Indiana bishops call for halt to federal executions

By Mary Ann Wyand

Indiana’s six bishops issued a joint statement on Dec. 6 calling for a moratorium on federal executions and clemency for federal Death Row inmate Juan Raul Garza of Texas, who is scheduled to die by lethal injection on Dec. 12 at the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute.

The statement was sent to President Clinton, members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, state senators and representatives, and the news media.

The bishops noted that Pope John Paul II—through Archbishop Gabriel Montalvo, the apostolic nuncio to the United States—also has appealed to President Clinton for clemency for Garza, who would be the first federal prisoner executed in 37 years.

“His death will only serve to restart the federal death machine that has been inoperable since 1963,” the bishops said. “It is a sad irony that Mr. Garza, a Mexican-American, faces execution on the Catholic Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the protector of Mexico and the Americas.”

Garza was convicted under the federal drug kingpin statute of murdering three men in a marijuana smuggling ring based in Brownsville, Texas.

In their statement, Indiana’s bishops noted that the National Conference of Catholic Bishops has called for a moratorium on executions for federal crimes.

“We join our voices to theirs in asking for clemency for Mr. Garza and a moratorium on federal executions,” the bishops said. “In effect, we must begin now to put an end to state-sanctioned violence.”

The statement was signed by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, general chairman of the Indiana Catholic Conference and a member of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities; Bishop William L. Higi of Lafayette-in-Indiana; Bishop John M. D’Arcy and Auxiliary Bishop Daniel R. Jenky of Fort Wayne-South Bend; Bishop Gerald A. Getteftinger of Evansville; and Bishop Dale J. Melchezek of Gary.

“As Catholics, we affirm the sacredness of human life from the moment of conception until natural death,” the bishops said. “While our opposition to abortion and euthanasia is well known, the See BISHOPS, page 8

Pope tells disabled they challenge society, deserve love and respect

ROME (CNS)—Pope John Paul II celebrated a jubilee Mass with thousands of disabled persons, and told them they deserved not just assistance but love, respect and social acceptance.

“Through your presence, you reaffirm that a disability represents not only a need, but above all a stimulus and a challenge” to a society that often prizes “gratification, appearances, speed and efficiency,” the pope said Dec. 3.

Reflecting on the word “disability,” he said, “I like to look upon you in a more authentic light, asbearers of a different kind of ability.”

The liturgy at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls was attended by some 5,000 disabled persons, along with 7,000 family members and assistants. Some See DISABLED, page 2

Jubilee video available

In response to many inquiries from throughout the archdiocese, the Catholic Communications Center has produced a two-hour videotape of last September’s archdiocesan-wide “Celebration in the Spirit of Hope: The Great Jubilee.”

The tape was put together from raw footage of the images that were projected onto the large screens during the event at the RCA Dome.

The tape is available for $24.95, which includes shipping and handling. See the advertisement on page 10 for details.

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Hispanics in the archdiocese say devotions to Our Lady of Guadalupe are growing among all Catholics

By Jennifer Del Vecchio

Enter Margarita Arias’ home and a picture of Our Lady of Guadalupe is the focal point.

Arias calls it a “beautiful picture” that shows that Our Lady is “queen of my house.”

But her devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe is about more than having a picture on the wall.

Instead, Arias, a member of St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, talks about how she incorporates the Blessed Mother into her daily life.

That devotion becomes public when Arias and other Hispanics in the archdiocese celebrate Our Lady of Guadalupe’s feast day on Dec. 12.

The Hispanic influence is noticeable as the feast day celebrations have increased over the past seven years and grocery stores are starting to carry religious art items of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

As celebrations for the feast day continue to grow, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein said there is no doubt that people understand and appreciate the meaning of the feast day.

“As we especially see in this Advent season, as well as on this feast day and others, Mary is the true example of saying ‘Yes’ to the Father and to Christ Jesus,” he said. “Above all else in her life, she kept her eyes on her son. What better example and intercessor can we have than Mary our Mother?”

Obet and Marcelina De Los Santos, parishioners at St. Mary Parish in Indianapolis, said they also have seen the festivities honoring the feast day increase.

“When we first came here [six years ago from Mexico], there wasn’t too many people at the churches doing it,” said Marcelina De Los Santos. “Also, people say Our Lady of Guadalupe is just for the Mexicans. I don’t think so. She is the mother for everyone.”

Now there are novenas, singing, dancing and traditional Mexican dinners to the feast day on Dec. 12.

See GUADALUPE, page 16

Pharmacist is unique among parish life coordinators

By Margaret Nelson

Tom Meier is a first when it comes to parish life coordinators in the archdiocese.

When he was named parish life coordinator (PLC) of Good Shepherd Parish in Indianapolis in July, he became the first man and first person who was not a member of a religious order to be appointed to the ministry.

Meier will be installed as PLC of Good Shepherd Parish this Sunday at the 11 a.m. Mass, which will be celebrated by Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein.

PLCs are responsible for parishes without full-time pastors. As PLC, the pastoral care of Good Shepherd Parish is entrusted to Meier.

He is responsible for the day-to-day pastoral responsibilities, liturgical life, faith development, social services and administration of the parish. He is assisted and supervised by Father Thomas E. Cheghi, who also serves as the part-time chaplain at Roncalli High School in Indianapolis.

Meier, a long-time south side pharmacist, has always been active in his parish. And he is affiliated with a religious order—as a Benedictine oblate of Saint Meinrad Archabbey.

As a pastoral associate when Good Shepherd had a full-time pastor, Meier had served as part-time director of religious education, responsible for the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.

He had been involved with the RCA since he joined the parish in the mid-80s when Msgr. Mark SvarcKopf was pastor.

Meier’s pharmacy was located down the street from St. James Parish, so when he went there when the parish had morning Mass.

“I knew so many of the parishioners,” said Meier, “and we lived on the border See PLC, page 2

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arrived in wheelchairs, others leaning on canes and crutches. Groups of deaf mutes followed the Mass with the help of a sign- language translator, and the first liturgical reading was done by a blind person reading Braille. 

The 80-year-old pope, who has trouble walking long distances, rode a mobile platform up the main aisle of the basilica, past a panorama of smiling faces and waving hands. He mounted the altar slowly and unsteadily, then listened to a greeting from a 16-year-old wheelchair-bound Italian girl suffering from hydrocephalus.

Addressing the pope as “papa” because “we feel you are the father of us all,” she told him that the disabled “have a bigger spirit, because it’s not oppressed by the thirst for success.”

Several hundred U.S. pilgrims attended the Mass, among them Diane Barett from Springdale, Pa., who applauded the pope’s message that the disabled want more than assistance.

“Handicapped people can do a lot for themselves,” said Barett, 43, who walks with a brace because of infantile cerebral palsy.

The pope told those present and others following the Mass on television and radio that he considered the Jubilee for Disabled one of the most significant events of the Holy Year. He has visited several moves during the liturgy in the packed church, especially at the offertory procession. As the blind, deaf, lame and mentally disabled slowly brought gifts to the altar, the pope blessed each person and touched their faces. Later he distributed Communion to a group of blind people, one of whom was accompanied by a white seeing-eye dog. In his sermon, the pope said modern societies should increase the opportunities for the disabled and make sure their human dignity is protected.

“In a society rich in scientific and techni- cal knowledge, it is possible and necessary to do more... in biomedical research to pre- vent disabilities, in treatment, in assistance, in rehabilitation and in social re-integration,” he said.

He said the disabled require not just care, but respect and appreciation through all stages of their lives. Their very presence is a “provocation to the individual and collective selfishness” that exists in developed countries.

“The pope received loud applause when he said the Church appreciates the difficult chapters in the lives of the disabled, particu- larly when they become adults and must move toward some form of independence—a moment, the pope said, which is “faced with trepidation by many parents.”

