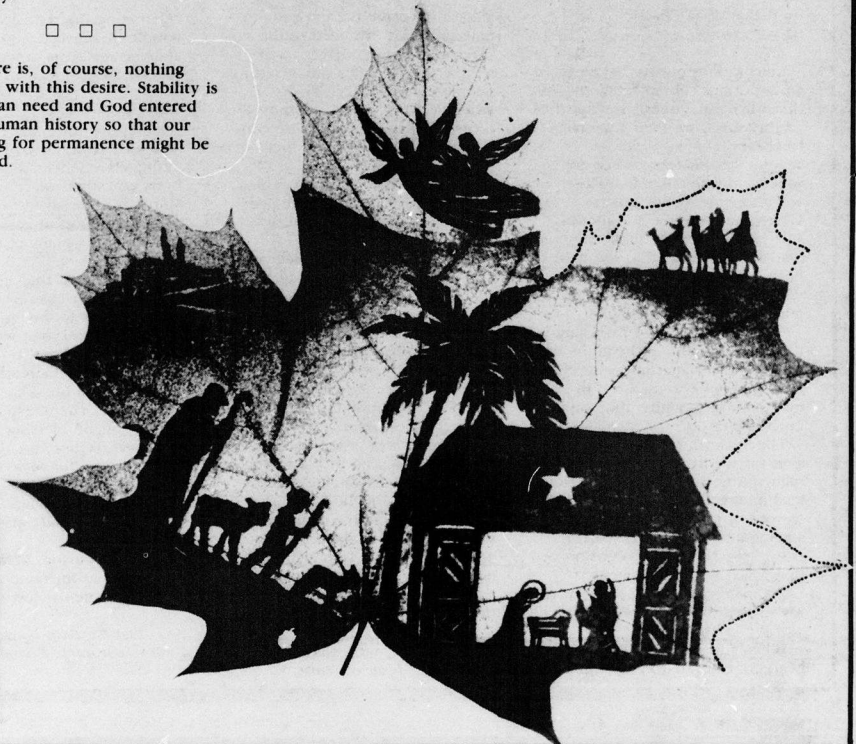
As members of a 2,000-year-old church, an institution seen today as the very symbol of permanence, we do well to remember our origins. We too were once wanderers, dependent on the kindness of others.

Today we live in a world of wanderers, people who in one sense or another, have no home.

Expressing hospitality to others in need can be a reminder of our origins. It is certainly a part of our heritage.

(Father O'Rourke is associate director of the Family Life Office in the Diocese of Oakland, Calif.)

A New Jersey parish without a church...A couple, far from home, with no place to stay. Perhaps we are all wanderers at one time or another, writes Father David K. O'Rourke, wanderers in need of welcome.



What? No Socks for Christmas?

By Dan Morris
NC News Service

I distinctly remember how difficult it used to be to figure out what to get my father for Christmas. There was the standing list: socks, Old Spice, tie. But I always felt I wanted to be able to present him with something out of the ordinary, special, unique. Something that would surprise and delight him.

Down deep, I think I wanted to get him something that would make him proud of me too. Looking back on it, that present clearly meant a lot more to me than him.

What got me to reflecting on that is my own children asking me what I would like for Christmas, most specifically a conversation I had with my oldest daughter recently.

"What do you want for Christmas?" she asked.
"A Bruce Springsteen comb and brush set would be nice," I said offhandedly.

"Cute, dad," she smirked.
"Really, what do you want?"

"How about a Christmas tree that does not shed needles, a dog that does not shed hair, a teenager who doesn't shed everything

everywhere and a shed to store them in?" I smiled.

"Dad," she said, in her please-get-serious voice.

"Well," I said, narrowing my eyes, "I could use some new socks and I'm nearly out of Old Spice."

"That's what we always get you. And don't say a tie."

I thought for a moment. "How about a lawn-mower blade that can stand up to coat hangers, toy road-graders and croquet balls?"

"Better yet," I went on, "how about a tie clip engraved with my blood type and phone number just in case I get hit by a bus or strangled by the copy machine at work?"

I was on a roll. "Hey, I know — a mink hammock. Or a sound-proof room of my own with a wet bar."

She smiled somewhat tolerantly. "I see we are in one of our David Letterman moods," she said.

From her tone of voice I sensed that despite her good humor in putting up with my kidding there was something else going on.

"Seriously, Marie," I said. "I really can't think of anything I need except maybe some socks

and some new wallet photos of you kids."

"Well, I was thinking," she said, pausing for a second and taking a breath, "about something Father William said to us last year about Christmas presents." Father William is one of our parish priests.

She went on. "He said once he asked people not to give him presents but to do a good deed for someone and write that down on a piece of paper and then give it to him. What would you think if this year I did something like that? It wouldn't be like a real present with a box and everything."

Talk about instant lump in the throat.

"I don't know how you could give anyone anything nicer," I managed, hugging her. "It makes me so proud of you."

It's going to be a special Christmas. Who cares if my toes stick out of my socks for another 12 months.

(Dan Morris is editor of The Catholic Voice, Oakland, Calif.)

Appalachia Christmas

By Cindy Liebhart
NC News Service

Rodney Frey remembers one special Christmas six or seven years ago.

Some weeks before Christmas, a man Frey knew was injured in a logging accident in the hills of southern Kentucky. The man, a husband and father of eight children, was unable to work because of his injuries and the family was "in a pretty tight situation," Frey said.

Frey and his brother, who lived nearby, knew of the family's hardships. They decided to bring a couple of large hams to the family on Christmas morning.

It wasn't an extraordinary or heroic gesture to Frey. It was just what a person did to help a neighbor in need.

The family, in turn, invited the two brothers in to share their Christmas meal. With the hams, there were sweet potatoes and cornbread, home-canned vegetables from the root cellar — a simple but festive meal.

For Frey, the family's hospitality transformed what might have been a bleak Christmas into a celebration filled with warmth and meaning.

"My brother and I didn't have any family then," Frey recalls. "We supplied the meat for the table, but they supplied us with the family that Christmas."

"You can get a ham at a grocery store but you can't get a family there," he reflects.

Frey, now 34, grew up in a "very poor but happy family" just outside Somerset, Ky., a town nestled in the western foothills of the Appalachian Mountains.

Frey, who is raising his 2-year-old daughter as a single parent, has been disabled since 1980 by a disease of the central nervous system. He volunteers much of his time to help out at St. Mildred's Outreach Center — stacking groceries for the food pantry, sorting clothes at the clothing center, fixing electrical appliances people bring in, delivering loads of coal to nearby families, or just visiting with someone who needs a friend.

He remembers that while presents and pretty decorations were uncommon in his home, Christmas was still a colorful time as the entire family would come together — parents, children, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins.

The Spirit of Celebration

By Father John Castelot
NC News Service

Celebrations always have played an important role in religion. The first Christians inherited a spirit of celebration from their Jewish forebears.

Some Jewish feasts were quite sober and reflective, like Passover and Atonement. But others were more carefree and joyous, such as the feast of Sukkoth (variously translated as the feast of huts, booths, tabernacles, tents). It was originally a fall harvest feast, much like Thanksgiving.

During the week of gathering in the crops, threshing the grain and pressing the grapes and olives, the Jewish people camped out in makeshift huts which they put up in the fields.

The Sukkoth feast was an occasion for warm camaraderie and high spirits. In the course of time, leading men in the community danced in the temple courtyards, singing and waving lighted torches. So gala was the occasion that a saying became current: "The man who has never seen the joy of this night has never seen real joy in all his life."

When the Jewish liturgy had been concentrated in Jerusalem,

Sukkoth became the most important and most crowded of the three annual pilgrimages to the temple. Even in this urban setting, people erected leafy bowers wherever they could, even on the roofs of their houses. These constructions were then the focus of rejoicing for seven days.

Inevitably the ritual developed over the years. There were processions in which people carried branches and citrus fruits symbolizing the harvest. And since rainfall was so important in an agrarian economy, prayers for rain became a dominant feature of the feast. The prayers themselves became dramatized.

On each of the seven mornings of the feast, a procession went down to the fountain of Gihon where a priest filled a golden pitcher with water. Then the procession went back up to the temple, with the crowds singing and carrying symbols of the feast.

Upon reaching the altar the priest walked around it and the priest poured the water into a silver funnel. On the seventh day they walked around the altar seven times.

Hannukkah, too, was a joyous week: the "feast of lights."

celebrating the rededication of the temple in 164 B.C., on the third anniversary of its desecration by the Syrians.

But the liveliest of all Jewish celebrations took place on the feast of Purim (Lots). This feast is intimately connected with the Book of Esther, niece of the pious Mordecai. She saved the Jews from extinction in Persia, thus thwarting the plans of the evil Haman.

On the eve of the celebration, lamps were lit in every house and the two days following were days of revelry. Everyone went to the synagogue to listen to the story of Esther. During the reading the people would break in with curses for Haman. The meeting closed with a solemn blessing for Mordecai, Esther and all Israelites.

Purim was the occasion for distribution of presents and alms. It was a largely secular feast, filled with banquets and various amusements.

Later the custom of wearing disguises was introduced and Purim became the Jewish carnival.

(Father Castelot teaches at St. John's Seminary, Plymouth, Mich.)

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

A Supplement to The Criterion



Merry Christmas
from
The Criterion Club

Richard Can
Dad Jones
Louise Williams
Keith H. Williams
Dennis Jones
Emily L. Lewis

John T. Kirk
John Johnson
Darle King
Sarah Campbell
Jeffery Blanchard

Christmas celebrations around the archdiocese

by Jim Jachimiak

Parishes, like families, develop their own ways of celebrating the Christmas season.

At St. Susanna, Plainfield, parishioners from pre-school to adult participate in a variety of Christmas activities. The sick, handicapped, shut-ins, needy families and children are all remembered, says Providence Sister Marilyn Therese Lipps, director of religious education.

Children at St. Susanna School began the season with the blessing of the Advent wreath. For religious education students, an explanation of the wreath and a prayer for each week were sent home. "A Super Gift from God" was dramatized on the stage of Public Service Indiana in Plainfield on Dec. 11. The play featured children from the parish telling the story of the birth of Christ. Residents of Plainfield's two nursing homes were visited by carolers from St. Susanna. During all Masses this weekend, children will bring wrapped toys to the altar. The Plainfield Jaycees distribute the toys to children of families in need throughout Guilford Township of Hendricks County.

As part of the Church Federation of Plainfield, St. Susanna's assists in supplying food and clothing for the

needy through the Christian Support Center. Many women of the parish volunteer to serve in the storeroom where the food and clothing are distributed. Parishioners also support the Hendricks County Mental Health Clinic during the holiday season.

The final Christmas Mass, at 10:30 a.m., is the Children's Mass of Participation. Children read, present the petitions and bring up the offertory gifts, including a small birthday cake. They have a silent dramatization of the Gospel as Father Richard Zore reads the Christmas story from a children's Christmas story book.

ST. MAURICE Parish, Napoleon, emphasizes Advent, says Benedictine Sister Mary Cecile Deken, pastoral minister and DRE. Parishioner David Engelking has built a four-foot Advent wreath and makes candles for the decorations in the church and parish hall. The Evangelization Committee at St. Maurice decorates an Advent tree with envelopes containing the names of inactive or unchurched persons. Prayers are offered for those people. In addition, Msgr. Joseph Brokhage, administrator of the parish, sends them a letter of welcome which includes the times of Christmas penance

services, private confession and Masses.

On Dec. 14, Napoleon churches held a reception at Central House, a restored building used for community activities, followed by Christmas caroling. This Sunday, a Progressive Dinner and a tour of historic buildings, including the St. Maurice parish plant, will be held.

The peak of the holiday celebration will be the Christmas Masses. The choir will be accompanied by organ, trumpet, flute and cello. High school seniors will take part in a traditional procession to the crib, and a contemporary version of the proclamation of Jesus' birth will be read.

Benedictine Sister Mary Philip Seib, pastoral minister and DRE at St. Maurice in Decatur County, said Advent was ushered in there with the parish's first Family Program. Forty adults, teens and children gathered in the parish hall for a pitch-in dinner, songs and group work. Jan and Hank Herpel coordinated the experience, which included reflections on Scripture, gifts, what it means to belong, and Jesus as redeemer of the world.

During Advent, parishioners are given a handout with Advent Scripture readings for each day. Rose Wolter has planned decorations for the sanctuary, including Theresa Nobbe's banner, reading "Come Lord Jesus." Church decorations include a wooden crib made by Clarence Fisse, an Advent wreath made by Charles Fisse, and crocheted tree decorations made by women of the parish. The Decatur County parish also uses the proclamation of Jesus' birth, and

small children bring the figure of the Infant Jesus to the crib in procession.

THE MILAN Council of Churches, including St. Charles Parish, emphasizes help for the needy during the holiday season, notes parishioner Phyllis A. Roberts. Other churches which make up the council are Milan Methodist, Milan Baptist and St. Paul's Lutheran. Reed and Appie Thompson chair the Christmas project. Mrs. Thompson is a member of St. Charles.

The Thompsons compile a list of families for each church, including children's names, ages, gender, size and garments needed. Church members and groups buy for the needy.

Food and money are also donated by the churches, with the money going toward turkeys and toys. Members of the churches sort the food, wrap clothing and toys, and deliver them the Saturday before Christmas. Santa Claus usually accompanies those making the deliveries to families with small children, and Milan's merchants support the project. Collections are also taken at the four churches' combined Lenten service, and the churches maintain a food and clothing cupboard all year.

A "giving tree" introduced last year at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin, is being repeated this year. A Christmas tree at the front of the church holds paper ornaments containing a needy person's first name, information on clothing sizes and a suggested gift. Parishioners take the (See PARISH CHRISTMAS on page 13)

Christmas message from Archbishop O'Meara

Greetings to all of you in the Lord Jesus Christ!

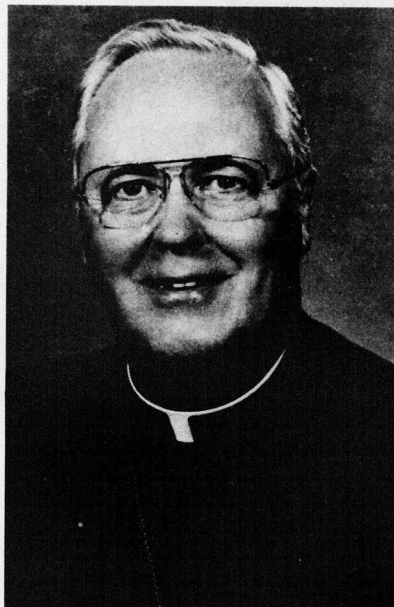
In a few days we will live out again the feast of the birth of him through whom all things were made, without whom there was made nothing that was made. Having taken to himself our humanness in every respect save for our sinfulness, the Father's Image, his Word, his very Son, entered into the affairs of humankind so completely and totally that he is the Lord of History, the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.