But the trials of the disabled have a deep meaning for society as a whole, espe- cially as a reminder that all people are, in a sense, waiting for a “liberation” from the suffering of this life,” he said.

He said Advent is a good time for Christians to recall their duty to serve the disabled and other on the margins of soci- ety, just as Jesus did. Thanks to Christ, he said, “disability is not the last word of existence; love is the last word.”

At the end of the Mass, the pope greeted English-speaking pilgrims.

You have passed through the Holy Door in the company of the crucified Lord— in St. Luke’s words—is “good news to the poor, liberty to captives and new sight to the blind. From the cross of your suffering, learn to draw the serenity of spirit which so many people yearn for today,” he said.

According to statistics cited by Vatican officials, more than 500 million people around the world live with disabilities. Of that number, about 85 percent live in deve- loping countries.

Later in the day, the pope joined the disabled in the Vatican’s Paul VI Audience Hall for a two-hour spectacle featuring testimoni- als and messages.

The first to speak at the televised event was Mary Jane Owen, executive director of the National Catholic Office for Persons with Disabilities, who is blind and uses a wheelchair because of spinal cord and neuro- logical damage. She said God did not cre- ate human beings “uniform or perfect, like Ken or Barbie dolls.”

“We are created individually, uniquely, different from all others, each one of us, whether we are able-bodied or disabled, whether we are young or old, whether we are blind or dumb,” she said. “We are each unique and essential for the body of Christ.”
Terre Haute youth center to double in size, increase services

By Margaret Nelson

TERRE HAUTE—A group of preschool children cling to a red rope near 14th and Locust streets to watch the groundbreaking on a $1.3 million addition to Ryves Hall Youth Center in St. Ann Parish.

Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein asked some of the children, who are helped daily by the center, to join him and other dignitaries in breaking ground Nov. 28 on the new addition, which will more than double the size of Ryves Hall.

Terre Haute Catholic Charities—a member agency of the archdiocesan Catholic Charities—operates several programs out of Ryves Hall.

Archbishop Buechlein explained how the parish built the basement for a cathedral-size church in 1924. When the pastor, Father John Ryves (1885-1928), realized this could not be accomplished, the parish turned the basement into a gymnasium, auditorium and social hall, which was later named in Father Ryves’ honor. In 1979, Catholic Charities of Terre Haute acquired the use of the building from the parish, developing a food bank there.

The archbishop said, “We are, in fact, expanding Father Ryves’ dream of having a very visible Church here … a Church of living stones—the people who make up the Church—dedicated to carrying out the Church’s mission here on 14th Street,” said Archbishop Buechlein, “the Church has been constantly and faithfully present. And it has done—as Mother Teresa of Calcutta often does—as ‘for Jesus, with Jesus and in Jesus.’

While a ‘cathedral’ has never stood in Terre Haute, the Church—the Church does in this building, it lives—in Vigo County. It lives the Church—dedicated to carrying out the Church’s mission here on 14th Street.”

Ryves Hall Youth Center served 1,234 youth last year; this year, it has helped 1,400 children and young people dealing with substance abuse themselves or in their families. The center works with the parents of these children to help entire families.

Eling suggested that the youth could do more with music, ham radio and even recreational facilities. “Someday, they hope to build outdoor facilities. Etling suggested that the youth could do more with music, ham radio and even recreational facilities. Some day, they hope to build outdoor facilities. Etling suggested that the youth could do more with music, ham radio and even recreational facilities.

The two-story addition will include an education facility, restrooms, three offices, two multipurpose rooms and an elevator with access to all three floors. The first floor addition will hold a preschool area, a new kitchen, pantry, restrooms and room for storage. The second floor will hold the second gymnasium, restrooms, concession and storage areas.

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The present Ryves Hall Youth Center space has been utilized to the maximum,” said Eling. “We are unable to develop additional programs because we have no more space. An improved and expanded facility will serve as a catalyst to bring about a positive change in the entire area.”

Looking at the children from Ryves Hall preschool, Bill Haley, vice president of the Terre Haute Catholic Charities Council, said, “That’s what it’s all about—those little kids!”

(Margaret Nelson, a member of St. Andrew the Apostle Parish in Indianapolis, is a correspondent for The Criterion.)

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Please join us as we pray for Death Row inmates and their families, especially for Juan Raul Garza, who was convicted in 1993 for the murder of three people in Texas while directing a drug smuggling operation. He has been scheduled for execution Dec. 12, 2000, at the U.S. Penitentiary south of Terre Haute.

Join us, too, as we pray for all victims of violence and their families.


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D
during their annual meeting in November, the U.S. bishops asked Catholics to pray from the beginning of Advent to Epiphany for a genuine peace in the Holy Land. They also recommended voluntary fasting and abstinence on Fridays during the same period for the same intention.

The bishops are well aware that the present situation in the Holy Land is volatile and, as this is being written, appears to be getting worse. They also realize that the only thing that can bring peace is an enforceable agreement that recognizes both Israel’s right to exist and flourish within secure borders and the establishment of a Palestinian state.

We can’t help but feel that both sides of the conflict have missed opportunities to achieve both of those objectives numerous times in the past.

First it was the Israelis at the time of the founding of the state of Israel who rejected David Ben Gurion’s warning against expanding into areas with large Arab populations. Then it was the Arab world that refused to listen when, after the Six Day War in 1967, the Israeli Labor government wanted to annex the territories they had conquered for permanent peace.

Then it was the Israelis again, with their policy of building permanent settlements in the occupied territories. That policy continued throughout the 1970s, when Arab sources report that, since the Oslo agreement, more than 78,000 Israeli settlements have multiplied to the number that more than 11,000 houses have been built for, and the Israelis have destroyed 895 Palestinian homes.

Then it was the Palestinians again, with Yasser Arafat’s refusal to accept Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak’s offer of about 92 percent of what Arafat demanded at the summit meeting at Wye Plantation that President Clinton tried so hard to mediate. Just when it appeared that an agreement was finally going to be made, Arafat remained adamant. He seems unable to control the extremists among his constituency.

The guerrilla warfare going on now seems to have ruined any immediate chances for an agreement. If Arafat really wanted peace, he did not have the opportunity. And the Israelis who supported Barak’s peace efforts are turning toward those like Ariel Sharon, who would take stronger measures against the Arabs. Polls in Israel indicate that former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahui will defeat Barak in the election that will take place in the spring unless Barak can come to an agreement with the Palestinians before them.

Meanwhile, the economies of both Israel and the Palestinians are at a standstill. The Israeli economy has been severely damaged. Israel has closed the borders to the West Bank and Gaza, thus preventing an estimated 125,000 Palestinian workers from entering Israel to work. The agriculture and construction industries in Israel, which employ many Palestinians, are suffering severely.

Tourism has dried up, affecting both Israelis and Palestinians. Hotels in both the Israeli West Jerusalem and the Palestinian East Jerusalem are nearly empty, as are the hotels in Tiberiust, Nazareth, Jericho and Bethlehem. There are no tourists or pilgrims to buy all the souvenirs in the shops along the Via Dolorosa or in Bethlehem.

The worst part, though, is that the barracks and the Israeli army are coming to be something we have seen before. Indeed, when we hear the name of Jesus Christ, we think of the small figures in the Via Dolorosa singing Ave Maria of Mary. We are not yet at the end. Perhaps conditions must hit bottom before they can improve. If so, the bottom must be near.

The bishops encouraged the U.S. government to try to revive the peace process. “The future of the Middle East must be built on mutual respect, recognition and reconciliation, not hatred or exclusion or occupation,” their message said.

The future of the Holy City of Jerusalem will continue to be a tough issue to resolve. The Vatican has long urged an internationally guaranteed statute that would guarantee freedom of religion for all and free access to, and protection of, the holy places of all three monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. So far, there has been no indication that Israel is willing to consider such a statute.

We encourage our readers to answer the bishops’ call to pray for peace in the Holy Land.

— John F. Pink

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Pray for peace in the Holy Land

Immigrants should remind us of our ancestors

Last St. Joseph’s Day, I wrote about the goodness of my dad and my great-grandfather, Joseph Buechlein. They are images to me of what St. Joseph must have been like.

I mentioned at the time that I don’t remember ever hearing Grandpa Buechlein speak an English sentence. Apparently the language of his birth country was German. My ancestors were rather recent immigrants. They came from poverty to find a new and better life in the United States. Judging from Dad and Grandpa, the willingness to work hard was an inheritance that they passed on to us. Other than the difference of arrival time on this continent by our immigrant ancestors, save Native Americans, I don’t think family roots and history are very different for most United States citizens.

I am reminded of my ancestors as I observe the influx of immigrants in our archdiocese in recent years. I am thinking mostly of the migration from Mexico, but also from other countries as well. I am reminded of my family training to work hard as I observe how hard the Hispanic population works at jobs that others find unattractive in our city and state. I am reminded of my southern Indiana roots and grateful and so I am grateful for the opportunities my ancestors and family had to make a better life.

As some of you already know, I will be residing in Mexico and studying Spanish for most of the month of January. I can read Spanish fairly well and I can understand some of the language, but I need help in developing my ability for basic conversation. I will be in residence at the archdiocesan seminary in Guadalajara. I hope that immersion in a Spanish-speaking community will help me learn some basics in a relatively short time.

A good number of our priests and seminarians are also doing their best to learn the language and to understand the uniqueness of Hispanic cultures (not only those of Mexican origin). Most people who know that I am trying to learn some basic Spanish affirm my efforts.

But not everyone. “Immigrants have come to the United States freely and they should learn our language,” some say. I am asked by others, “Why should you learn Spanish?”

And I think of my Grandpa Buechlein. He was less-American because he spoke German. He paid his taxes. He raised a large hardworking family, and he asked for no special breaks. Would that all citizens in our day were as loyal and law-abiding. Considering our roots, I can’t imagine how anyone in the United States can be opposed to immigration. I can’t imagine how anyone can object to accommodating ourselves to the language needs of first generation immigrants. Others did so for our ancestors. And clearly, the need for good workers in our city and state is large.

Yet those reasons are neither the whole story nor are they adequate. “They will know you as my disciples if you love one another” (Jn 13:35). So Jesus taught. One need only read the New Testament account of the parable of the Good Samaritan and other teachings of Jesus to recall that everyone is our neighbor and, after God, we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. Basic Christian charity is the basis of the Christian life, and we are to extend our charity to everyone, not only those who speak our language and look like us.

It is not just a matter of language. All of us are beneficiaries of an inherited culture. The Archdiocese of Indianapolis has a Multicultural Commission because we are a community of faith made up of people who have an enriching diversity of cultural roots. And the richness of that diversity continues in our day.

Each cultural heritage offers unique gifts that enrich the body of Christ in central and southern Indiana. Our commission is charged to help us appreciate and share these gifts as we pursue our shared mission. Those of us who were present for the “Celebrating the Spirit of Heritage, the Great Jubilee 2000” event in the RCA Dome in September were delighted to visually experience the rich diversity of cultures in central and southern Indiana.

Often enough, prejudice and racism are not intended, sometimes they are even unrecognized. The facets and causes of racism are complex and it is not helpful to oversimplify them. Racism can be as multi-cultural as a natural mix of any given human community. Clearly, what is required of every person is a sincere commitment to justice and charity. And this implies the willingness to be further enlightened.

Pray that learning to speak a language more and more common in central and southern Indiana won’t be too hard for a senior citizen like me!"
Inmigrantes deberían recordarnos de nuestros antepasados

E l pasado de San José, escrito con la bondad de mi papá y abuelito Joseph Buechlein. Para mí son imágenes de cómo pudo haber sido San José. En aquel momento mencioné que no recuerdo haber oído hablar mi abuelito Buechlein ni una frase en inglés. Al parecer el idioma en su hogar era el alemán. Mis antepasados eran inmigrantes recientemente llegados. Éstos vinieron de la pobreza en búsqueda de una vida nueva y libre en Estados Unidos. A juzgar por mi papá y abuelito, el deseo de trabajar duro fue un patrimonio que nos pasaron. Más que la diferencia en el momento en que llegaron, es que por parte de nuestros antepasados inmigrantes, a excepción de los ameri- canos nativos, creo que las raíces familiares sean muy similares para la mayoría del pueblo de Estados Unidos.

Recuerdo a mis antepasados a medida que observo la afluencia de inmigrantes en nuestra arquidiócesis. Últimamente estoy pensando de la migración de México, pero también vienen de otras partes. Recuerdo mi educación familiar para trabajar duro a medida que observo cuán duro trabajaron nuestros antepasados. En la escuela aprendí que en trabajos que a los demás no les gustan en nuestra ciudad y estado. Re- cuerdo mis raíces del sur de Indiana con agradecimiento. Doy gracias por las oportunidades que tenían nuestros antepasados, familia para construir nuestra vida en la Iglesia, sobre todo como sacerdotes o religiosos.

Un día la carcasa del Señor

Opposes death penalty

I am writing to you about a matter of grave concern, namely the imposition of the death penalty.

I join with the U.S. Catholic bishops in supporting a consistent ethic of life. I believe in the sanctity of all life and the immutability of moral laws. I believe this from the moment it begins until it natural death. Executions are morally wrong and only serve to increase the cycle of violence in our country. The death penalty assumes that life is expendable when it is when it is not. It teaches that revenge is an acceptable course of action in our justice system. I believe that those who kill, even those who commit heinous crimes, are still sacred in the eyes of God. We are called to model the love of God, which embraces all prodigal sons and daughters.

Those who believe that the death penalty often say that it serves as a deterrent to crime. However, it has been shown that the average murder rate per 100,000 people in states with capital punishment is about 4 percent, while it is only 4.4 percent in abolitionist states. Furthermore, imposition of the death penalty risks putting innocent people to death. In the past 20 years, 350 capital convictions later revealed that the con- viction of the convicted had not committed the crime. Those convicted of capital crimes usually cannot afford legal defense, and they are often given inadequate representation at their hearings. Even mental incompetence does not assure that a per- son will be spared the death penalty. Since 1976, 31 people with mental retar- dation have been executed. 19 of them within five years. Our nation claims to be democratic, and yet we believe it is acceptable to kill our fellow human beings. We believe it does not serve to increase the cycle of violence in our country.

I write this not only to raise awareness of the moral issues of the death penalty and the injustice that it perpetuates, but also to request that you join me in prayer for those convic- ted of capital crimes. I often think of my fellow Catholics who have opposed the death penalty in the past, and yet believe it is acceptable to kill our fellow human beings.

May our prayers seek to understand the anguish of the condemned, and to find alternatives which respect the dignity of all human beings while offering society adequate protection.

Donald P. Halsey, S.B. Saint Mary-of-the-Woods

Letters to the Editor

I join with the U.S. Catholic bishops in supporting a consistent ethic of life. I believe in the sanctity of all life and the immutability of moral laws. I believe this from the moment it begins until it natural death. Executions are morally wrong and only serve to increase the cycle of violence in our country. The death penalty assumes that life is expendable when it is not. It teaches that revenge is an acceptable course of action in our justice system. I believe that those who kill, even those who commit heinous crimes, are still sacred in the eyes of God. We are called to model the love of God, which embraces all prodigal sons and daughters.