This is the child we reverence and worship this Christmas, aware that only 15 more such observances remain to us before the third millennium of Christ's Era dawns for us. As we ponder this year's festival and look forward to the year 2000 and beyond, let us look back and let us look ahead in the joy that is ours because Christ, who is so truly with us, is renewing the grace of his coming as we live again the events of his coming in the liturgy of the church.

LOOKING BACK at this century, what contests it presents! In the secular order, the explosion of knowledge simply staggers our individual minds. More has been discovered and learned in the 1900s than in all previous human experience; we of the human species can do so many things so well that we literally have reason to fear our very genius and inventiveness.

In the spiritual and the religious area, we have witnessed an extension of the human family's awareness of the Christmas child such as has not happened in all the rest of the first two millennia—there are now 850 million Christians in the Roman Catholic faith communion alone. In union with all of them, and indeed with consciousness of our union with all in the human family who have been baptized into the Christ event, we will celebrate this year's Christmas.

Within our own church, the religious event of the century has taken place. The assembly of the chief pastors of the church throughout the world in the Second Vatican Council enabled the church to reexamine itself, the human family, the world itself, and the Lord Jesus to whom all history tends. We are living in the ever unfolding light of that event, and will continue to do so into the next thousand years.



WHICH MAKES it time to look forward. Acting from the same kind of instantaneous impulse which prompted Pope John XXIII to decree a general council, Pope John Paul II convened this year a mini-council, an extraordinary synod of the chief pastors of the church. Even now its message is beginning to unfold and, as it does, I ask everyone in the archdiocese to summon a positive response to the challenges the synod offers and the demands that it may make of us. Remember when we prayed daily before the council began? We asked God to help us to accept what the council decreed and willingly carry it out. Let this be our prayer again as we look to the next 15 years.

During these years till 2000 comes, I have four particular hopes for the archdiocese. The first is

that we may all learn to live the Gospel together, to work together at the task of being the church, to look at the world in union with concern for peace and for justice. Let us do this in a way that is a faithful image of the manner in which the pastors of the church speak and act collegially in union with our Holy Father. This is my vision of what sharing responsibility is all about; this is what the priests of the archdiocese have repeatedly requested in their council.

Let us, too, continue the work of the renewal of our worship in the celebration of all the liturgy of the church. I testify to you that the fruits of this renewal are evident everywhere and are simply beautiful to behold. More is possible, more is needed and more will be forthcoming.

FOR MY third hope I lay before you the need to learn how to work more effectively for the visible reunion of Christ's body, the church. The Holy Spirit calls us to this; the council and the synod urge us to it; the Holy Father himself has irrevocably committed the church to this course. During these 15 years, may we in the archdiocese learn how to be ecumenical and to do ecumenism more worthily.

The final facet of my vision is for a greater awareness of the imperatives of evangelization. Pope Paul VI called the church to take more seriously the mandate of the Lord Jesus to announce the message, to preach the Gospel, to shed the light of God's truth everywhere and on all, in fullness and completeness. These ideas must make more and more alive all our educational and catechetical efforts, our struggles for peace and justice, our demands that human dignity and human life be always respected.

Thanks for coming this far with me. May Christmas 1985 be one of peace and joy for you and yours. May the Lord grant all of us the pardon of the year's inadequacies, failings and sinfulness. May he make us keenly aware of his presence and his loving care as we look to 1986 and beyond.

Sincerely yours in him,

Edward T. O'Meara
Most Rev. Edward T. O'Meara, S.T.D.
Archbishop of Indianapolis

Parish Christmas celebrations

(Continued from page 12)
ornaments and buy for the needy. Mary McCormick and Conrad Montoya coordinate the project.

At St. Roch Parish in Indianapolis, 120 families are being helped through a giving tree. The tree is placed on the altar, with a child's Christmas wish printed on each ornament. The project is also supported by Cathedral High School and by parish schools at Immaculate Heart, St. Gabriel, St. Jude, St. Roch and St. Malachy, Brownsburg.

St. John's Parish in Osgood sponsored a Christmas meal last year for anyone in Ripley County who was spending Christmas alone or didn't have a Christmas meal to look forward to. The project will be repeated this year, says Father John Minta, pastor.

Beginning at noon on Christmas day, volunteers will serve a turkey dinner in the parish hall. At the same time, others will be delivering meals, groceries and other gifts to shut-ins. "Anybody who has made a reser-

vation will get a meal," Father Minta says. Last year, about 80 meals were delivered and 75-100 were served at the church, and Father Minta expects the numbers to be higher this year.

The dinner is actually a community project. "People from all of the churches volunteer to help and contribute," Father Minta explains. "Because of the generosity of many merchants, churches and individuals, we are also able to give groceries and gifts." But, he adds, "the real winners are the ones who help."

St. Philip Neri Church in Indianapolis began a similar project, Christmas with Christ, four years ago. The goal is to provide an outfit of clothing and two toys for each child in a family, plus a food basket. Committees begin working each October on such areas as finance, visiting the 300 families which will be helped, wrapping 10,000 packages, and picking up and delivering food and gifts. Thirteen parishes will assist St. Philip Neri this year.

Newborn babies served by Birthline will be helped by St. Michael Parish, Greenfield. A 6 p.m.

will include a pageant illustrating the Christmas story. During the offertory procession, families will bring gifts for newborn babies to the manger to honor the Infant Jesus. The wrapped items—Pampers, canned baby formula, baby blankets, sleepers, bibs, etc.—will be given to Birthline for families in need.


St. Anne Parish, Hamburg, has undertaken a similar project, a Pro-Life Christmas Tree. Parishioners are asked to place baby items on or under a tree in the church. The items will be given to the Crisis Pregnancy Center serving that area. St. Anne's is also planning a procession with grade school children at the beginning of midnight Mass, to place the Christ Child in the crib. The first communion class will choose children to play Mary and Joseph; the rest of the children will dress as angels and shepherds.

Santa Claus will visit children at Holy Angels Church in Indianapolis on Christmas Eve. He will join them for a 6 p.m. Mass, then invite them to pray with him at the crib. After the Mass, Santa and the children will celebrate the birthday of Jesus in (See CHRISTMAS on page 16)



GIVING TREE—Decorating the giving tree at St. Roch Church are, from left, Kathy Hoff, Kerry Blandford (St. Roch's principal), Heidi Hoff, Katie Hoff and Pat Meyer. A child's Christmas wish is printed on each ornament on the tree, and parishioners take ornaments and buy gifts for the children.

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Theology 101

What the Catholic Church teaches about the mystery of the Incarnation

by John F. Fink

We all know that Christmas celebrates the birthday of Jesus; even little children are taught that. But adults ought to have a little more understanding of why this was important. We also celebrate George Washington's and Abraham Lincoln's birthdays, but there's a vast difference. Jesus is God.

Christmas really is the celebration of the mystery of the Incarnation. That means, in the simplest of terms, that God assumed human nature, including a human body, human soul and will, and all other human characteristics except sin.

That's simple to say but im-

possible to comprehend fully, and Catholic doctrine about the Incarnation was a real bone of contention in the early church. Numerous heresies arose over just how this union of the divine and human took place and it took special councils to try to settle the matter. But I'll get to that later in this article.

To understand just what the Catholic Church teaches, we have to start with the mystery of the Trinity—that there are three persons in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It was God the Son who became man.

GOD THE Son is the incarnate Word of God. Expressed in

theological terms, he is the supreme manifestation of God's self-communication, which, by this very fact, also manifests God's will, which is identical to God himself. St. John's Gospel says it this way: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God; all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (Jn. 1:1-3). The "Word" is God's self-communication.

God the Son has existed from all eternity, not just from the time he became man. He became man when he assumed our human nature. Or, as John expressed it, "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn. 1:14).

When he was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, God the Son united to himself two natures, the divine and human. In theological terms, this is known as the hypostatic union, a term that was introduced at the Council of Ephesus in 431. It means that in Jesus there are two complete and distinct natures, the divine and the human, joined in one person, so the result is a person who is both perfect God and perfect man.

The reason God did this was to redeem mankind. This could only be done by someone who was both God and man. St. Paul declares (Ti. 3:4-8) that we have been saved through the Incarnation. And the Second Vatican Council taught: "In the human nature which he united to himself, the Son of God redeemed man and transformed him into a new creation by overcoming death through his own death and resurrection" (Lumen Gentium).

Another Vatican II document teaches this about the Incarnation: "He who is 'the image of the invisible God' (Col. 1:15) is himself the perfect man. To the sons of Adam he restores the divine likeness which had been disfigured from the first sin onward. Since human nature as he assumed it was not annulled, by that very fact it has been raised up to a divine dignity in our respect too.

"For by his Incarnation, the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every man. He worked with human hands. He thought with a human mind, acted by human choice, and loved with a human heart. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like us in all things except sin" (Gaudium et Spes).

IN THE early centuries of the church, there were a great many heresies that concerned the Incarnation. (A heresy is the formal and obstinate denial or doubt by a baptized professed person of any truth which must be believed as a matter of divine and Catholic faith.) The church took these heresies very seriously because, after all, the doctrine of the Incarnation is central to Christianity. Special councils were called to debate the heresies, to condemn them, and to refine the doctrine of the Incarnation.

Some of the heresies included:

► **Adoptionism**, which taught that Jesus was subordinate to God and was his Son by adoption rather than by nature.

► **Modalism**, which taught that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are not really distinct persons but only three different modes of being. Forms of Modalism included Monarchianism, Patripassianism, and Sabellianism.

► **Arianism**, by far the most devastating of the early heresies, which denied the divinity of Christ. Numerous saints honored by the church today are recognized because of their defense of the church against Arianism. It was condemned by the Council of Nicaea in 325 but spread widely, particularly in the east. After the death of Constantine in 337, Semi-Arians arose and raised havoc in the church for several centuries.

► **Apollinarianism**, which attacked the soul of Christ, saying that since Christ was whole, man and God, the completion of such a being could only be made where there was sin. This was condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 381.

► **Nestorianism**, which denied the real unity of divine and human natures. Nestorius also denied that Mary could properly be called the Mother of God, saying that she was the mother only of Christ's human nature. This heresy was condemned by the Councils of Ephesus in 431 and Chalcedon in 451. The Council of Ephesus defined Theotokos ("Bearer of God") as the title of Mary, Mother of the Son of God made man. Today there are many Nestorians scattered throughout the world as members of several Eastern Christian churches.

► **Monophysitism**, which denied Christ's human nature (the opposite of Arianism). This was condemned by the Council of Chalcedon in 451, but today there are Monophysite Armenians, Copts, Syrians, Ethiopians and Jacobites.

► **Monothelitism**, which denied the human will of Christ, and which was condemned by the Third Council of Constantinople in 681.

HOW CAN ONE person be both divine and human? Nobody can completely understand the mystery of the Incarnation, which is why it's called a mystery—and why there was so much controversy in earlier centuries among those who were trying to understand it better.

For example: At Bethlehem a baby was born, but we can't really say that God was born since God has always existed. But we also can't say that only Jesus' human nature was born since both natures were united in one person. All we can really say is that God assumed a human nature. (Of course, he really did that nine months earlier during the Annunciation in Nazareth.)

We know that Jesus had both human knowledge and divine knowledge, but we can't understand how that worked in practice. Human knowledge must be acquired, but divine knowledge is not.

The entire person of Jesus suffered and died on the cross, but God cannot die. And yet we cannot say that only the human nature died. This is part of the mystery.

So it's easy to express the meaning of the Incarnation, and the church has told us both what it means and what it doesn't mean. But it is one of the truths that we must believe on faith alone because we cannot fully comprehend it.

We can, however, marvel at it—marvel at the fact that someone who is divine would lower himself, humble himself, to take on our imperfect human nature. He did it because of his perfect love for us.

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Maybe there is more to sending Christmas cards than people realize

by Suzanne Elsesser

"It's not Christmas without Christmas cards."

That sign in a local shop where I do my photocopying had been bothering me since I first saw it early in the fall. Looking around the cluttered but efficient storefront room with its magical machines, I had said to myself, "Of course there can be Christmas without Christmas cards."

I had even thought, "How annoying that the proprietor of this shop is trying to tell me, a Christian, that Christmas has got to do with cards! Why doesn't she stick to selling what she is selling and leave Christmas out of it?"

I considered saying something to the proprietor in a friendly sort of way: "Gee, Christmas is a lot more than cards to me."

Or, "What do you mean there's no Christmas without cards?"

In the end, I didn't say anything.

BUT THEN that little sign got me to thinking. I remembered the importance my mother and father put on sending Christmas cards to the many friends and acquaintances they had made in the more than 50 years of their life together.

Each fall—and it must have been fairly early—my parents would begin

the process of selecting their cards. There always were two: one for their Christian friends and a more non-committal "Season's Greeting" card for their Jewish friends.

Next, mother would start the long process of signing, writing a little personal note and addressing the cards. She sat at the dining room table with a special floor lamp pulled up next to her chair for better visibility and the red, imitation-leather looseleaf binder that contained the Christmas card list open in front of her.

THERE WERE hundreds and hundreds of names. I doubt if there were many people they met that didn't end up getting a Christmas card from my parents.

The preparation process took weeks, it seemed to me, as mother fitted it into her busy days as a second-grade teacher. When finished, we all helped with the envelope licking, stamping and trip to the post office for mailing.

My mother died last year. When my family and I were receiving the many people who came to the funeral parlor to offer condolences, I was greeted by a man in his late 50s who introduced himself and said he was a friend of my mother's but had not seen her in years. He added that no one else in

the family would be able to remember him.

Puzzled, I continued my conversation with him. Shyly he told me that he was the policeman who had come to my home more than 35 years ago to tell my mother and grandmother that my grandfather had been stricken by a fatal heart attack

while waiting for the train to take him to work.

The man explained that mother had continued to send him Christmas cards over all the years since then and he had wanted to come to say goodbye to her.

MAYBE THERE is more to Christmas cards than I realized. Maybe they have something to do with reaching out to people to say we remember, to say "thank you" for the persons they are, to say that we care.