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LETTERS

continued from page 5

I waited throughout 1999 for my pastor to say something from the pulpit about the despicable behavior of Bill Clinton in the Oval Office with Ms. Lewinsky. Nothing was ever said.

I waited this year to hear something from the pulpit about the next president perhaps being able to appoint enough Supreme Court justices to reverse Roe vs. Wade. Nothing was ever said.

However, in the height of the presidential campaign, I did get treated to a video before Mass about the Church’s stance on the death penalty. I viewed this as no more than a veiled message to vote against George W. Bush for president.

I have lost a daughter and a sister to fundamentals Christian congregations. Their pastors were unafraid to preach what Jesus Christ would have preached relative to the sanctity of human life in all circumstances!”

I certainly agree with him, and I just wonder why he didn’t say anything about those “self-proclaimed ‘Catholics’” who voted for Gov. Bush, who supports the death penalty so strongly he would not even consider a moratorium in his state of Texas. If “…we are going to abide by God’s commandments …,” we should reconsider just what “Thou shalt not kill” might include.

Gerard Burford, Indianapolis

Bush and the death penalty

In the Nov. 24 issue of The Criterion, there was a letter written by David Nealy of Greenwood. In it, he says, “We as Catholics have an obligation to defend the sanctity of human life in all circumstances!”

The Criterion  Friday, December 8, 2000

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The Birthline Ministry helps pregnant women in crisis and young mothers who have recently given birth and need assistance. Donations that are in good condition should be delivered to the Archbishop O’Meara Catholic Center, 1400 N. Meridian St., in Indianapolis.

For information, call Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the archdiocese pro-life office, at 317-236-1521 or 800-382-9838, ext. 1521.

Father John Buckel, a Scripture theology student from Saint Meinrad Seminary, will present an Advent Morning of Reflection on “And the Word Became Flesh: Reflections on the Gospel of John” on Dec. 9 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel, in the Lafayette diocese. Mass will be celebrated at 8 a.m. with breakfast afterward. The reflection begins at 9 a.m. The suggested donation is $5. $.

Ashley Sanders, a sixth-grade student at St. Jude School in Indianapolis, was chosen as one of 25 students nationally in the National Geographic World Essay Contest. Her essay, “What’s Great About my State” earned $1,000, a bag of state quarters and a sweatshirt for every child in the school. The school also receives geography teaching materials. There were 9,000 entries in the contest. $.

Awards/Grants

This Is Camera Ready!

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Fatima Retreat House, 5353 E. 56th St., in Indianapolis will host a New Year’s Eve retreat from Dec. 31 until Jan. 1. Father James Farrell, pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Bernadette parishes in Indianapolis, will be the retreat presenter. The retreat will allow time for rest, reading and journaling about plans for the future. There will also be a vespers service. For more information, call 317-543-7681.

A free Advent program, “Waiting in Hope,” will be presented at 7 p.m. Dec. 13 and 20 at the Catherine Spalding Center in Nazareth, Ky. Sister of Charity Emily Nabholz will lead each evening, which takes participates through reflections about the longing for Christ in our lives and in our world. For more information, call 502-348-1597.

A Catholic speaker will offer a free lecture on “The Connection Between Our Human Relationships and Our Relationship with God.” Matthew Kelly, a native of Sydney, Australia, will speak at 7 p.m. Dec. 11 at St. Jude Church, 5353 McFarland Road, in Indianapolis. For information, call 317-786-4371.

The archdiocesan Birthline ministry, coordinated by the Office of Pro-Life Activities, needs donations of maternity clothing, all types of baby clothing and accessories, cribs, strollers, car seats, playpens, diapers and infant formula.

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Awards/Grants
Penance services scheduled throughout archdiocese

Parishes throughout the archdiocese have scheduled communal penance services for Advent. The following is a list of services that have been reported to The Criterion.

Indianapolis North Deanery
Dec. 9, 11 a.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas School
Dec. 10, 1:30 p.m. at St. Joan of Arc
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Pius X
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Andrew the Apostle
Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. at St. Luke
Dec. 14, 10 a.m. at St. Matthew
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at Immaculate Heart of Mary
Dec. 15, 9:30 a.m. at Christ the King School
Dec. 15, 1 p.m. at Christ the King School
Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m. at St. Lawrence
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at Christ the King
Dec. 19, 12:30 p.m. at St. Luke School
Dec. 20, 12:30 p.m. at St. Luke School
Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Thomas Aquinas

Indianapolis East Deanery
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at Martin’s Tours, Martinsville
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Charles Borromeo, Bloomington
Dec. 17, 2-4 p.m. at Christ the King, Paoli
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Springs, French Lick

Indianapolis South Deanery
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Mark
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Barnabas
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at SS. Francis and Clare, Greenwood
Dec. 17, 3 p.m. Good Shepherd, Holy Rosary, Sacred Heart and St. Patrick at St. Patrick
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at Our Lady of the Greenwood, Greenwood
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Roch
Dec. 21, 7 p.m. at St. Jude

Indianapolis West Deanery
Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m. at St. Gabriel
Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. at St. Christopher
Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. at St. Joseph
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. St. Malachy, Brownsburg; Mary, Queen of Peace, Danville; and St. Susanna, Plainfield, at St. Malachy, Brownsburg
Dec. 17, 2 p.m. at Holy Trinity
Dec. 17, 2 p.m. at St. Anthony

Batesville Deanery
Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. at Immaculate Conception, Aurora
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. for St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross, Bright, held at Presbyterian Church, Bright
Dec. 11, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Shelbyville
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. John, Osgood, and St. Magdalene, New Marion, at St. John, Osgood

St. Mary, Rushville
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Rushville

Indianapolis South Deanery
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Augustine and Sacred Heart at St. Augustine, Jeffersonville
Dec. 12, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Charlestown
Dec. 13, 8:15 a.m., noon and 3:07 p.m. at Our Lady of Providence High School, Clarksville

Indianapolis South Deanery
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Michael, Bradford
Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph Hill, Sellersburg
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, Navilleton
Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, New Albany
Dec. 16, 9:30 a.m. at St. Mary-of-the-Knobs, Floyds Knobs
Dec. 17, 7 p.m. at Holy Family, New Albany
Dec. 18, 7 p.m. at St. Anthony of Padua, Clarksville
Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m. at St. John the Baptist, Starlight
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, New Albany
Dec. 20, 7 p.m. at St. Paul, Sellersburg

Seymour Deanery
Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Jennings Co.
Dec. 10, 2 p.m. at St. Rose of Lima, Franklin
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Patrick, Salem
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Mary, North Vernon
Dec. 14, 7 p.m. at St. Anne, Jennings Co.
Dec. 16, 10 a.m. at American Martyrs, Scottsburg
Dec. 19, 7 p.m. at St. Bartholomew, Columbus

Terre Haute Deanery
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Paul, Green Castle
Dec. 13, 7 p.m. at St. Joseph, Rockville
Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart, Clinton
Dec. 14, 6:30 p.m. at Holy Rosary, Seelyville
Dec. 17, 6 p.m. at St. Patrick, Terre Haute
Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m. at St. Margaret Mary, Terre Haute

Advent wreath
After servers light a traditional Advent wreath with each candle representing one week of the season, Advent is the period of expectation that precedes Christmas.
By Mary Ann Wyand

On the Feast of St. Francis Xavier, an early missionary and patron of the archdio-
cesis, Msgr. Joseph F. Schaedel, vicar gen-
eral, blessed four of five archdiocesan Catholics scheduled to journey to Cuba this week to begin a humanitarian aid program facilitated by Catholic Relief Services.

The Dec. 3 prayer service at St. Barna-
bus Church in Indianapolis was held for representatives of C.U.B.A. 2000, which stands for “Community Understanding By Action,” and preceded their Dec. 7 flight to Cuba to organize a diocesan twinning relationship between the Archdiocese of Indianapolis and the Archdiocese of Camagüey in Cuba.

“This is a new endeavor for us,” Msgr. Schaedel said, speaking on behalf of Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein. “We are grateful, in particular, to a number of peo-
ple here at St. Barnabas Parish who have encouraged us and brought us to this new beginning of such a wonderful project.”

It is particularly fitting to celebrate this new missionary effort to Cuba on St. Francis Xavier’s feast day, he said. “How different our country would be if for the zeal of those early women and men who came as missionaries to our country to spread the faith. What meaning-
ful contributions they have made to our country and to our lives. Sending forth the men and women of this delegation is very appropriate on this feast day.

“In our baptismal covenant with God,” he said, “we are called to go forth to spread the Good News to all peoples. As we take part in tonight’s celebration, in a real sense we are reliving a practice of the early Church of sending its members to other peoples to assist those who are already in the household of the faith or those who do not yet believe in Christ.”

Archdiocesan C.U.B.A. 2000 representa-
tives are Thomas Gaybrick, archdiocesan secre-
try for Catholic Charities and Family Ministries; Sister Demetria Smith, a Missionary Sister of Our Lady of Africa in general from violence or death.”

Describing capital punishment as “more often about revenge than it is about jus-
tice,” the bishops said that it “in no way honors the murderer’s victim nor can it bring about true closure or freedom to the victim’s loved ones. Only forgiveness can do that.”

Jesus died on the cross “as a result of state-imposed capital punishment,” the bishops said. “We must look—especially in this Jubilee Year of reconciliation—to the example of Jesus, who forgave those who put him to death. It is well past time for our society to let go of our need for revenge and to embrace reconciliation and forgiveness. We cannot stop violence by committing more violence.”

Cuban Catholics about how the faith sur-

Catholic Church also teaches that the direct killing of anyone is only justifiable in a case of self-defense when there is direct killing of anyone is only justifiable in a case of self-defense when there is in a case of self-defense when there is absolutely no other way to protect one-

self, another innocent person, or society.

Bishops

continued from page 1

The execution of federal Death Row inmate Juan Raul Garza of Texas is set for 9 a.m. on Dec. 12 at the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute. Opponents of capital punish-

ment have planned a vigil for Garza that morning.

Penitentiary officials are providing bus transportation from Fairbanks Park to the vigil site. Fairbanks Park is located on First Street between Farrington and Poplar streets in Terre Haute. To get to the park, exit north on U.S. 41 (Third Street), turn left on Farrington and proceed to First Street.

People riding the bus need to bring identification.

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From the Archives

At 177, our oldest parish

St. Mary-of-the-Knobs Parish, the oldest parish in the Archdiocese of Indianapolis, was founded in 1823 as a mission of the Diocese of Bardstown (now the Archdiocese of Louisville). Eleven years later, it became part of the Diocese of Vincennes (now the Archdiocese of Indianapolis), which was founded in 1834. The “knobs” are a series of beautiful rounded hills that are prominent in the area.†

Photos by: Brass key—Archives, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs; Log church—Archives, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs; Pastors: Neyron—Archives, St. Mary-of-the-Knobs; Rinckes—Diocese of Green Bay; Stremler—Diocese of Cleveland; Sons of Parish—Paul Schellenberger; Descendants—Paul Schellenberger

At far left, three of the 10 sons of the parish who became priests: Father Paul Koetter, Father John Geis (the present pastor) and Conventual Franciscan Father John Elmer, whose ordination in 1973 was the first one held at the parish.

At left, the brass key—still owned by the parish—to the original log church. Above, the log church that was built on Thomas Piers’s farm, about 1823.

No Catholic monopoly on martyrdom, conference speakers say

ROME (CNS)—The Catholic Church does not have a monopoly on martyrdom, participants in a Rome conference said.

Two priests underlined the need to recognize martyrs of other religions, as well as those who gave their lives not for their faith but for their political views or their belief in peace.

“We do not have the right to hijack the entire meaning of the term for ourselves,” said Comboni Father Nazareno Contran.

Father Contran spoke Dec. 5 at a conference on African and Asian martyrs, part of a Holy Year 2000 series of conferences on martyrs sponsored by the Legioraries of Christ. Pope John Paul II has placed particular emphasis on martyrs during the jubilee, most notably during a May tribute to 20th-century Christians who gave their lives for their faith and in an October canonization of 120 Chinese martyrs.

As examples of martyrs of other religions and cultures, the Italian priest recalled Steven Biko, the anti-apartheid activist murdered by South African police in 1977, and Vietnamese Buddhist monks who set themselves on fire in response to U.S. involvement in their country.

“And couldn’t the millions of people who die each year from hunger be called martyrs?” asked Father Contran, who has spent much of his life as a missionary in Africa.

Remembering martyrs such as the “millions of African victims of violence they never wanted” can “give back the voice that hate robbed them of,” he said.†

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Disciples in Mission training explores making dream real

By Fr. Joe Folzenlogen, S.J.

Thirty-five members of the Archdiocesan Leadership Team for Disciples in Mission gathered for an overnight training session at the Benedict Inn in Beech Grove on Dec. 1 and 2. Under the leadership of Notre Dame Sister Susan Wolf, Paulist Father Ken Boyack and staff member Suzanne Nelson, representatives of the Evangelization Commission, the Multicultural Commission and the Field Team learned how they can be a resource to the parishes of the archdiocese during the next five years.

Sister Susan guided the participants in shaping an evangelization profile of the archdiocese. The first step was to name those elements which make the archdio-

cese unique—history, geography, people, leadership, structures. Then people reflected individually and in small groups about the factors that made them feel glad about the archdiocese, and then about the factors which produced sadness.

With this list of “glads” and “sads” in mind, people began naming their dreams for the archdiocese.

The list included items such as: that we would truly be one body where all are welcome and included; that we would be for Christ for one another in a way that would allow people to experience Christ; that we are all responsible, we are all the Church; greater appreciation and acceptance of our spiritual diversity; building stronger families who would not be afraid to live Gospel values; that evangelization and multiculturalism would be a reality and not just commissions; that we would have something for all ages, from young to elderly, that we experience the joy of Christ; and that we would be passionate for justice, even known for it, so there would be no homeless, no abused child.

As each of these items was written down, the feeling of peace in the room grew and deepened. People were naming some of their deep desires. There was the honest realization that the fullness of these dreams would only come with the return of Jesus, but the challenge was to find ways to take steps toward them now.

Father Boyack outlined an overview of the renewed emphasis on evangelization during the last 30 years. He reminded the group the salvation in Jesus Christ is the heart of Catholic evangelization.

Evangelization is fundamentally the work of the Holy Spirit. Beginning with the Second Vatican Council and moving through Evangelization in the Modern World, Go and Make Disciples, and the new evangelization of John Paul II, the Church has repeatedly reminded us of the implications of our baptismal call. Disciples in Mission is a resource for equipping people to become more aware of that call and to respond effectively. So the next session was a role play in which one of the staff pretended to be a newly appointed parish coordinator for Disciples in Mission. In studying the manual to respond to her questions, the Archdiocesan Leadership Team learned what assistance they need to give to parishes.

The group then moved on to consider some of the key groups who would be affected by Disciples in Mission. These would include Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein, pastors, parish staffs, archdiocesan agencies, parishioners, parish coordinators and teams. What would be some of their major concerns? How would Disciples in Mission benefit them? How would their support be important for the process? How could the group best collaborate with them?