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SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS—This Currier and Ives Christmas card was designed and printed more than a century ago. (NC photo)

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You couldn't really ban Christmas

by Fr. John Gurrieri

It is hard to believe, but at one time Christmas was banned by government order.

During the Puritan regime in 17th-century England, town criers went through the streets by order of Parliament a few days before Christmas reminding citizens that "Christmas Day and all other superstitious festivals" must not be observed. People were told to go about their usual business and keep shops and markets open.

In the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1644, the Puritans banned church services on Christmas and appointed Dec. 25 as a day of fasting and penance.

But, humbug! People paid little or no attention to the orders and kept the feast lavishly in their homes. Christmas, after all, was as English as plum pudding and caroling.

Christmas could never really be banned or prohibited. Even if churches were forced to close that day, Christmas had become so much a part of family and social life that there was no use trying to repress it.

CHRISTMAS IS unlike any other feast in the liturgical year. Even today, when Christmas has become a thing of shopping malls and department stores, this feast is the joyous reason to bring family and friends together.

It is a time of gift giving and a day marked by special family and community traditions which manifest our cultural and ethnic roots.

The Christmas card, which originated in Victorian England; the Christmas tree, which finds its origins in medieval Germany; the use of mistletoe and holly, an English custom; the posada celebrated by Mexican-Americans—all these customs testify to a deeply felt religious understanding that the Incarnation is the blessed mystery by which the human race was given another chance to live in paradise, Eden, where the tree of life is planted.

Christmas celebrates the birth of the Messiah, the Christ, and there is nothing more joyous in human existence than the birth of a child. No doubt this accounts for the popularity and universal observance of Christmas. The birth of the helpless but kingly child captures the imagination like no other festival can do.

An old North Carolina Christmas carol "I Wonder as I Wander" perhaps sums up our feelings about the child Jesus:

If Jesus had wanted for any small thing
A star in the sky or bird on the wing
Or all of God's angels in heaven to sing
He could sure have had it,
'cause he was the king

GIFTS ARE given on this day because in the lowliness of the Christ-child's birth we find the generosity of God toward all his creatures.

Families celebrate the day with festive foods and customs because

somehow they know that in Jesus their families are made whole and united.

Christmas is a festival that unites us to the best of our human hopes and aspirations. The folklore of Christmas testifies to human imagination, human possibilities and God's great love and affection for the human family.

The Christ-child could demand tribute from grateful humans 'cause he was the king. Instead he accepts the joy and happiness his birth causes in hearts and in homes.

Clearly, there is no successful repressing or banning or prohibiting Christmas.

THE SECOND reading of the Mass at dawn on Christmas Day summarizes God's mysterious design

Christmas around the archdiocese

(Continued from page 13)

Holy Angels School with cake, punch and treats.

The parishes of St. Joseph in Rockville and Immaculate Conception in Montezuma celebrate the holidays with a Three Kings Parish Pitch-In Supper. Each family is asked to bring a basket of food on the Sunday closest to Epiphany. Three names of children are drawn to determine who will portray the three kings for the evening. They give gifts to all who are present, and receive special prizes themselves. The grade school students from the two parishes present a short program.

St. John Parish in Indianapolis has become known as Christmas for

for our salvation and his lavish love for us:

"When the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared he saved us, not because of any righteous deeds we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the baptism of new birth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:4-7).

Christmas is "the kindness and love of God our Savior" celebrated in liturgy, popular folklore and family customs. It points ahead toward Easter, toward the gift of the Holy Spirit and toward the heavenly inheritance lavished on us by a God who never ceased loving the handiwork of his creation.

The feast points us also toward love for others. For as the birth of Christ is remembered and observed on Christmas Day with cherished family customs, we open our hearts to others bringing them, through our gifts, the very gift of God.

its large nativity scene, which stands on a platform four feet above the floor. The scene is 11 feet wide, nine feet deep and 18 feet high. The average height of the figures is 30 inches. The set, built with stage flats and concealed lighting, was first installed in 1935 by the Indianapolis Theatrical Company.

The Evangelization Committee at Holy Trinity Parish in Indianapolis is planning an open house for the holiday season. The open house will be held on Dec. 29, 3-5 p.m. The purpose is to open the landmark church to the community, and to answer visitors' questions about the church.

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A Christmas quiz

by Theodore Hengesbach

Christmas is such an important celebration for us. It is surprising that so little is written about it in the New Testament. Many people would like to find out more about what happened. But, for now, let's see how well we remember what has been written.

This quiz is based on Matthew 1-2, as well as Luke 1-2 and 3:23-38. When you finish this, treat yourself to reading those chapters—perhaps aloud for dramatic effect. (Or, try option 2. Approach this as an open-book quiz.) Good luck!

1. Both Matthew and Luke give us Jesus' family tree.
Matthew traces Jesus all the way back to:
a. David
b. Abraham
c. Joseph
d. Adam

Luke traces Jesus all the way back to:

- a. David
b. Abraham
c. Adam
d. God
2. Which one does the better job in giving us information about the magi?
a. Matthew
b. Luke
c. They both really do a good job.
3. Which one does the better job in giving us information about the shepherds?
a. Matthew
b. Luke
c. Both do a good job on this one too.
4. What was the profession of the magi?
a. kings
b. prophets
c. shepherds
d. wise men
5. How many magi were there?

- a. three
b. five
c. We don't really know.
6. What gifts did the magi present to Jesus?
a. gold, frankincense and myrrh
b. They didn't leave any gifts.
c. They didn't give the gifts to Jesus. They gave them to Mary.
7. Jesus' first trip after his birth was to:
a. Nazareth
b. Jerusalem
c. Egypt
d. Jericho
8. What was the name of the donkey that carried Jesus on this trip?
Was it the same donkey that Joseph used to take Mary from Nazareth to Bethlehem before Jesus was born?

Yes
No
9. Jesus' first visit to the temple was:
a. when he was 12 years old
b. shortly after his circumcision

- c. when he was 1 year old
d. He did not visit the temple as a child because it was not the custom at the time to bring children there.

10. What was the name of Jesus' hometown?
a. Bethlehem
b. Jerusalem
c. Nazareth
d. Jericho

Answers:

1. Matthew traces Jesus back to Abraham (b); Luke to God (d).
2. Only Matthew tells us about the magi.
3. b. Only Luke tells us about the shepherds.
4. d.
5. c. More than one, but we don't really know how many there were.
6. a.
7. Both b and c. Luke has Jesus making his first trip to Jerusalem and Matthew to Egypt.
8. Nice try, but no donkey is mentioned.
9. b.
10. c.

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A Christmas story

by Richard Cain
and Yvonne Patterson

In his haste to pass a truck, Jose almost missed the sign: I-65 North next right.

Pressing down on the brake, he guided the '77 red Chevette behind the dark shape and onto the entrance ramp of the interstate. Snow was swirling in the grey morning light, momentarily settling into wispy ridges on the asphalt only to be churned up into swirls again by the next passing car.

Jose was grateful for the speed as the car picked up momentum and merged with the traffic heading north toward Indianapolis. The snow was getting worse. The car hit a bump and the little statue of St. Christopher on the dashboard began to rock gently back and forth. Jose's eyes turned toward the statue, then met his wife's and they smiled inwardly.

"Yes, my little friend," Jose said. "You indeed are guiding us."

Gabby had insisted that they take the statue with them when she arranged for them to borrow the car. "He will watch over you. He and the Christ child," she said solemnly, her eyes sparkling. "They will bring you a blessing."

Gabby was like that. Full of maternal warmth and a wonderful sense of the mysterious. From the time the young couple had immigrated to Columbus from Guatemala two years ago, she had welcomed them into her parish and had watched over them. "You are my special charge," she would say, as though God was going to do something important through them. Jose had no doubt that she believed it, too. He glanced at his wife.

"Como estas, querida?"

"Muy bien."

Maria smiled and looked down at her bulging waist. "The little one is behaving well today." Though they

were trying to speak only English, she liked it when he spoke affectionately to her in Spanish.

JOSE'S SMILE faded as his thoughts turned from the baby to the reason for their trip. Why did Maria have to lose her immigration papers so close to the due date? At least the immigration officer had scheduled their appearance on the day before Christmas when it was easier to borrow a car.

As they passed the Edinburgh exit, he could feel the rear wheels begin to slip a little on the ice and let up on the accelerator. Red lights began winking through the snowy haze in front of them. Traffic was slowing down. Up ahead they saw a rig jackknifed in the median.

Traffic was down to a crawl. The car ahead of them attempted to pass another car but instead lost control and spun into the shoulder. Jose let off the accelerator and edged to the right. When the Chevette had come to a stop, he got out to help. Maria felt the rush of cold air pressing against her like a piece of metal. Then the door shut and there was only the sound of the engine. Inside herself she felt something begin to tighten and she remained in the thoughtful silence, praying.

A minute or two later, the door opened again and Jose got back in, his breath billowing. "We will stop at the next exit and send help." He gingerly laid his foot on the accelerator and edged the car back on the highway.

At the next exit they saw more red lights wink on. A red light was flashing and traffic inched to a halt. Jose took Maria's hand and gave it a squeeze. After some time a man approached out of the fleecy gloom. He paused at the car ahead, then came up to them. Jose could see that he was in a patrolman's uniform and rolled down the window.

"The roads are closed. Get off at

this exit and follow the line of cars in front of you."

"Car back there needs help," Jose said.

"There are lots of cars that need help," the patrolman said. "Where is it?"

"Four or five miles back, where road turns."

"OK. We'll take care of it."

Jose nodded his head and rolled up the window. What would happen now, he thought to himself, though outwardly he tried to remain calm. He glanced at Maria. She returned his look. But he could see that her eyes were a little distant.

"What is it?" Then he straightened. "Is it . . . time?"

"I don't know."

The line of cars began to move. Jose followed them. After a long time and several turns, they entered a town and pulled into a parking lot next to a red brick building. Jose told Maria to wait while he found out what they would do next. It turned out that the building was a boys' club which was being used as a temporary shelter for stranded travelers. A tall woman came back with Jose who helped Maria out of the car.

"My name is Judy. I'm a nurse," the tall woman said. "How are you doing?"

"I am having pains."

"When are you due?"

"Two weeks."

"Well let's get you both inside the shelter."

JOSE HELPED Maria inside while Judy followed with what little they had. The shelter was an old gym smelling of wood and wax. On one side of the room there were long rows of cots each with a pillow and blanket. Many people were already milling around carrying styrofoam cups of steaming tea or coffee. Judy helped Maria over to one of the cots where she lay down. The nurse then took Maria's pulse and timed her contractions.

"They are not too close. Is this your first child?"

Maria nodded.

Judy gave her a reassuring grin. "Hopefully this is just a false alarm. Call me if you need me."

Jose took his wife's hand. He could feel its warmth in his as she squeezed it. He looked around the shelter. People were gathered in small groups talking. Evidently the weather report was not good. He could hear people complaining about having to spend Christmas in a shelter. A few minutes later a new group of people came in. Jose recognized the driver of the car that had spun off the road.

Through the afternoon, the contractions continued without getting closer. Then someone announced that dinner would be brought in. The mood brightened a little. Occasionally, people would come over and ask about Maria.

THEN JUST as people were lining up, Maria squeezed Jose's hand. "Go call the nurse."

Jose was off in a dash. After a few minutes he was back with Judy in tow. She bent over Maria.

"Are the contractions coming closer?"

"Yes."

Judy timed them. "I think we had better call a doctor."

"How soon?" Jose asked.

"I don't know," Judy replied.

"Maybe soon, maybe not." She went off toward the makeshift office. A little circle of interested people had begun to gather around Maria's cot. Jose knew she needed privacy, but where?

Judy came back and said she had called a doctor. But the roads were really bad and they were not sure when he could get through.

Jose motioned Judy over to the side. "My wife, she needs to be by herself. OK?"

"I know." She disappeared again for a few minutes, came back and disappeared again. A tall, dark-haired woman came up, introduced herself as Susan. She had once been a midwife and offered to help. Jose gratefully accepted. Word of what

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was happening began to spread around the shelter.

THEN JUDY returned. "The only thing we have here is a storeroom. I've put a cot in there. It will have to do." Then she and Jose helped Maria over to the room while Susan carried their belongings.

The storeroom was small and filled with racks of basketballs, volleyballs and other gym equipment. It smelled a little of dust and old rubber. But someone had gone over it with a broom and cleared a space for Maria's cot. After Maria had lain down again, Judy came up to Jose. "The contractions are very close now. It's going to come any time."

Judy went out and called for towels, sheets and blankets. Many more were offered than were needed. Soon she and a couple returned with a stack. Jose sat by Maria's cot and held her hand.

All around the gym, people forgot their own problems and situations. All the talk was about how the new mother was doing. The people joined in Christmas carols. A minister led an informal prayer service. At midnight the excitement peaked.

Judy and Susan were beaming. "Congratulations, Jose and Maria. You have a boy. It's a miracle. I've never seen such an easy birth!"

Jose thanked God. He kissed Maria and gave her hand a squeeze. "Did you hear that? A boy!"

Maria smiled and nodded. Outside the door people were gathered. Jose and Maria could hear the news as it was passed from person to person. "It's a boy!" "Is he healthy?" "Yes!" "How is the mother?" "Fine."

Then there was a murmur and a bustle in the crowd as someone tried to approach the room. It was the doctor.

"Well, I see you went ahead without me. Would it be OK if I checked him over?"

"Please," Jose said. The doctor went over to Maria,

gently lifted the baby out of her arms and laid him down on the cot next to her.

"Heart, lungs, reflexes, all good." The doctor returned him to Maria's waiting arms, turned and clasped Jose's hand.

"Congratulations. Your son is one of the healthiest babies I have ever seen. What will you name him?"

Jose and Maria exchanged glances. She nodded. He squeezed her hand and took a breath. "Our son was born on Christmas," he said in his soft Guatemalan accent. "It is just fitting that we name him 'Jesus.'"

Judy came toward the cot. "We have many people here who would like to see the new child. Would this be all right with you?"

AT THE parents' nod, she motioned toward the door. One by one, the people approached the baby as he lay in his mother's arms. Some brought small gifts or money which they placed on the cot next to the child. Maria and Jose tried to protest, but Judy placed her hands on them. "These gifts are for the child. He has brought a sense of love to the whole shelter and reminded us what Christmas is all about."