Finally, Father Boyack returned to the Holy Spirit as the one who would help the archdiocese use Disciples in Mission to develop an evangelizing culture. This process is more than a set of activities. It is a way of using reflection, prayer and planning to discern how God is leading us and how we can cooperate with him.

(Jesuit Father Joe Folzenlogen is evangelization coordinator for the archdio-
cese.)
Heaven is life in and with the Holy Trinity

By Fr. Berard Marthaler, O.F.M. Conv.

Society functions on a system of rewards and punishments—the carrot on the stick. From our earliest years, we learn that high grades and trophies indicate approval of good conduct and distinctiveness. The ultimate reward for virtue and a life of service is the joy of heaven. The ultimate punishment for unrepentant sin and selfishness is the torment of hell.

Not long ago, Pope John Paul II captured the headlines when he told an audience that hell is not a place.

“‘It is not a punishment imposed externally by God,’ he said, but ‘the ultimate consequence of sin itself.’ Sinners who, even in the last moment of life, reject God’s mercy, accept these consequences.

The Bible relies upon symbolic language to portray the unspeakable torments of hell. Figures such as a fiery furnace, where the individuals “weep and gnash their teeth” (Mt 13:42), and images like Gehenna with its ‘unquenchable fire’ (Mt 9:43) are intended to capture the frustration and endless pain suffered by those who defensively and defiantly turn away from God. In denying that hell is a place and affirming that language used to describe the pain of final damnation is not literal, it was not Pope John Paul’s intention to question the existence of hell or to make its torments less frightening. The opposite is the case. He wants people to take hell seriously.

In theological terms, hell is “the state of those who freely and definitively separate themselves from God,” but it is not equivalent to the hell in mythological stories intended to convey the point. The popular caricature of hell that pictures a sinister looking devil with horns and pitchfork does not deter humans from deceit and exploitation, violence and murder.

Picasso’s “Guernica” presented a glimpse of hell to people of the 20th century. Street violence and destruction from floods and tornadoes, incurable sickness and mental distress, destructive hatred and battered women, endless expletives and screeching noises are symbols and images that communicate the horrors of hell. These, again, are only figures. The reality is worse.

We also employ metaphors to describe heaven. The Bible speaks of heaven as God’s dwelling place and uses many different images to describe it (see Psalms 11:4; 104:2; 115:16). Believers hope, with God’s grace, to arrive there upon death.

In the Catholic tradition, “heaven” is a code word for the place in the risen Christ through the communion of the Trinity. It is our meeting with the Father which takes place in the risen Christ through the communion of the Holy Spirit. Everything that hell is not, heaven is.

Hell is eternal isolation and loneliness, emptiness and torment compounded by the realization that it is the consequence of selfishness and opportunities squandered.

On the other hand, in the words of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness” (#1024). It is life in and with the Holy Trinity, a communion of life and love with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all who have struggled to do God’s will.

It is in this sense, Pope John Paul said, that Jesus speaks of a “reward in heaven” (Mt 5:12) and urges his followers to “lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Mt 6:20).

(Cantional Franciscan Father Berard Marthaler is professor emeritus of religion and religious education at The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.)

Liturgy unites the faithful with God

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick

Talking about life after death is always a challenge. One reason is that the biblical writers, early Christians and the Church are deeply interested in the formation of the earthly body or “resurrection” of Jesus. This is why many people think heaven is a place rather than a time. Yet, the final destiny is both place and time.

In heaven, sin will be no more. Our worship then will be a time of feeling most alive and most in tune with God, other people and the universe, a time of joy, love and gratitude. In the liturgy, as in heaven, we speak of time in God’s presence, we sing God’s praises and are united with all our brothers and sisters in the love of the Lord. Mass can be a time of feeling most alive and most in tune with God, other people and the universe, a time of joy, love and gratitude.

In heaven, sin will be no more. Our worship then will be a time of feeling most alive and most in tune with God, other people and the universe, a time of joy, love and gratitude. It is the ultimate time of life with God, of becoming completely human as God intended us to be. Here we will live in the fullness of all the hopes and dreams we have ever had.

In heaven, we will live in the eternal life of the risen Christ. Though the risen Christ will be present to us, we will be in a full, conscious relationship to God. We will be able to express our wills in full accord with God’s will, a unity that will be most profound and most complete.

Heaven symbolizes peace, harmony

By Fr. Lawrence E. Mick

This Week’s Question

What image of heaven or question about it would you like to share?

“I think immediately of my parents who have died. My faith tells me that heaven is where my dear ones are.” (Marguerite Gomes, Newark, Del.)

“The first image which comes to mind is one my Aunt Lisa told us when we were kids. Heaven will be like a giant ice cream.” (Susan Hayden, Sterling, Va.)

“I have no real image of heaven. I don’t even know if it’s up in the clouds. But I do see it as a state of absolute peace, love and harmony.” (Evelyn Crabtree, Maryland Heights, Mo.)

Lend Us Your Voice

An upcoming edition asks: What important concern of yours would you like a parish small group to explore?

To respond for possible publication, write to Faith Alive! at 3211 Fourth St. N.E., Washington, D.C. 20017-1100.
Brother André: Miracle man of Montreal

When I was writing about Venerable Solanus Casey last week, I couldn’t help but think about the saintly man who befriended him and Blessed André Bessette. Their lives are so similar they might have met once when both were renowned for healing through their prayers.

Holy Cross Brother André and Capuchin Father Solanus both spent most of their ministry as porters, welcoming people. Father Solanus was ordained as a “simpler of souls,” and both had frequent opportunities for hearing confessions or giving sermons. André was almost denied the right to live as a brother because of his frail health.

One of the most impressive sights in Montreal, Canada, is the basilica of St. Joseph’s Oratory at the top of Mount Royal. The basilica is one of the largest ecclesiastical buildings in the world, and thousands of people visit it every year.

This church sponsors an existence to Braces Born on Aug. 9, 1845. After professing his vows in 1872, he spent 40 years as porter of Notre Dame College, greeting all those who entered. Soon it became evident that cures were in his place. People began searching out Brother André. The number of visitors wanting to see him became so disruptive. In 1896, the Holy Cross congregation bought Mount Royal and André built a small oratory there. The oratory turned into a chapel and Brother André, then 60, moved there.

Pilgrims began to come by the thousands, and André spent eight to 10 hours a day receiving 30 to 40 people an hour. Cured people left crutches, canes and braces behind. In 1916, 435 cures were recorded. After he met with the sick, André took care of his mail, more than 80,000 letters a year, requiring four secretaries to answer them.

He wasn’t satisfied with his chapel, though. André wanted to build a shrine to his Saint Joseph so great that it would attract the attention of all those who visited. Montrealers loved how his life raising money for the project. He was aware that he would not live to see the completion of the basilica. That didn’t bother him because he knew that the work would be done. “It’s not my project anyway,” he insisted.

The basilica was finished in 1967—30 years after Brother André’s death. André was known as “the boy and weak youth reached the age of 91 (Father Solanus died at 86). More than a million people passed by his coffin as he lay in state. He was buried in a simple tomb in the basilica that he helped St. Joseph build.

Catholic McCall in 1937. The sickly boy and weak youth reached the age of 91 (Father Solanus died at 86). More than a million people passed by his coffin as he lay in state. He was buried in a simple tomb in the basilica that he helped St. Joseph build.

Pope John Paul II beatified Brother André in 1982. His feast is Jan. 6. +

Evangelization encyclical is 25 years old

Dec. 8 marks the 25th anniversary of the publication of Pope Paul VI’s pastoral encyclical Evangelii Nuntiandi—an important work that outlines the power of Jesus at work among us, the Church’s mission in the Modern World.