Jose and Maria smiled and together gazed at the child. Maria said softly, "This is the blessing Gabby told us the Christ child would bring. Each child's birth is a chance to bring Christ into the world again."

Tears brimmed in Jose's eyes. Outside in the gym the people were singing again. Suddenly, he remembered the lost immigration papers, the appointment with the immigration office and the whole reason for their trip. But God had had other things in mind. The papers would have to wait. God would provide. Jose was sure of that.

In the distance he heard a snow plow rumble past and Judy gently suggesting that people get some sleep. The weather report was promising. He looked down at Maria and the child sleeping in her arms and he was content.

Christmas:

The Her-story of Mary

by Cynthia Dewes

As with most converts, devotion to Mary did not come naturally to me. I respected her as the mother of God and as a holy and virtuous woman, but her reported apparitions and cures at various shrines left me frankly cynical. Praying to her or indulging in devotions to her sacred heart, her sorrows, or whatever else, smacked of pagan idolatry to my Protestant-trained sensibilities.

On a more sophisticated level, I'd heard that Vatican II denied the idea that grace is channeled only through Mary. I'd even witnessed some grumbling among the faithful over the proclamation of the Assumption. So for a long time I felt justified in my benign neglect of our First Lady among the saints.

Then I got to thinking. What is so special about the Virgin, especially in these times when virginity seems out of date? What's the big deal about a teen-ager who was so unassertive that she opened herself up to a life full of pain?

Mary was what we'd call a "nice" girl. She was religious, obedient, modest, probably sweet. She expected to lead the life of an ordinary Jewish maiden by marrying young, producing a family, and enjoying the ordered and limited world of her village.

Surprise. After her arranged betrothal to a nice enough carpenter named Joseph, Mary suddenly found herself in situations which must have seemed, to say the least, unreal. She experienced a dramatic dream involving an archangel, of all things, in which she humbly agreed to be the mother of God. Imagine, the mother of God.

It was a catch-22. If she said yes, she'd lose her reputation and probably the nice young carpenter as well. If she said no, she'd lose her reputation with Yahweh, but no one

else would know. No contest for this girl; she said yes. Joseph, to give him credit, nobly stood by her and married her anyway.

Moving right along, Mary found herself eight and three-quarter months pregnant, riding a donkey on a long, dismal journey to her husband's ancestral home. When they finally got there it was night, it was winter, and there was no room in the inn.

The baby decided to be born and everyone rushed around to hustle up a cave and some hay. Mary looked up from her (literally) labor to find strangers surrounding her—shepherds, other locals, animals. Later she was astonished by still another visit, this time from three wise and wealthy men who said they had come to honor her baby.

As her little boy grew, things settled down for Mary. She and her kindly husband almost forgot how Jesus came to them. Only once, when Jesus was 12, did he give them a startling reminder by engaging the temple elders in philosophical discussion far beyond his years, or his parents' comprehension.

By the time Jesus was a grown man, Mary may have thought "Hey, this is easy." Nothing untoward had happened, and her God-son was now 33 years old. But wait. She had yet to live through the terrible public humiliation, torture and death of her only child, and this time without the support of her faithful spouse.

Mary is special, and her-story is special simply because it illustrates perfectly what scripture tells us: if we believe, and open ourselves to God's grace without reservation, we will be filled. The more love we offer, the more vulnerable we become. And also the more joyous.

As with Mary and her son, triumph will come after sorrow. Christmas must come before Easter.

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Some more or less prominent people tell about a memorable Christmas

Christmas Memories

Reprinted from Our Sunday Visitor
Dec. 25, 1977 and Dec. 25, 1983

Each Christmas reveals to me varying facets of the joy and delight and profound meaning and mystery of this holy season. In this light, I cannot point to any particular Christmas which was the most memorable but I do recall Christmas of 1953.

One year after my ordination, I was assigned to the Cathedral parish in Charleston, S.C. There I was introduced to a Christmas tradition begun years before by the pastor.

After the celebration of the Masses of Christmas Day the priests of the parish visited the homes of all families in which death had occurred during the past year. The visits were brief but for a short while we shared the deeper realities of Christmas, God's great love and concern for the human family, made evident in the birth of Jesus. For a few minutes the sorrow which, understandably, such families were experiencing on that day was lessened. They were grateful to us for the visit.

In turn, each of us gained a new and treasured insight into the ministry of sharing the love and peace and joy of Christmas with others.—Cardinal Joseph Bernardin, Archbishop of Chicago

Christmas was coming early in 1979. My sons—ages seven and 10—were excited over a train trip to Denver 500 miles away and anticipating visiting their father who had been in the Denver V.A. hospital the past six weeks. He was awaiting a kidney transplant. He hadn't been doing well but we were optimistic that our prayers would be answered with a miracle during this holy season.

Our bags were sitting by the door when the phone rang. The doctors said that my husband had been found unconscious and his heart had stopped. Leaving the boys, I caught the next plane to Denver and rushed to the hospital.

The doctors told me that he was completely paralyzed, had extensive brain damage, and would never recover. I stayed by him, looking at all the tubes and machines. I talked to him about the boys and I prayed. Then, just before I was about to leave, his hand gently closed around my hand. And as I looked at his face, tears rolled down his cheeks.

He died the next morning. I will always remember the miracle of his last goodbye.—Pat Michielutti, Lincoln, Neb.

The time was the late '50s and the place was Baja California, Mexico, down at the very tip, below La Paz. It was three days before Christmas when I stepped off an airplane on a gravel strip nestled between very rugged mountains with a box canyon at one end and the Pacific Ocean at the other.

As I came down from the airplane, I noticed the local rancheros standing around somewhat wide-

eyed at this new arrival dressed as a priest (something that wasn't done in Mexico at that time).

They immediately came up and asked if I was a Roman Catholic priest and when I said I was, they immediately exclaimed: "This year we will have the 'Misa de Gallo,'"—Midnight Mass for Christmas.

I asked them when the last time a priest was there and they said 40 years ago. Then I said there will be one condition for Midnight Mass: everybody must go to Confession. Their eyes got wider as they queried: "After 40 years?" I told them that it would only be a question of headlines in their lives and they seemed satisfied.

When Midnight Mass came, the whole village turned out and there was great satisfaction in having Midnight Mass for a group of faithful Catholics who had not heard Mass there for 40 years. Somehow it made Christmas seem more real that year.—Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, president of the University of Notre Dame

Christmas 1949 was a year I shall never forget. My husband, on part-time employment, two children, and with only enough money for food and bills. We were even living with my in-laws.

My husband had a few spare pieces of lumber which he made into a table and chair set and a rolling toy elephant. We had no money for paint. I dressed a doll I found by cutting up one of my own dresses.

My father-in-law, who was also working only part-time because of health reasons, gave me \$5 to spend. After much debate, we spent \$1 for our offering at Mass, then paint for the toys, candy canes and extra food for the kids. We had 25 cents left over. After supper on Christmas Eve, my husband walked a mile to a country florist shop and bought me a beautiful red rose. He carried it home under his coat so it would not freeze before he got there. That rose cost 25 cents.

Times have gotten better through the years (and roses now cost more). We have raised five children and have nine grandchildren to date. Every Christmas Eve, my husband still remembers to buy me one red rose. It is the centerpiece of our Christmas table. Our sons even remind dad a week or so before Christmas not to forget mom's red rose.

Of all the Christmas gifts I have ever received over the many years, none has meant more to me than the first rose of 1949.—Avis K. Garney, Palmyra, N.Y.

One Christmas I shall never forget was in 1957. I was then circuit attorney of St. Louis.

Father Dismas Clark, sometimes referred to as the "Hoodlum Priest," invited me, my wife, and my Aunt Hazel to attend Midnight Mass at Dismas House. Convicts from the Missouri penitentiaries were paroled to Dismas House so that they had a place in which to live as they were seeking employment and returning to civilian life. Father Clark himself said Mass. It was in Dismas House's beautiful, simple chapel. There were 25 ex-cons and the circuit attorney praying together.

After Mass, we had a marvelous breakfast and Father Clark called on me for a few words. I said there and I repeat now, that I never knew of a more appropriate setting to commemorate the true spirit of Christmas.

We recall from the Bible that although Christ found great joy in the worship of the faithful, his greatest joy was in the repentance of a sinner. To me, that special joy of Christmas has never been more evident than during my Christmas dinner with these "sinners" 28 years ago.—U.S. Senator Thomas F. Eagleton of Missouri

Santa and the Christ child were never separated in my childhood. Dad had a powerful way of tying Santa with the Holy Family.

Dad would bring home the tree and drag up the decorations from the family basement. The last box opened was always the manger scene. Every year the Christ child was missing. When we questioned dad, he always had the same reply: "Santa will bring baby Jesus."

Every Christmas morning after checking to see if Santa had eaten the snack we had left for him, we would rush to the manger to see if Santa had remembered the baby Jesus. He never forgot.—Mary Fran Meekison, Napoleon, Ohio

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New holiday movies give Santa powers once reserved to the deity

by James W. Arnold

Santa Claus is beginning to act like the house guest who comes for the weekend, stays all winter, and never wants to leave. In fact, he's taken over the joint.

The "joint" in this case is Christmas, popular culture version. That's the main drift of two new holiday movies: "Santa Claus," an extravaganza from Alex and Ilya Salkind, the same wonderful folks who brought us the "Superman" movies; and "One Magic Christmas," a more modest U.S.-Canadian production that reworks the "Christmas Carol" legend.

The most curious aspect of each is that they manage to get through an aggregate 3½ hours of screen time without the vaguest reference to the birth of Christ or even to God (who, the last time I looked, was still running the universe). Equally puzzling is the attribution to Santa of powers once reserved to the deity, such as giving assignments to angels, rewarding the blessed deceased, answering petitions, righting wrongs and working miracles. Santa is a nice guy, but he's getting pushy.

What's going on here? Our consumer society has grasped the beloved Jolly Old Elf to its bosom. He is non-controversial and non-sectarian. He allows us to express kindness, joy and love without getting all religious about it. You can have the feeling without the substance. And he very nicely supports the cultural and economic requirement of gift-giving. I mean, you can't very well have Baby Jesus in department store ads.

Santa's North Pole workshop in these movies is Macy's toy department seen as heaven. It has a dazzling Black Forest motif, linking Santa to pagan legends about northland elves, and looks like something designed to fit into the shopping mall. The difference in the workshop's looks reflects the style of the films: "Santa Claus" is spectacular, brassy, comic and overdone; "Magic Christmas" is quiet, homey, a bit melancholy but snug and comfy.

"Santa" is really two films in one. In the first half, writer David Newman constructs a history for Santa just as he did for Superman. It has nothing to do with St. Nicholas. Santa and spouse are a nice childless couple back in the Middle Ages who perish in a blizzard on their way to give toys to children. Instead of heaven, they find a community of singing-dancing-toymaking elves who anoint them in the happy task of being the immortal Mr. and Mrs. Claus. We then watch Santa (David Hud-

leston) learn the job and go through ups-and-downs for a few centuries.

The second half is strictly 20th century Manhattan. The focus is on a likeable renegade elf (Dudley Moore) now working for a greedy toymaker (John Lithgow marvelously over-acting) who wants to replace Santa in the hearts of little boys and girls. This is a campy situation recycled from "Superman," and Santa and the reindeer do a lot of aerial stunts around the skyscrapers that are easily the visual zenith of the movie.

Typically, the climax is a full-scale skychase, in which Santa snatches Moore and a child companion from their flying automobile seconds before Lithgow's candy canes explode. The old man thus becomes a Pop Hero doing the classic rescue act.

The rescue in "Magic Christmas" is of a depressed wife-mother (Mary Steenburgen) who is understandably "down" about Christmas buying. Her husband is out of work, the family is being evicted, and they're surviving on her wages as a supermarket clerk. So Santa sends an angel to cheer her up, largely by showing her what it would be like if she lost what little she has left—her husband and kids. At the end, nothing has really changed except Mary's heart, and she's spreading around the family savings.

To stress the positive, "Magic" is sensitively done and touching, if you don't pay too much attention to what's really happening. Santa's house at the Pole is more like Grandpa's Gift Shop than the Castle of the Vagabond King.

Also wonderful (if wildly offbeat) is the casting

of Harry Dean Stanton as the angel. In broad stetson and longcoat, he looks like the somber Ghost of Cowboys Past. But he is softspoken and kind. Most of the time he sits in a large tree, which is where you'd expect to find a Christmas angel, and plays the harmonica, a refreshing image of benevolence in the suburban night.

As for Santa, people may argue that Dickens and old movies like "Miracle on 34th Street" and "It's a Wonderful Life" had little religion in them either. But they were soaked in the atmosphere of the old faith, and Santa was never the Christmas star in those days. There was so much religion in movies that a little sentiment about the Santa myth was no problem. It may be one now.

("Santa Claus" is basic secular Yuletide family entertainment; "One Magic Christmas" is also secular, but less gaudy and more touching.)



HOLIDAY MAGIC—Abbie Grainger, played by Elizabeth Harnois, looks at a magic Christmas ball which initiates amazing adventures in Walt Disney Pictures' "One Magic Christmas." (NC photo)



SAVING CHRISTMAS—Santa Claus, played by David Huddleston, comforts Joe, a lonely steed kid played by Christian Fitzpatrick, and tries to assure him that he can stop the evil B.Z. and restore Christmas. Dudley Moore co-stars in "Santa Claus: The Movie," a Tri-Star release. (NC photo)

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White House Christmas

by Joe Michael Feist

To the American people, the White House has always been a magical, fairy tale sort of place. Truly great men, and a few who merely approached greatness, have walked the venerable old structure's halls, breathed its history and made history of their own.

But the White House has never been a museum or a castle. More than anything it has been a home. Since the day its first occupant, John Adams, moved in, the house has witnessed births, deaths, weddings, children at play and all the other joys and trials of typical families.

And like most families, the families of the presidents have counted the Christmas season as one of the joyful times.

MOST OF the presidents have had young people with them in the White House. This no doubt influenced the way Christmas was celebrated. Not all the young people were the president's own children; some were grandchildren or the children of close friends.

In the early 1800s, Christmas in the White House was celebrated in the traditional English manner. This combined music, feasting and dancing with church-going.

It wasn't until the administration of Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893) that a Christmas tree was set up in the White House. Harrison had a pine tree placed in the library over the Blue Room and he and his wife

decorated it and filled its branches with presents for their grandchildren.

Harrison had three grandchildren who lived in the White House much of the time. The president was forever playing with the children, hosting birthday parties for them, taking them for walks. Newspapers delighted in reporting the president's escapades with the children, much the way they would report in later years the antics of President John F. Kennedy and his children.

CAROLINE Kennedy was an energetic child who loved living in the White House. One of her joys was picking up a telephone and talking to whomever answered. Once, shortly before Christmas, she told her father she really would like to talk to Santa Claus and tell him what she wanted for Christmas. So the president arranged for her to do just that.

Kennedy asked one of the White House operators to take a call from Caroline as though answering the phone in the Santa Claus residence. The call was made and Caroline, a bit puzzled at first, was told that Santa Claus was not at home and that she was talking to Mrs. Santa Claus. When she was invited to leave a message, Caroline rattled off a list of presents she wanted for Christmas—a list immediately given to the president.

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WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS—The National Christmas Tree is aglow on the ellipse south of the White House after being lighted by President and Mrs. Reagan. (NC photo from UPI)

Franklin Roosevelt and his family, perhaps because Roosevelt lived in the house longer than anyone else.

After official parties and staff receptions earlier in the day on Christmas Eve, the Roosevelt family would gather in the White House living quarters to decorate the family tree. Then, in his resonant voice that had calmed a nation during Depression and war, the president would read Charles Dickens' Christmas Carol to his children and grandchildren gathered around him.

On Christmas morning, the smallest of the grandchildren would empty their stockings on the president's bed. After morning church services and lunch, the president's wife Eleanor would usually visit some of Washington's poorest slum areas.

The Roosevelt family celebration would be held late in the afternoon of Christmas Day. Friends and family would exchange piles of presents and then enjoy a Christmas dinner. The president savored his presents, taking days to open them all. If he received a book, for example, he might read it through before opening another present.

A special Christmas for the Roosevelts, and the nation, was in 1941. On Christmas Eve that year a large crowd gathered at the White House. Since the attack on Pearl Harbor 17 days before, a nationwide blackout had been established. But this night floodlights illuminated the

White House. With the British Prime Minister Winston Churchill at his side, President Roosevelt threw a switch that turned on the lights of an enormous Christmas tree.

But "after that year," Eleanor Roosevelt would later recall, "Christmases weren't so cheerful. . . . The boys all went off to different war theaters. Their absence meant we did what we could to cheer their families if they were with us, or we tried to get in touch with them by telephone if they were far away."

But joyful Christmases did return to the country and to the White House. In the 1950s, President Dwight Eisenhower would bring his children and grandchildren to the White House for Christmas. As many as nine brightly lighted and brilliantly decorated Christmas trees adorned various White House rooms. On Christmas Eve, around a tree in the family living room, Eisenhower would lead the carol singing while his wife, Mamie, played the organ. The next day the president would play Santa Claus and hand out the gifts.

IN RECENT years, Christmas at the White House has been marked by the presidential lighting of a huge tree on the Ellipse on the south side of the mansion. A yule log is burned, live reindeer are on display and area choirs sing carols nightly.

And inside the house, no matter who is president or which party is in power, a family is celebrating Christmas.

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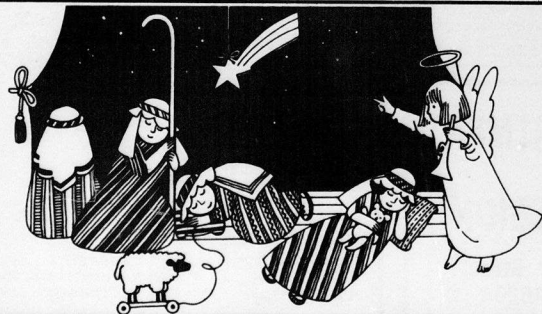
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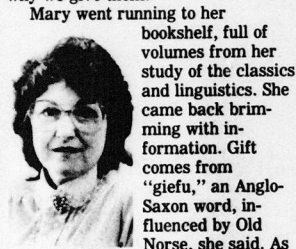
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How to make your gifts really gifts

by Antoinette Bosco

We were getting ready for Christmas when my two daughters and I started talking about gifts and why we give them.



Mary went running to her bookshelf, full of volumes from her study of the classics and linguistics. She came back brimming with information. Gift comes from "giefu," an Anglo-Saxon word, influenced by Old Norse, she said. As she translated the word, it meant to offer something that comes from oneself to become an enhancement for another.

But it was her following comments that touched me. "Giving is one of the most basic things about our culture," she said. "We would have no humanity without giving. And you couldn't have a culture if people didn't give to one another."

In fact, she continued, giving is so basic that apparently "no one ever had any impulse to change the meaning in any way." Gift means much the same today.

Her comments got me thinking. All I had been hearing, as usual, were complaints from co-workers and friends saying they were smack into the holiday "rush," all "pressured" and tired of the

"commercialism." They had fallen into the trap that is so easy to get caught in during the weeks just before Christmas as the flurry of Christmas preparations escalates. Their time was so budgeted for buying that they had no time to ponder why we are gift givers.

As my daughters and I conversed, we went back to considering how essential gift giving is—for giving is the statement that we choose to be a part of something, and someone, outside ourselves. It is the way we become connected to one another and show we care for others.

It's never been a mystery to me that Christmas is a time for gift giving. It is, after all, the season to remember again that God touched us with his benevolence in a tangible way—by bringing love in the person of his son Jesus to earth.

We imitate God's benevolence when we give a gift and express love or friendship in a tangible way.

What we have to watch out for is falling into the trap of thinking that we're giving gifts when we're only exchanging merchandise. I've often heard people say the gift they gave wasn't appreciated or that they expected one in return.

When gifts are spoken of in terms of obligations, strings attached or gratitude, they really aren't gifts at all. The minute a condition accompanies an offering, it becomes a barter, a bribe or an obligation, not a gift. This kind of giving is only an exchange of a thing that does nothing

to form a bond between two people.

In the concept of bonding lies the reason why we give gifts. Consider two people in love. When they exchange rings, they have not simply decorated each other with twin circles. The rings signify the bond that exists between two individuals.

On Dec. 25, when the bustle is all calmed down for another year, and

the gifts rest beautifully under the tree, I wonder how many will be just merchandise and not true gifts?

If they have been given to make someone feel better, happy, special, beautiful or enhanced in some way, they will be truly gifts, delivered out of the same motivation as the Lord's in giving us his Son.

Then we can feel how truly, through the centuries, giving has added to the store of goodness in the world.

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Scattered thoughts for the disorganized at Christmas

by Alice Dailey

There is a special breed of women, the well organized, who not only know exactly where their Christmas card list is (neatly re-typed and with address corrections,



of course) but who have had their cards addressed, stamped and ready for liftoff since Thanksgiving. These same women also have their cookies and fruitcakes baked and frozen and three-fourths of their gift shopping finished.

Then there is my kind.

All the paraphernalia so gladly shoved out of sight last January is now the object of an intense search.

Those cookie cutters, in the way all year long; where are they now when needed? Where is that extra box of brown sugar, an after-Christmas bargain? Solidifying into a lethal weapon somewhere, no doubt.

While digging I'd better unearth something gold to wrap the fruitcake since that's what its ingredients are worth their weight in.

At a time like this wouldn't a home computer have been mother's little helper? It could have told me instantly that my crossed-over, crossed-out card list was to be found in an old box of cards with no envelopes.

Said list, like its owner, is somewhat dotty. In '82, when the list was new, a red dot went opposite the addressee's name ensuring she wouldn't get two cards and the name below none at all.

Eighty-three found a holly green dot to the left of Christmas red. In

'84 it was mellow yellow. What will give with '85?

Gobbling up even more time is the stamp and seal job; not just Uncle Sam's trademark but all those Holy Childhood, Lung Association and Boys Town seals bought in a burst of benevolence. Putting them on all envelopes is simply mission impossible. They'll stay where they are—still in sheets.

Throughout this to-do, visions of gifts and garlandry danced in my head so I dropped everything to unearth festoonery. When I get around to decking the halls I should deck whoever jammed the velvet bows into a flat box. Ever try pressing crumpled velvet?

And the little crib, the piece de resistance of it all, has turned up with its special extension cord purloined. What manner of person would steal from the Christ Child?

Giftwise, help may be at hand. "Make it easy on yourself; shop by catalogue" say the glitzy editions sent out.

Great. For the "truly discerning" there are "genuine porcelain tree ornaments exquisitely crafted. Only \$75." Never mind that most people don't Christmas visit to ooh and aah over porcelain ornaments. They come to eat, drink and be merry.

For the hostess caught with unexpected guests, "shimmering tunic 'pyjamas' with optic dancer motif." Won't the shimmer shrivel when the wearer hauls out food for the unpteenth time and hurriedly washes stacked glasses?

Surely there can be no gift for the host more outstanding than "a roman striped cummerbund with matching bow tie." Girls, wouldn't it be worth blowing the \$65 to watch his expression when he opens that package?

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We should personalize the moment of gift giving

by Fr. Eugene Hemrick

Holiday anticipations and expectations are at their peak. Seasonal music has replaced the Top 10. Trees stripped of summer leaves twinkle with Christmas lights.



Advertisements for sales and deals of a lifetime have doubled the weight of newspapers and hit us in every TV commercial. The appetites of children—and adults—are whetted.

But when the holidays are over, what will be the end result of all these built-up expectations? If a

recent doctoral dissertation by a graduate student I advised is any indication, it is very possible there will be grave letdowns and disillusionment with the world of business and the Christmas holidays themselves.

I am afraid many of the anticipated joys of holiday gift exchanges could end up in disillusionment. Unfortunately, anticipated gifts never quite fill us with the joys we anticipate. This leads me to ask: in a season that fosters giving, is there a principle to hang onto which can give us control over the commercialism that so often controls us?

One principle worth considering is this: put expectations into their proper perspective.

Are we caught up in a consumer age which shapes our attitudes, leading us to think gifts are the heart of Christmas and that if there is a new and improved gift this year, it is the ultimate gift to give? Are our holidays fixed on gifts and spent frantically in crowds seeking the best deals possible? Or should we have another set of expectations that take gift exchanging and raise it to a higher level? Should our expectation be that this year's holiday is going to be more personal—more in the real spirit of Christmas—than last year?

How often I have seen children rip open one gift package after another, seemingly more interested in adding up the number of gifts they receive than in noting the significance behind them and the person who gave them.

How often Christmas cards are sent with only a signature. No personal message or thought is included.

When gifts are exchanged, is there a conscious effort to digest the goodness of the other person and personalize the moment? Do hearts touch each other? More important, do we include a third heart, that of God, and thank him?

Would it be going too far—becoming too pious—to suggest that, after the excitement of opening gifts has settled down, a moment for silent prayer be part of the celebration? A touch of the divine linked with deeply personalized love: the perfect ingredients. The gift is subordinated to the person and both are subordinated to their creator.

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It's time for us to get ready; the Lord is coming

by Dale Francis

Back when I was a kid and Dayton, Ohio, was the big town near by, what I liked to do best was to go to a vacant lot on Main Street just south of



Fourth Street to watch the sandwich-board and pitchmen.

Both are gone from the American scene now but they fascinated me when I was 12. The pitchmen sold vegetable parers, shampoo soap made of sheep-fat, trick decks of cards, little wooden figures that walked aided by black thread you couldn't see because they worked against a black velvet backdrop. If you moved

over to the side where you might be able to see how

the trick worked, the pitchmen would say, "Get away, boy, you bother me."

And there were the sandwich board men, wearing two boards, held together by straps at the shoulders. On front and back, there were advertising messages for various business establishments and entertainment productions. But the sandwich man I remember best was a free agent, carrying his own message, a small, thin man who seemed very shy. On the front of the sandwich board in large letters were the words, "Get Ready!" and on the back, "The Lord Is Coming!"

It's time for the sandwich board man again. It's get ready time. The Lord is coming.

There are no lack of reminders of the coming of Christmas in our society. The department stores made the transition to the Christmas motif before the end of October. The first Christmas music was

heard on radio before mid-November and I heard the first Christmas carol on November 19.

Department stores were reporting better than average Christmas receipts before Thanksgiving.

By Thanksgiving Day, Santa Claus had appeared ubiquitously in virtually every town and city in the nation. Newspapers started publishing the number of days until Christmas—it used to be shopping days but now all days are shopping days. But it is shopping days they are talking about.

All of this is designed to urge you to get ready, but ready for a celebration, not what the celebration is about. We are called in a special way because the Lord is coming. We are preparing to celebrate the nativity of Our Lord.

There was a time that Advent was observed as a penitential season, much as Lent, but that has disappeared. The world about you is caught up in another meaning of the Christmas holiday, the buying and giving of gifts. That's not really something bad; it can be good. When we're thinking of gifts for others, we are acting motivated by our love.

It is important that, in the context of this motivation, we remember others. Every parish should ask its members to provide for the needy at Christmas. Our parish provided lists of needs of particular families, what the children wanted and needed, what the family needed, and individual families provided for those Christmas needs, never knowing the names of those they helped, the gifts given to the parents before Christmas, the parents never knowing the names of the donors. Programs like this should be coordinated with the Salvation Army and other groups to make sure no one is missed or that help is not duplicated.

So there is a way to get ready for Christmas in the way most of the world celebrates it, too. It is right because gifts celebrate humankind's greatest gift, the coming of our Redeemer. But, in the most important way, we must get ready spiritually, preparing ourselves for the coming of the mystery of the Incarnation.

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Before Christmas "we dash about hurriedly writing cards, at tending parties, shopping, cooking, supporting worthy causes, seldom if ever stopping for a moment of reflection and peace."

"Then on Christmas Day we abruptly end it all. We wash the dishes, throw away the ribbons and the wrapping, stack the toys and sigh, 'Thank God, it's over.'"

Does that scenario sound familiar? Bishop Joseph Maguire spoke of it in a pastoral letter to the people of his Diocese of Springfield, Mass. Christmas is a moment to "savor," he said.

Earlier generations seemed to know "a more leisurely way of doing things," partly by concentrating festive celebrations during the 12 days of Christmas, Bishop Maguire wrote. Could modern celebrations be extended into the days after Christmas? Bishop Maguire had a few suggestions to help parishes and families do just that.

Consider holding an open house tied to the feast of St. John on Dec. 27, traditionally a day of hospitality, he suggested. In parishes, an open house for young people home from college can remind them they "are still a vital part of the parish."

Children's parties for the feast of the Three Kings extend the feast of Christmas, as do liturgical celebrations like

Christmas Vespers and caroling, the bishop said.