The publication date, Dec. 8, is also the feast of the Immaculate Conception. That feast provides an excellent opportunity to reflect on how evangelization is, and was, an outgrowth of that experience. Some people have used the term “new evangelization,” not in content but in methods, intensity and emphasis.

Our American bishops have taken Evangelization in the Modern World and applied it to us in our current American context. Their national plan for Catholic evangelization offers three goals of enthusiasm for the faith, welcoming and inviting, and transforming into the Gospel of the Modern World? When we look at the record, we find ourselves drawn to some of the most well-known and well-loved famous figures: Jesus, the mustard seed and yeast to describe the growth of the kingdom of God.

Our American bishops have taken Evangelization in the Modern World and applied it to us in our current American context. Their national plan for Catholic evangelization offers three goals of enthusiasm for the faith, welcoming and inviting, and transforming into the Gospel of the Modern World. St. John Paul II gave us the power of Jesus at work among us, the Church’s mission in the Modern World.

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Sunday, Dec. 10, 2000

• Baruch 5:1-9
• Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
• Luke 3:1-6

The Book of Baruch provides this second weekend in Advent with its first Old Testament reading. Baruch is not one of the major prophets, nor is Baruch often read in the Liturgy of the Word. However, over the years it has been a favorite among those wishing to hear God’s word.

This weekend’s reading is set, as were many prophetic writings, against the background of disappointment and distress that often punctuated the history of God’s people. The prophet’s response is one of great enthusiasm and reassurance. Although sin has laid God’s people and their earthly circumstances low, God will redeem them.

The reading refers to Jerusalem. This ancient city, so often the scene of struggle and turmoil, even in present days, was and is for the devout Jews much more than a town. It is much more than an ancient community in which so many events of profound importance to religion and heritage have transpired. Jerusalem is the city of God in a unique and special way. No other city on earth, not even Rome itself, which is so treasured by Christians, can claim equal divinity. In Jerusalem, the link between God and humanity was forged. This in the city, the prophets proclaimed God’s word. In Jerusalem, David and Solomon reigned as God’s viceroys. For Christians, the importance of Jerusalem is sealed in the fact that it was the site of the Lord’s death and resurrection.

Therefore, Baruch pledges in God’s name that Jerusalem will rise again. Its misery and misfortune will yield to peace and triumph. The Epistle to the Philippians is the second reading for this Second Sunday of Advent. The letter encourages and demands. It was home to some Christians. While sin has worked its harrow on lives and on societies, God always forgives, always cleanses and always crowns lives with victory. This attribute of God greatly refreshes any soul bound in guilt or bewilderment. No one need despair or be perplexed. Light awaits. Life awaits. It is in God, borne by Jesus, born in Bethlehem.

Reflection
The Church progresses through Advent. It points us toward Christmas. There is no other interpretation for the writings of John the Baptist. The Lord is coming! Throughout the years, God has saved, loved and rescued the people. While sin has worked its harrow on lives and on societies, God always forgives, always cleanses and always crowns lives with victory. This attribute of God greatly refreshes any soul bound in guilt or bewilderment. No one need despair or be perplexed. Light awaits. Life awaits. It is in God, borne by Jesus, born in Bethlehem.

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Question Corner
Fr. John Dietzen

Date for Christmas was also the winter solstice

Q Can you answer a question for our family? Our children are asking when people started to celebrate Christmas. And where? How do we know that’s when Jesus was born? Can you help? (New York)

A I can help, but the answers may not be what you expect. First of all, strange as it seems, we have no idea of the date of the birth of Christ, so much less the year of Our Lord’s birth.

From information supplied in the Gospel according to Luke, scholars generally believe that Christ was born sometime between the years 8 and 6 B.C. Though our present calendar was supposedly based on the year of Christ’s birth as Year 1, that is not the case. The Roman monk who, in the sixth century, originated the Before Christ/After Christ way of designating years simply did not have at hand the historical documents now gifts of God to the Church.

As perhaps most everyone knows, Easter and related feasts were the first ones celebrated by Christian people. The feast of the Nativity comes in a Roman liturgical calendar composed in 339. By the end of that century the feast of the Lord’s birth was celebrated on Dec. 25 in most of the Christian world. If we don’t know the date, why choose Dec. 25? The explanation generally accepted by most scholars today is that Church authorities of that time assigned the birth of Christ to the date of the winter solstice.

In our calendar, the winter solstice is Dec. 21. In the Julian calendar, however, which predated our calendar and was in effect in those days, the solstice was Dec. 25. (The Egyptian calendar has its Jan. 6, which is why this date is still followed for Christmas in some Eastern-Rite Christian Churches.)

The solstice, when days begin to lengthen in the Northern Hemisphere, was referred to by many non-Christians as the Birthday of the Unconquered Sun. During the 200s, Roman Emperor Aurelian dedicated Dec. 25 to the sun god, whose cult was particularly strong in Rome at the time.

Even before this, Christian writers referred to Jesus Christ as the Sun of Justice. It seemed logical, then, that 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. This may be confusing for your children, but I’m sure you can “translate” this information to them. It’s a lovely story of how followers of Jesus can learn to turn everything, even the seemingly irrelevant and irrigulous events of life, into ways of praising and honoring our Lord.

Q The Gospel says the magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Gold I understand, but why frankincense and myrrh? (Texas)

A Both myrrh and frankincense are aromatic gum resins used as incense or as ingredients for incense. Myrrh was also used for perfumes and embalming. Both were produced particularly in Africa, were highly prized and very costly. They would have been gifts at least as precious as gold.

(A free brochure answering questions Catholics ask about Mary, the mother of Jesus, is available by sending a stamped and self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 324, Peoria, Ill. 61651. Copies of this brochure may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address or by e-mail in care of gdietzen@ask.com.)

The Criterion Friday, December 8, 2000

Daily Readings

Monday, Dec. 11

Damasus I, pope
Isaiah 35:1-10
Psalm 85:9ab-14
Luke 5:17-26

Tuesday, Dec. 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe
Zechariah 2:14-17
or Revelation 11:19a;
12:1-6a, 10ab
Psalm 45:11-12, 14-17
Luke 1:26-38
or Luke 1:39-47

Wednesday, Dec. 13

Lucy, virgin and martyr
Isaiah 40:25-31
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10
Matthew 11:28-30

Thursday, Dec. 14

John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 41:13-20
Psalm 145:3, 9-15ab
Matthew 11:11-15

Friday, Dec. 15

Isaiah 48:17-19
Psalm 1:1-6
Matthew 11:16-19

Saturday, Dec. 16

Strach 48:1-9, 11-14
Psalm 60:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Matthew 17:10-13

Sunday, Dec. 17

John of the Cross, priest and doctor of the Church
Isaiah 34:1-9
Psalm 50:1-10, 16ab, 21
Philippians 2:5b-11
Matthew 18:21-30

The Sunday Readings

By Carmel of Terre Haute

The prayer of the Carmelite nuns of Terre Haute during their Advent novena days on the second weekend in Advent with its first Old Testament reading.

Msgr. Owen F. Campion

The Sunday Readings

My Journey to God

Advent Novena

O Jesus, Word of God, Splendor of eternal glory, Alpha and Omega of history, we joyfully welcome You as You pitch your tent among us, taking flesh of the Virgin Mary. Give us Your blessing to impart strength to our faith and clarity to our vision, so that we may recognize You as You journey with us in the joys and sorrows of life.

Mary, Mother of God, your hands are always raised in loving intercession. Queenly in your holiness and radiant in your glory, you are still our gentle Mother of mercy. Comfort us in our sorrows of life, and sweeten our pilgrimage on earth with the fragrance of heaven. Keep our eyes fixed on that blessed Fruit of your womb, Jesus, our Prince of Peace.

Amen.