"The 12 days of Christmas revolved around family gatherings," he explained. "There are values and blessings in this that we should reclaim and never lose."

And Christmas is "a serious matter," the bishop stressed. "Unless we take it seriously, we will find no real joy" in it and "will not really celebrate what the feast is all about." He observed:

- Christmas is about sharing and forgiving and reconciling and being one as a human family.

- Christmas is about commitment — about making our word live, in marriage, in priesthood, in religious life, in family.

- Christmas is about us: about our yearning for peace; about the lowly and the forgotten, the castaways, the homeless, imprisoned, rejected and abused.

- Christmas is about the best in us: the human spirit, our courage, our compassion, our dreams, our sensitivity, our decency, our delight with one another.

Bishop Maguire challenged people to take Christmas seriously and to savor it in a leisurely and reflective way.

How do you think the moment can be savored? What does it mean to take Christmas seriously?

...for discussion

The "moment" of Christmas needs to be savored, Bishop Joseph Maguire of Springfield, Mass., has written. What can you do so that the moment and the spirit of Christmas are savored?

Bishop Maguire also has said that unless Christmas is taken seriously "we will not really celebrate what this feast is all about," though we "may have the glitter and tinsel, the jingle bells and holly." What do you think it means to take Christmas seriously?

Dominican Father David K. O'Rourke thinks that the spirit of Christmas and the spirit of hospitality are linked. Why does he say that the expression of hospitality toward those in need can be a reminder of our Christian origins?

What is the deeper reason, as you see it, for giving gifts at Christmas?

SECOND HELPINGS

"Legends and Traditions of Christmas," by Trudie West Revor. "Keep in mind that persons of all ages enjoy legends," the author of this book writes. Intended especially, but not only, for elementary age children, she adds that the collection "represents a rich heritage that I have spent a lifetime discovering." The book includes the popular legend of Babushka who came quite late to the stable in search of the baby Jesus, and found him gone; now she wanders the world with her basket of gifts for the Christ child, leaving three gifts at the homes of many children, "one to marvel at, one to enjoy and one for the baby Jesus." Also found here are the legends of the mistletoe, of the little juggler, of the holly wreath and others — stories that contain lessons "of love, kindness and unselfishness," the author explains. (Judson Press, Valley Forge, Pa. 1982. \$7.95.)



They would talk and eat and some more. After the adults would sit out on the big porch surrounding the parents' house. Heavy coats don't usually cover the children until January, and the mild winter air made it quite comfortable to be outside. People would bring guitars and radios and my father played the piano," Frey said. "They would play music out on the porch into the night." The children would listen for a while. They would then play tag and seek or games of tag, and large bonfires and stay out until midnight. People anticipated the Christmas celebration with great excitement and use this was often the only time the entire family was able to get together.

For most of the people whose roofed houses dot the hills and

hollows outside Somerset, home and family are still what make Christmas special.

"Christmas is everyone in the family coming home to eat, to talk, to laugh, to take care of the babies," said Humility of Mary Sister Marty Conrad, who helped to develop St. Mildred's Outreach program 10 years ago and who continues to work there.

Many do not have much in the way of material possessions and most do not have the means for extensive gift giving, she said. But what they have, they share. Their homes are warm and welcoming, like "walking into a nest."

And the spirit of the season — hospitality, simplicity, concern for neighbor and deep appreciation for family — is the gift they try to give all year long.

(Ms. Liebhart is media reporter for NC News Service.)

CHILDREN'S STORY HOUR

A Rebirth of Christmas

By Janaan Manternach
NC News Service

Maggie shivered as a cold draft swept through her room. She pulled her gray shawl more tightly around her body. The cold seemed to cut into her brittle bones. She sat for hours by the window, even though it was colder there than in other parts of her room. She looked out, trying to break through the wall of loneliness by at least touching other people with her eyes.

Her husband had died five years ago. They had been married 53 years. His death left a great emptiness in Maggie's days and nights.

Her two daughters were married and had families of their own. They lived across the country. Her son and his family lived in Mexico. Maggie was alone.

"I used to love Christmas," Maggie thought to herself. "It seems I just don't belong to anyone anymore."

Tears welled up often in Maggie's eyes as she watched the street below. "Everybody is rushing around buying gifts for people they care about."

Maggie dozed off for a while. A knock at her door woke her. "Who can that be?" she thought. At first she was afraid. "No one ever comes at this time of the afternoon."

There was a second knock. And a third. "Miss Maggie! Please open the door," a young voice begged.

"Why it must be Joan!" Maggie said. Then she smiled. Joan lived down the street with her father, brother and grandmother. She passed Maggie's apartment every day as she walked to and from school. Joan was in fifth grade.

When the weather was warmer, Joan used to stop for a few minutes most days to chat with Maggie. But now that the weather was cold, Joan just waved as she passed by. Maggie missed their moments together.

Maggie reached for her cane and walked slowly to the door. "Come in, dear!" she said, unhooking the chain.

"Merry Christmas!" Joan greeted her. "We want you to come to our house on Christmas Day for dinner. It was my idea."

Maggie bent down and hugged her thoughtful little friend.



"Thank you. I'd love to have Christmas with you."

"I've got to go now," Joan told her. "Dad's waiting for me."

Joan ran outside and up the street. Maggie closed the door. She sat down at her kitchen table. The room felt a little warmer now. And now Maggie's tears were tears of joy.

"I've got to think of something to give that dear girl," she thought. "And something for her father. And for her grandmother."

All Maggie did from that day until Christmas was think of what she could do for Joan and her family.

"I had almost forgotten what Christmas was all about," Maggie wrote to Joan. "You helped me remember. Merry Christmas!"

(Ms. Manternach is the author of catechetical works, scripture stories and original stories for children.)

Christmas Word Scramble

Unscramble the words below. All the words are connected with Christmas.

Example: army

M	A	R	Y
---	---	---	---

 (Mary)

1. hemtheble

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

2. gami

--	--	--	--

3. ngeram

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

4. epjosh

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

5. abelts

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Answers: 1. Bethlehem, 2. magi, 3. manger, 4. Joseph, 5. stable

HOW ABOUT YOU?

☐ Joan gave Maggie the best gift she could think of for Christmas, the gift of thoughtfulness. Can you think of a way you can do something thoughtful for a relative or neighbor at Christmas?

Children's Reading Corner

In the story "Mama's Going to Buy You a Mockingbird," by Jean Little, Jeremy and Sarah prepare to celebrate their first Christmas after the death of their father. On Christmas morning, before anyone else is up, Jeremy notices that his mother's stocking is practically empty. So the lad decides to fill it himself, putting a beloved treasure inside — something that had been a gift from his father and that his mother also cherished. This brings Jeremy the joy that he had experienced on previous Christmases and which he had been longing for. A very special story! (Viking Penguin, Inc., 40 West 23rd St., New York, N.Y. 10022. 1984. Hardback, \$11.95.)

Today's Heroes, Or Tomorrow's Saints?

Father Viscaino — A Leader In Search Of Leaders



Father Mario Viscaino directs the Mobile Hispanic Ministry Team throughout 21 dioceses in our Southeastern states. He labors vigorously for the Church among Hispanic Catholics. Because of the shortage of Hispanic priests, Father Mario tirelessly seeks potential lay leaders in the community to encourage religious instruction and devotion among unchurched and migrant Hispanics.

His leadership and zeal are bearing fruit because more people have joined his growing ministerial team. Many Hispanics who had left the Catholic Church have begun to return to it as a refuge where they

can find love and understanding.

Father Mario is one of several Hispanic clergy and laity reaching out to help their struggling people, who are featured in the July issue of *EXTENSION* Magazine. The magazine regularly publishes inspiring stories of people, who, as true followers of Christ, devote and fulfill their lives in His service.

Complete the coupon to receive a trial subscription to *EXTENSION* Magazine, at no charge. You can also request quantity copies of "Catholic Hispanics in Special Focus" for religious education and discussion groups.

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The SUNDAY READINGS

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 22, 1985

by
Richard
Cain
Micah 5:1-4a
Psalm 80
Hebrews 10:5-10
Luke 1:39-45

The first reading is from the book of the prophet Micah. One of the 12 minor prophets in the Old Testament, Micah lived during the latter part of the eighth and the early part of the seventh centuries B.C. and was a contemporary of the prophet Isaiah.

At this time Israel was divided into two kingdoms, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Both were prosperous. Yet their prosperity was threatened by idolatry and social injustice from within and the growing political menace of Assyria from without.

Micah can be called the prophet of social justice. His book is a scorching attack on a long list of social injustices then prevalent in Israel and Judah.

In his prophecies he proclaimed a direct link between the injustices committed in Israel and Judah and the political menace from without. The menace from without was God's way of correcting the injustices within by overthrowing those who had become mighty through corruption and exploitation.

The invasion of Judah by the Assyrian king Sennacherib in 701 B.C. provided Micah with an especially striking symbol of what he was talking about. Through Sennacherib, God had reduced the proud and mighty city of Jerusalem to powerlessness. Yet God would one day raise up the lowly and unimportant town of Bethlehem by making it the birthplace of the Messiah, Israel's savior.

In the second reading we return to the letter to the Hebrews from which the second readings were taken in October and November. This letter shows how the ministry of Christ fulfilled and replaced the old Jewish system of sacrificial worship instituted under Moses.

The author of the letter offered as proof of the superiority of Christ's ministry, a series of comparisons between the new and

old covenants. Under the old covenant, the Jewish high priest offered animal sacrifices year after year for his own and the nation's sins. The fact that the same sacrifices had to be offered again and again demonstrated that they were unable to achieve what they symbolized.

Yet Christ in establishing the new covenant offered up his life once and for all. Because he needed to sacrifice his life only once, we can be sure his sacrifice achieved what it symbolized.

Despite their differences, however, the two covenants are not opposed to each other. Both have at their heart the centrality of our need for reconciliation with God. The whole point of sacrificing animals under the old covenant was to express in ritual language what sin is and how it is healed. Sin occurs when we attempt to live our lives as though they belong to us rather than to God. Repentance and healing of sin then necessarily involve turning our attitude and will back toward obedience to God.

Under the old covenant this giving back of one's life to God was expressed symbolically through the giving of an animal's life back to God. It was necessary to use an animal because in actuality we are not able to give back our lives. Only God has the ability to give back his own life and survive the giving back.

But before God could give back his life for us in Christ, he first had to help us understand what he would be doing. This was the purpose of the old covenant and its system of animal sacrifices.

The gospel reading is taken from Luke's account of Mary's visitation to her relative Elizabeth. The passage has many parallels with II Samuel 6:9-15 which is an account of David's bringing of the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. This suggests that Luke intended us to see Mary as the ark of the new covenant, Jesus Christ.

the Saints *by Luke*

ST. PETER CANISIUS



ST. PETER CANISIUS, CALLED THE SECOND APOSTLE OF GERMANY IN THAT HIS WORK WAS LIKE THE EARLIER WORK OF ST. BONIFACE, WAS BORN IN THE NETHERLANDS IN 1521, THE SAME YEAR MARTIN LUTHER BROKE WITH THE CHURCH. ST. PETER CANISIUS WAS A KEY FIGURE IN THE CATHOLIC COUNTER REFORMATION IN GERMANY. HE ONCE ACCUSED HIMSELF OF IDLENESS BUT EARNED A MASTER'S DEGREE AT AGE 19 FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF COLOGNE. HE MET PETER FABER, THE FIRST DISCIPLE OF ST. IGNATIUS LOYOLA, WHO INFLUENCED HIM SO MUCH THAT HE MADE A VOW OF CELIBACY IN 1540 AND BECAME A JESUIT THREE YEARS LATER. PETER DEDICATED HIS LIFE TO THE SERVICE OF THE TRUTH. HE OPENED MANY COLLEGES, ENGAGED IN DEBATES AND WON MANY BACK FROM HERESY. HIS TEACHING WAS CLEAR AND FORCEFUL AND HIS LIFE WAS ONE OF STUDY, REFLECTION, PRAYER AND WRITING. WORKING IN POLAND, SWITZERLAND, AUSTRIA AND GERMANY, HE WROTE EIGHT VOLUMES OF LETTERS AND A CATECHISM IN LANGUAGE PEOPLE COULD UNDERSTAND. AN ELOQUENT PREACHER AND WRITER, HE ALSO FOUND TIME TO VISIT PRISONERS AND THE SICK. HE DIED AT AGE 76 ON DEC. 21, 1597 AND WAS CANONIZED AND DECLARED A DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH IN 1925. THE FEAST OF ST. PETER CANISIUS IS DEC. 21.

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THE ACTIVE LIST



The Active List welcomes announcements of parish and church related activities. Please keep them brief listing event, sponsor, date, time and location. No announcements will be taken by telephone. No pictures, please. Mail or bring notices to our offices by Friday prior to the week of publication.

Send to: The Active List, 1400 N. Meridian St., P.O. Box 1410, Indianapolis, IN 46206

December 20-21-22

A Christmas Family Retreat will be held at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center. Call 812-923-8817 for information.

December 21

Separated, Divorced and Remarried Catholics will attend a special liturgy at 3 p.m. in Sacred Heart Church, Jeffersonville. Covered dish dinner follows in cafeteria. For reservations call 812-282-5062 or 812-283-7591.

December 22

The CCD students of St. Joseph Parish, St. Leon, will present a Christmas program following the 9:30 a.m. Mass.

A Sign Mass for the Deaf is celebrated at 9 a.m. every Sunday in St. Barnabas Church, 8300 Rahke Rd.

A Sign Mass for the Deaf is celebrated at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday in St. Joan of Arc Church, 42nd and Central.

The Church of the Holy Name of Jesus, 17th and Albany, Beech Grove, will present Christmas Concert XXIV from 3 to 6:30 p.m. Choirs, orchestra, organ and guitar directed by Jerry Craney. Tickets available at the door or by calling Harriet Strack at 784-0459.

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December 23

Separated, Divorced and Remarried Catholics (SDRC) will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St. for a Christmas Sing-Along. Bring cookies and your kids. For more information call 236-1592 days or 259-8140 or 255-3121 evenings.

December 24

The 6 p.m. Christmas Eve liturgy at St. Barnabas Church, 8300 Rahke Rd. will be a signed Mass for the hearing impaired.

Christmas Mass will be celebrated at 8 p.m. in Bishop Chartrand Chapel, Marian College.

December 25

Christmas Mass will be celebrated at 10:15 a.m. in Bishop Chartrand Chapel, Marian College.

December 27-28-29

A Retreat for Young Single Adults (18-35) will be held at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center. Call 812-923-8817 for information.

December 28

A CYO Reunion for persons involved in youth programs, past or present, will be held at 6 p.m. in Wagner Hall at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church, New Albany. \$5 per person includes

food, refreshments and a dance. For required registration call 812-945-0354.

St. Benedict Parish, Terre Haute, will hold a Holiday Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Bring your own table service and a covered dish. For information call 812-877-3398 or 812-877-9589.

December 29

A Sign Mass for the deaf is celebrated at 9 a.m. every Sunday in St. Barnabas Church, 8300 Rahke Rd.

A Sign Mass for the deaf is celebrated at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday in St. Joan of Arc Church, 42nd and Central.

A New Albany Deaneary Youth Mass and Christmas Party will be held at 6 p.m. at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center. Bring Christmas snacks.

December 31

St. Lawrence Parish, 46th and Shadeland, will hold a New Year's Eve Party and Dance at 8 p.m. \$18 per couple, \$9 per person. For reservations call 546-4065 or 542-4921.

St. Joseph Council #5290, K of C, 4332 N. German Church Rd. will sponsor a New Year's Eve Dance beginning with a roast beef dinner at 8 p.m. \$40 per couple members presale; \$45 per couple nonmembers; and \$50 per couple at the door.

Separated, Divorced and Remarried Catholics (SDRC) will enjoy a New Year's Eve Party from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m. at the Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St. Call 236-1596 days or 259-8140 or 255-3121 evenings for more information.

Holy Spirit Parish, 7241 E. 10th St., will begin its New Year's Eve Party with champagne and hors d'oeuvres at 7:30 p.m., followed by dinner and dancing until 1 a.m. \$17.50 per person.

St. Mark's annual New Year's Eve Dance will feature D.J. Lee Daniels at 9 p.m. in the church hall, 6047 S. East St. \$8 single; \$16 couple. For required reservations call 786-3812 or 783-9411.

January 3

Deadline for registration for Lent/Easter Seasonal Planning Workshop sponsored by Office of Worship. Call 236-1483 for information.

January 4

A Day of Prayer and Inner Healing will be presented from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Mount St. Francis Retreat Center. \$15 fee includes lunch. Call 812-923-8817 for information.

The World Apostolate of Fatima (Blue Army) will hold its First Saturday Holy Hour at 2:30 p.m. in St. Jude Church, 5353 McFarland Rd. Everyone is welcome.

January 5

St. Joseph Parish, Rockville, will hold a combined 3 Kings Carry-in Supper and Crucifixion Celebration at 5 p.m. in Holy Family Hall.

The Blessed Sacrament is exposed for quiet prayer and reflection from noon until Benediction at 5 p.m. in St. Joan of Arc Church, 4200 N. Central Ave.

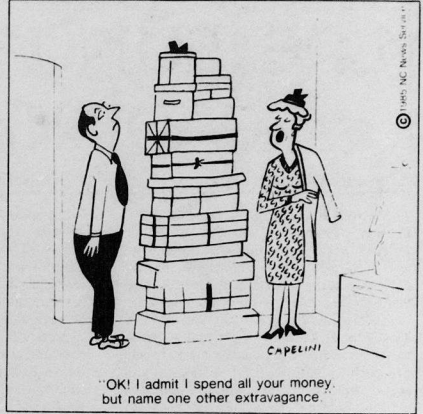
A Sign Mass for the Deaf is celebrated at 9 a.m. every Sunday in St. Barnabas Church, 8300 Rahke Rd.

A Sign Mass for the Deaf is celebrated at 10:30 a.m. every Sunday in St. Joan of Arc Church, 42nd and Central.

Placement tests for eighth grade girls will be held at Oldenburg Academy. Call 812-934-4440 for information.

Socials

MONDAY: St. Ann, 6:30 p.m.; Our Lady of Lourdes, 6:30 p.m.; St. James, 5:30 p.m. TUESDAY: K of C, Pius X Council 3433, 7 p.m.; Roncalli High School, 5:15 p.m.; St. Peter Claver Center, 3110 Sutherland Ave., 5 p.m.; St. Simon, 6:30 p.m.; St. Malachy, Brownsburg, 6:30 p.m. WEDNESDAY: St. Anthony, 6:30 p.m.; St. Patrick, 11:30 a.m.; St. Roch, 7-11 p.m. THURSDAY: St. Catherine parish hall, 6:30 p.m.; Holy Family K of C, 6:30 p.m.; Westside K of C, 220 N. Country Club Rd. FRIDAY: St. Andrew parish hall, 6:30 p.m.; St. Christo-



pher parish hall, Speedway, 7 p.m.; St. Rita parish hall, 6:30 p.m.; Holy Cross, 5:30 p.m.; Central Catholic School, at St. James Church, 5:15 p.m. SATURDAY: Cathedral High School, 3 p.m.; K of C Council 437, 1305 N. Delaware, 4:30 p.m. SUNDAY: Cardinal Ritter High School, 6 p.m.; St. Philip parish hall, 3 p.m.

Celebrate M.L. King day

WASHINGTON (NC)—Catholic, Protestant and Jewish leaders urged celebrations and reflections to mark the first federal legal holiday honoring the late civil rights leader the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Jan. 20.

In a Dec. 10 joint statement Msgr. Daniel F. Hoyer, general secretary of the U.S. Catholic Conference, the Rev. Arie Brouwer, general secretary of the National Council of Churches, and Rabbi Henry Michelman, executive vice president of the Synagogue Council of America, recommended "prayer services in churches and synagogues and interfaith memorial convocations so that we can reflect together on the values Dr. King lived by and died for."

Dr. King, a Baptist clergyman who spearheaded the national civil rights movement in the 1960s, was assassinated April 4, 1968, at the age of 39.

The civil rights leader "looked prejudice in the eye and did not flinch, confident that justice could be achieved in a non-violent way, that right would have the final word," the statement said. "We urge all of America to celebrate the memory of this strong but gentle man."

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Pope defends church teaching on birth control

by John Thavis

VATICAN CITY (NC)—Pope John Paul II strongly defended the church's teaching against contraceptive birth control again Dec. 13, warning that Catholics should not leave the issue up to their individual consciences alone.

The conscience can "deceive itself" about what is really good, the pope said. The magisterium, the church's teaching authority, on the other hand, helps the conscience discover "the truth of things."

"The church's magisterium does not present truths that are impossible to live out," he said.

The pope spoke to a plenary meeting of the Pontifical Council for the Family, which deals with pastoral and teaching questions on family matters.

Later in the day, the pope told an Italian group of natural family planning teachers that even the natural methods approved by the church—which rely on periodic sexual abstinence—must not be seen as merely biological practices. They must be part of a fully lived faith, he said.

In his talk to the family council, the pope emphasized that the individual conscience cannot be the ultimate guide to moral decisions about birth control. The conscience "can deceive itself by orienting itself toward something that reasonably seems to be a good thing," the pope said. The church's magisterium helps individuals tell the difference, he said.

"The faithful have the right to receive from the magisterium the teaching on moral truths. One cannot say that the church's magisterium is opposed to the 'rights of conscience,'" he said.

The pope said church teaching on responsible parenthood has been clearly stated in Pope Paul VI's 1968 encyclical "Humanae Vitae" ("Of Human Life"), in his own apostolic exhortation on the family, during his several years of weekly audience talks on the subject, and in pastoral statements by bishops around the world. Still, "disorientation and doubt" have spread about the teaching, he said. He urged the council members to continue to work with "courage" in support of church teaching.

When the church reminds Catholics of its doctrine in this area, it is engaging in "a profound exercise of charity," the pope said. The church "does not limit itself in promoting 'solutions' that are rather easy and of immediate effect," he said. Rather, "like the good doctor, it seeks to cure the causes of disorder," he said.

In this case, those causes are often of an "interior" nature—a misunderstanding of the sacred relationship in marriage, he said.

In instruction of Catholics, the church should be careful not to relativize its teachings, the pope added. "One is not allowed to speak of the 'graduality of the law,' as if the law were more or less exacting according to the concrete situations," he said. All teachers should keep personal situations in mind, but "without weakening the principles," he said.

In his talk to participants in a course for natural family planning teachers, sponsored by an Italian Catholic university, the pope said the group has a role in promoting church doctrine.



CLOWNING AROUND—Members of St. Christopher's clown troupe receive communion after being commissioned during Mass. They are, from left, Dick "Happy" Niemeyer, Steve "Eugene" Niemeyer (rear), Cathy "Pokey" Brewer, David "Hely" Heinzen, Joe "Froggy" Pleczko, Louise "Bascom" Clute, Nicole "Uncle Elmer" Alsop, Victoria "Chumper" Mora (back to camera) and Jane "Sparkle" Anderson.

St. Christopher commissions first class of clown ministers

SPEEDWAY—The altar at St. Christopher looked a little like a college of clowns last Sunday as 21 parishioners were commissioned as clown ministers. The parishioners had recently completed a 30-hour course in clown ministry led by Don Berkoski.

"It's a nice way to share Jesus without cramming him down someone's throat," Berkoski said.

The clown ministry, called "Smiles Unlimited," is an outreach program designed to bring smiles, love, laughter, joy and happiness to residents in nursing homes, hospitals, prisons and handicapped facilities in the Indianapolis area, he said.

Berkoski said he would like to see a ministry of 150-200 clowns offering weekly visits to people.

According to Berkoski, the clown costume has a spiritual meaning. Putting the white on the face symbolizes death to self while putting the colors on symbolizes the resurrection of putting on Christ. "It develops the Christ within them and enables them to share Christ with others."

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Vatican official says catechism in preparation well before synod

by John Thavis

ROME (NC)—A new catechism of church doctrine is being written by the Congregation for the Clergy before the idea was suggested by the Nov. 24-Dec. 8 extraordinary Synod of Bishops, Cardinal Silvio Oddi, head of the congregation, said Dec. 16. The document will soon be presented to Pope John Paul II, he said.

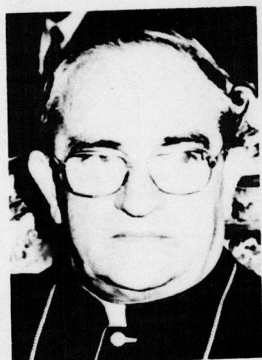
The congregation has been preparing the writings, which would be designed to serve as a "guide" for all locally written catechisms, for about five years, Cardinal Oddi said in an interview with National Catholic News Service. The new catechism emphasizes traditional church teachings on such matters as original sin, the soul, hell and punishment, Cardinal Oddi said. He said some national catechisms "skip over" these points of doctrine or fail to present them clearly.

Another section will delineate church teaching on moral issues, he said. That part will be modeled on the 10 Commandments, he said.

Both sections will be supported, point by point, by citations from Scripture, papal documents and teachings of councils and church fathers, he said.

"This will be a directory of the truth, followed by a directory that proves the church has always followed that particular doctrine," Cardinal Oddi said.

Cardinal Oddi, a 75-year-old Italian, was one of several



Cardinal Silvio Oddi

synod members to propose a catechism. Another was Cardinal Bernard F. Law of Boston. The synod in its final document endorsed the idea as part of a needed "systematic catechesis" in the church. It made clear that such a catechism or compendium would serve as a "point of reference" for national and regional groups that now prepare catechism texts.

None of the published synod documents, however, made mention of the clergy congregation's project. Cardinal Oddi said he did not refer to the text of the congregation's draft catechism when he addressed the synod, but presented his idea in general terms.

Much of the post-synod speculation has centered on who would prepare such a catechism. In his talk to the synod, Cardinal Law proposed that a commission of cardinals be

given the task and that the world's bishops be consulted. But Cardinal Oddi said that if the pope approves the draft text, only the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith would need to further review it. Under current church organization, the clergy congregation has the primary responsibility for catechetics. The doctrinal congregation deals with all matters of doctrine.

At a press conference Dec. 12, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the doctrinal congregation, said a churchwide catechism would "require cooperation among several congregations." He did not refer to the project already undertaken by the clergy congregation.

Cardinal Oddi said the second section of the draft catechism, on moral teaching, will be ready in January.

The pope did not tell the congregation to prepare the catechism, Cardinal Oddi said. "But when I explained it a couple of years ago to the pope, he said it was a very good idea," he said.

The doctrinal section will be a return to the "basic truths" of the faith, Cardinal Oddi said. "The clergy congregation has found that many catechisms do not necessarily teach wrong things, but skip over basic elements of the faith, such as original sin, the soul, hell and punishment," he said.

Card. Ratzinger discusses catechism, new document on liberation theology

by Agostino Bono

VATICAN CITY (NC)—The Vatican hopes to issue a second document on liberation theology in mid-February, said Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The document is being prepared in consultation with bishops' conferences, he said at a Dec. 12 press conference.

The cardinal also said that formulation of a compendium of church teachings suggested by the Nov. 24-Dec. 8 extraordinary Synod of Bishops would probably be a cooperative effort among several Vatican congregations. "But it is still too early after the synod for a formal plan to have been worked out," he added.

The press conference was called to announce Vatican publication of a collection of the 58 documents issued by the doctrinal congregation since the end of the Second Vatican

Council in 1965. Cardinal Ratzinger told journalists he would answer only questions having to do with the congregation's work since Vatican II. He refused to answer several questions asking his overall assessment of the extraordinary synod, which was called to evaluate the teachings of Vatican II.

One of the synod suggestions was formulation of a universal compendium or catechism of church doctrine as a point of reference for local church catechisms. Pope John Paul II publicly supported the idea, but neither the pope nor the synod said who should draw up the compendium.

"The Congregation for the Clergy has the primary competence for catechetics," said Cardinal Ratzinger. "But this would require cooperation among several congregations."

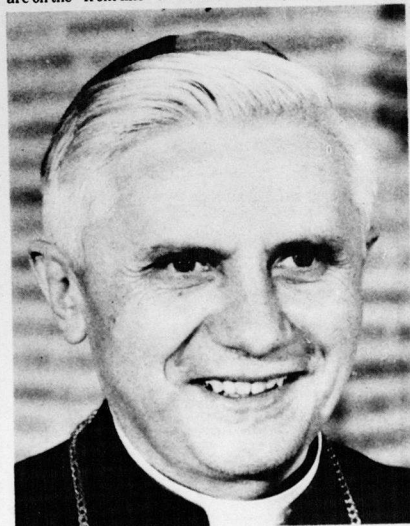
Regarding liberation theology, Cardinal Ratzinger said the congregation has been consulting with local bishops' conferences and hopes to have the document ready in time for Lent, which begins Feb. 12.

Consultation is part of the congregation's effort to develop a responsible document, he said. "The church has a need of responsible collaboration through fraternal, cordial, but also frank dialogue. There is always a need to deepen doctrine through responsible dialogue and diverse opinions," he added.

In September 1984 the doctrinal congregation issued a document on liberation theology warning that uncritical borrowing of Marxist concepts—such as class warfare and use of violence to promote social change—is against Catholic teachings. The document also praised many aspects of liberation theology, especially its desire to correct social injustices, and promised the congregation would issue another document concentrating on the positive aspects of liberation theology.

Liberation theology developed in Latin America in the late 1960s as a Christian response to the need to overcome the region's misery and poverty. Some theologians have incorporated Marxist concepts in an effort to understand structural causes of injustice, while other theologians have not.

Cardinal Ratzinger said much of the consultation on the future document has been with Latin American bishops, who are on the "front line" of liberation theology.



Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger

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YOUTH CORNER

Bad thoughts about parents

by Tom Lennon

Question: I don't think my mom really loves me. In fact, I thought about her dying once, and I wasn't even sad. What's the matter with me? (Virginia)

Answer: Part of The American Dream is the happy family whose members live together in harmony. So important is familial peace that many of us feel downright guilty or inferior if our homes are the scene of much quarreling, bickering or worse.

But life is not exactly like "Leave It to Beaver." Most families are not the scene of 100 percent harmony all the time.

Living closely with family members day after day is not always easy. Being generous, thoughtful and forgiving can be an enormous struggle.

So do not be discouraged if there is friction between you and your mother. This happens in the best of families.

Your mother may be experiencing serious problems of her own right

now. Maybe she is fed up with the endless tasks she has as a homemaker. Or maybe she is not in the best of physical health.

Or perhaps she feels that life is passing her by and she is unable to focus on the many positive contributions she is making to her family.

Eventually she may work out her present problems and be able to manifest her love for you more easily and readily.

It will may be that if you were involved in an automobile accident, she would be the first to rush to the hospital. She might be jolted out of her present mood and show her real love for you in many ways.

Do not be discouraged by your thought about her dying. Many a teen-ager has had such a thought pop into his or her head.

This does not mean that something is the matter with you. None of us has complete control of the thoughts that pass through our heads.

If it was your mother who was involved in an automobile accident, I suspect you would find out

that you love her more than you now realize. Random thoughts are not always an accurate gauge of what we feel about other people.

Perhaps right now you too are having a more difficult time than usual in some area of your life. Monotony, boredom, difficult schoolwork—such problems can affect how you feel about other family members.

Harmony and happiness in family living are prizes that can be won only with struggle and sacrifice. So, what to do?

Could you imitate the Scouts and at least once a day do something nice for your mother? This may lighten her heart in ways you do not know and even help her find the solution to whatever problem she may now have.

And once a day could you say a prayer for help to that holy and happy family who once lived in a town called Nazareth—Joseph, Mary and Jesus?

(Address questions for this column to Tom Lennon, 1312 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005.)

Youth news briefs

Youth Mass, dance Dec. 29

There will be a youth Mass and dance for all youth in the archdiocese Sunday, Dec. 29 at Holy Spirit in Indianapolis. The Mass begins at 6 p.m. and the dance will follow from 7-11 p.m. Music will be provided by a DJ. Admission to the dance is \$2 per person for those wearing any red or green and \$2.50 per person for others. You may bring a guest. Holy Spirit is located at 7243 E. 10th St. between Shadeland and Franklin roads. For more information, call the CYO Office 317-632-9311.

New Albany Deanery youth Mass and party

There will be a youth Mass and Christmas party at Mt.

St. Francis for all youth in the New Albany Deanery Sunday, Dec. 29. The Mass will begin at 6 p.m. The dance will follow and end at 10 p.m. Please bring a Christmas snack. Softdrinks will be provided. For more information, call the New Albany Deanery Catholic Youth Ministry Office at 812-945-0354.

CYO Music Contest soon

The entry deadline for the CYO Archdiocesan Music Contest is Thursday, Jan. 23. The event is open to all youth in grades 4 through 12 in the archdiocese. The contest has three event categories, piano, vocal and instrumental. The entry fee is \$5 per person per event. The competition will be held 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 15, at Chatared High School in Indianapolis. To enter, contact the CYO

Office, 580 Stevens. St., Indianapolis, Ind. 46203 317-632-9311.

Bloomington Deanery lock-in

There will be a lock-in for all youth in the Bloomington Deanery Jan. 18-19. The lock-in will begin Saturday, Jan. 18, at 11 p.m. and will end Sunday, Jan 19, at 7 a.m. It will take place at the Monroe County YMCA. During the lock-in, the youth will have access to all the facilities there including the swimming pool, weight room and racquetball courts. Each person attending should bring \$5 and one can of food. Canned goods will be donated to the St. Vincent de Paul Society. The registration deadline is Tuesday, Dec. 31. To register or for more information, call Jerry Moorman at 812-336-6846 or Cathi Stone at 812-358-4185.

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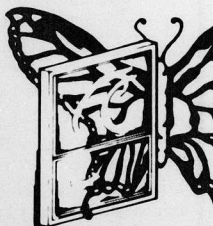
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Book review

Religion always been part of public life

RELIGION IN AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE, by A. James Reichley. The Brookings Institution, (Washington, 1985) 389 pp., \$31.95 cloth, \$11.95 paper.

Reviewed by
Richard Philbrick
NC News Service

Contrary to the views of some public figures who would like to see it inserted into American public affairs through legislation, religion has never been left out. Moreover, as author A. James Reichley shows, it has

never been furtive in participating.

In this well-researched, carefully written book, the author traces manifestations of religion in the nation's affairs from colonial days to the present. He is at pains to point out that rebels did not tread on the heels of Pilgrims, that what held true about colonists in the early 17th century was not necessarily a factor when the United States of America was founded.

The Constitution of the new country is presented so even-handedly and with such close adherence to facts that

the narrative becomes a bit wooden. Fortunately, Reichley changes the tone and pace for the better in his well-reasoned treatment of the First Amendment.

The author's fairness and perceptiveness are evident especially in his review of Supreme Court decisions that touch on religion. He ranges widely and displays deep understanding in making his choices.

Using abundant evidence and forceful arguments, Reichley makes it clear that the justices are not and have not been the foes of religion the public figures hold them to be.

As to the future of religion in American public life, Reichley believes it should take the form of what he calls "theist-humanism." Of it he says, "Socialism espouses the goal of human mutuality, which is also one of the social objectives of theist-humanism, the other two

being reverence for God and his creation, and respect for the dignity of the individual human soul."

He adds elsewhere that "to the extent that it promotes theist-humanist

values, religion supplies moral qualities that capitalism needs for survival and that counter its dehumanizing tendencies."

Like it or not, Reichley has presented a resounding,

persuasive concept and has made a fine contribution to a discussion that must continue.

"Religion in American Public Life" is not in bookstores but can be ordered from the Brookings Institution, 1775 Massachusetts Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

(Philbrick is book review coordinator for National Catholic News Service.)

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

† **BOYLE, Freda M. Cook**, 78, Little Flower, Indianapolis, Dec. 6. Mother of James W. and Mathew R. Boyle, Sylvia E. and Jacqueline M. Fager, and Dolores Gemmill; sister of June Speaks and Buddy Morgan.

† **CLARK, Edna M.**, 79, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 6. Mother of Jim, and Loretta McKim; sister of Nellie Cassidy; grandmother of 10; great-grandmother of 20; great-great-grandmother of two.

† **FOOTE, Richard F.**, 51, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Nov. 21. Husband of Martha; father of Bill, Bob, Rich, Mary and Jeanne; brother of Bill, James, Joseph, Harold, Marian, Catherine Tepe, Marie Grunkemeyer and Betty Olthaus.

† **GAVIN, Bertha**, 90, St. Philip Neri, Indianapolis, Dec. 5. Mother of Mary Helen Sullivan, and John.

† **GRAMELSPACHER, Rosa**, 77, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 9. Wife of Raymond; mother of Wilma Fisher, Delores Little, Raymond Jr. and Fred; sister of Dorothy Hicks and Harold, William, Norbert, Robert, Henry and Walter Brown; grandmother of 15; great-grandmother of six.

† **HALL, Homer T.**, 76, St. Mary, Richmond, Dec. 4. Husband of Mary; brother of Herman; uncle of two.

† **LEE, Mitchell**, 50, Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood, Nov. 27. Husband of Mary Ann Cogswell; father of Angela Marie, Deanna Kay, Gregory M. and David C.; son of Lucille.

† **MAUDE, Virgil A.**, 64, St. Simon, Indianapolis, Nov. 18. Husband of Dolores; father of Larry, Tim, Dan, Carol Webb and Bonnie Thomas; brother of Vincent, and Bonnie Bledsoe; grandfather of 10.

† **RIEDMAN, Hubert J.**, 64, Little Flower, Indianapolis, Dec. 4. Husband of Grace Mastrangelo; father of James L., John M. and Hubert.

† **SCIEFRES, George E.**, 77, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany, Dec. 7. Husband of Virginia Trudeau; father of George E. Jr.; stepfather of Stephen and Edward Trudeau Jr. and Lynne Reed; grandfather of five; great-grandfather of eight.

† **SCHAEFFER, Firmin G.**, 78, St. Gabriel, Connersville, Dec. 9. Brother of Eugene A.

† **SCHNEIDER, Robert**, 67, St. Paul, Tell City, Dec. 9. Husband of Dora Lee; father of Sharon Hoblitzel, Darlene, Kathy, Robert and Richard; brother of Catherine Fischer; grandfather of one.

† **WAGNER, Victor Gustave**, 60, St. Christopher, Indianapolis, Dec. 2. Husband of Mary Ann Veth; father of Vickie M. Oslos, Dianne M., Richard L., Steven A., Daniel N. and Donald V.

Sister Mary Borgia buried Dec. 14

ST. MARY OF THE WOODS—Sister Mary Borgia died here Dec. 12 after a prolonged illness, and was buried from the Church of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 14. She was 91.

The former Mary Catherine Quilter was born in Chicago, where she attended St. Columbkille grade school and high school. Later she studied at St.

Mary of the Woods College, earning a B.S. in education.

For more than 50 years, Sister Mary Borgia taught in schools in Illinois, California and Indiana. Her assignments in the Indianapolis Archdiocese included St. Matthew and St. Philip Neri in Indianapolis.

Sister Mary Borgia is survived by a sister-in-law, Helen Quilter of Chicago, nieces and nephews.

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Philippine bishops decline to endorse a presidential candidate

MANILA, Philippines (NC)—The Philippine bishops' conference has declined to endorse candidates for the Feb. 7 presidential election, said retired Bishop Francisco Claver of Malaybalay, Philippines.

Bishop Claver, who works with the Institute on the Church and Social Issues, said the bishops want a fair and honest election. He said they are sensitive to charges of partisanship and would not identify with any party or candidate.

Cardinal Jaime Sin of Manila has met with the opposition candidates, but also has refused to endorse a ticket.

Corazon Aquino, widow of murdered opposition leader Benigno Aquino, and her former chief rival, Salvador Laurel, have announced they will challenge President Ferdinand Marcos in the election. Mrs. Aquino will be the presidential candidate, but she and Laurel will run as a team for his party, the United Nationalist Democratic Organization.



Cardinal Jaime Sin

Cardinal Sin said Dec. 10 that he thought most Philippine bishops see Mrs. Aquino as the moral alternative to Marcos, but they cannot and should not commit the church to support her candidacy. He said the church should not officially declare its support for any candidate, so that separation of church and state can be upheld. "I have always condemned certain religious sects here for openly supporting Mr. Marcos," he said. "How can I now turn around and commit the church to any candidate?"

Cardinal Sin was asked about the endorsement after Mrs. Aquino declared in a press conference her confidence that she enjoyed the support of the church. Laurel has said the cardinal promised the church's moral backing. "Cory probably meant many bishops would vote for her," the cardinal said, adding he was confident she could effectively exercise moral leadership if elected. "But I say that as a private citizen, not as the archbishop of Manila," he said.

Cardinal Sin said that during the crucial stages of negotiations to achieve unity, Mrs. Aquino and Laurel visited him separately in an effort to enlist him to hasten the unification process. "The cardinal told her, 'I cannot tell you what to do, but I will ask you if what you plan to accomplish can be accomplished with the two of you disunited,'" said an aide to the Manila prelate.

The cardinal said he had been "distressed" about previous disputes between Mrs. Aquino and Laurel because a split opposition would have made it "doubly difficult . . . to topple the present government."

Bishop Claver said the Philippine bishops are expected to draft a pastoral letter on the election when the conference meets in mid-January. He also said that if the National Movement for Free Elections, a private organization, is not

accredited as a poll-watching body by the Philippine Commission on Elections, the bishops will set up their own group to ensure a clean and safe election.

The election movement is a citizen's poll-watcher group formed with the help of business and church leaders to safeguard the 1984 parliamentary election.

Cardinal Sin, however, told Manila Rotarians Dec. 4 that he doubted the election would be clean and honest. "If the opposition candidate, Mrs. Cory Aquino, were to win a resounding mandate, is there any guarantee that her victory would be ratified by the Commission on Elections?" he asked Rotarians.

The cardinal said the election commission is made up of men who, with one exception, are loyal to Marcos. Its deliberations are secret. "What will happen if the true will of the people is thwarted?" the cardinal asked Rotarians. "We must give this matter serious consideration so that we may be able to act accordingly."

U.S. has special responsibility for peace, Card. O'Connor says

WASHINGTON (NC)—Americans have "a particular responsibility" to apply the theme for the church's World Day of Peace observance and to work for justice because of U.S. political power and wealth, said Cardinal John J. O'Connor of New York. Cardinal O'Connor is chairman of the Committee on Social Development and World Peace of the U.S. Catholic Conference.

World Day of Peace is celebrated Jan. 1. Pope John Paul II has chosen "Peace is a Value With No Frontiers" for the 1986 theme.

Cardinal O'Connor called for an examination of "the relationship between North-South economic inequality and its contributions to East-West tensions" and said Americans must maintain a balance between their consumption and U.S. military spending and the needs of people in poorer countries.



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