By Carmel of Terre Haute

(“That the blessing of Jesus, our Emmanuel, will rest on you and your loved ones” is the prayer of the Carmelites nun of Terre Haute during their Advent novena days on Dec. 16-24.)
December 9-10  

Holy Rosary Church, 520 Stevens St., Indianapolis. National Night of Prayer for Life, 9 p.m.-1 a.m. Information: 317-636-4478.

Plainfield Christian Church, 800 Dun Dan Road, Plainfield. Plainfield Church Federation, including St. Susanna Parish, Jesus’ birth in the field. Plainfield Church Life, 9 p.m.-1 a.m. Information: 317-549-6304. Lic. 200000006395

December 10  

SS. Peter and Paul Cathedral, 1347 N. Meridian St., Indianapolis. Advent vespers, 12:10-12:50 p.m. Information: 317-842-7662. 85th people; more people, higher payout. $10.00 for 36 cards. Doors open at 4:00 p.m. Extra packs for $3.00 each. Warm-up games 6:15 p.m. Regular games start at 7:40 p.m. Lots of Pull tabs—Bonanza—Jack Pot $10.00 for 36 cards $15.00 for 60 cards $50.00 per game for $4.00 each $100.00 regular games, $500.00 Coverall, Warm-ups $25.00 Based on 85 people; more people, higher payout. Come and play! Help us build a Brand New Bingo Game. Thanks for supporting our School.

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See ACTIVE LIST, page 15
Archdiocesan Youth Conference is Feb. 3-4 in Indianapolis
By Mary Ann Wyand

“Carry Your Candle—Go Light the World” is the theme for the 2001 Archdiocesan Youth Conference scheduled on Feb. 3-4 at the Adam’s Mark Airport Hotel in Indianapolis.

High school-age youth from throughout central and southern Indiana are invited to celebrate their Catholic faith at the annual conference, which is sponsored by the archdiocesan Office for Youth and Family Ministries.

“The Arch Conference will be an exciting weekend of meeting new friends, hearing interesting speakers, dancing, singing, learning about the Catholic faith, and realizing that youth can make a difference in the Church and world,” said Marlene Stammerman, associate director of youth ministry for the archdiocese.

The keynote speaker is Mike Patin, director of the Catholic Youth Organization and youth ministry office in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. He has worked in youth ministry since 1990 and has presented programs during more than 400 youth gatherings in 39 dioceses.

In his keynote presentation, Patin will combine humor and stories to encourage teen-agers, affirm the goodness of God’s presence in the world and invite young people to take the next step in their journey with God.

As in past years, Archbishop Daniel M. Buechlein will participate in a youth forum with the teen-agers.

(Conference reservations are $83 per person and are due by Jan. 3 to the archdiocesan Office for Youth and Family Ministries, but participants must register for the conference through a parish youth ministry coordinator. There is an additional $10 fee for late reservations, which will not be accepted after Jan. 11. For more information, contact a parish youth ministry coordinator or call the archdiocesan youth ministry office at 317-236-1439 or 800-382-9836, ext. 1439. )

The price of this terrific compilation of more than six years of weekly columns—316 columns—from The Criterion has been reduced in time for the Christmas season. This book makes a wonderful gift and brings together in one place the day-to-day concerns and reflections of an archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church.

Consistently the most read item in The Criterion, Archbishop Buechlein’s column reflects his southern Indiana, straight-talking German-American roots. His style gives readers the feel of “fireside chats” with a devoted teacher and friend.
celebrate. More churches throughout the archdiocese are beginning to offer bilingual or special Masses on the feast day, and Archbishop Buechlein will be the celebrant at two Masses in honor of the feast.

Stores like Kroger are also taking notice and beginning to offer entire sections—two to three aisles long—that contain Hispanic foods and devotional items, said Sonya Saunders, manager of Kroger communications.

The feast day honors the Virgin Mary’s daily appearances in Mexico to Juan Diego, a poor Indian, from Dec. 9-12 in 1531. She appeared during a time when the Aztecs were offering human sacrifice to their gods. Devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe is credited with converting millions to Christianity, and her messages speak of her love for all people as their merciful mother.

For Arias, that means praying daily to Our Lady of Guadalupe to watch over her five children. Her picture, which hangs above the fireplace mantle, is the gathering spot for the family rosary.

“She is like my mother,” Arias said. “Whatever I feel I tell her.”

The De Los Santos said their devotion to the Blessed Mother strengthens their faith.

“She’s a mother who always takes care of her children,” said Obet De Los Santos. “We have so much respect for her. It makes us better Catholics because she is like a mirror that we can see who helped everybody. She’s our mother and we are supposed to follow her example.”

Arias said her devotion to the Blessed Mother has never failed her, especially in times of great need.

When her father was ill and dying in Mexico, Arias didn’t know what name she wanted. A friend found an Indian name, Xochil, pronounced so-she.

“A friend came to visit and gave me a dress to wear for Easter,” she said. “I wanted to name my fourth daughter Xochil.”

Arias said that she wishes that those in the archdiocese could take a pilgrimage next year to Mexico to really see how the feast is celebrated.

While Our Lady of Guadalupe is her private devotion, Arias said Our Lady of Lourdes and other apparitions are important too.

“They are all Mary,” she said.†

By Mary Ann Wyand

Archdiocesan Catholics are invited to participate in the 14th annual National Night of Prayer for Life on Dec. 8-9. The annual pro-life prayer vigil begins at 9 p.m. on Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, and continues until 1 a.m. on Dec. 9 in Catholic churches throughout the United States.

Information distributed by All-Night Life Vigil, the sponsor of the National Night of Prayer for Life, explains that an hour of unified prayer before the Blessed Sacrament has been designated from midnight until 1 a.m. across the country “to pray for an end to abortion and to make reparation for the sins against the lives of our innocent pre-born and helpless ones being slaughtered in today’s society.”

Servants of the Gospel of Life Sister Diane Carollo, director of the archdiocesan Office of Pro-Life Activities, said the format for the vigil is exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, recitation of the rosary and silent meditation. The vigil will conclude with Benediction when a priest is available.

“Let us pray that the Lord will intercede for us,” Sister Diane said, “so that the innocent will be saved from the evil of abortion.”

The ongoing tragedy of abortion reveals that our society has lost sight of what freedom means,” Father Pavone said. “The one person who can remind us again is the Blessed Virgin Mary.

“Abortion also demonstrates that we have lost sight of what freedom means,” Father Pavone said. “We can rediscover its meaning in the Eucharist. By giving us his body and blood, the Lord shows us that freedom means the freedom to love, and to give our lives that others may live. Therefore, it makes perfect sense for everyone who wants to see an end to abortion to take part for some time in the adoration of the Eucharist on the Feast of our Blessed Mother’s Immaculate Conception.”

The image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas and of the unborn, will be displayed during pro-life prayer vigils in U.S. parishes.†
More Catholics are learning the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe

By Mary Ann Wyant

Hispanic Catholics know the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe very well, Father Clem Davis explained, but many other Catholics aren’t aware of the full meaning of four Marian apparitions on Dec. 9-12 in 1531 at Tepeyac, a hill in Mexico.

The story of Our Lady of Guadalupe has, I think, for a long time been pretty much limited to the Mexican-American identity and culture,” the pastor of St. Bartholomew Parish in Columbus, said. “The story of the image and its role in aiding the conversion of the Aztecs to the faith, and also aiding the ending of human sacrifice as part of the Aztec way of life, is an extremely timely message.

“It’s very timely for what it says about cultural differences and the spread of the faith across cultural lines,” Father Davis said. “But also for what it says to us about a culture of death, and how the culture of death can only be replaced by a culture that is honoring life.”

Because the official missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe was brought to the archdiocese in November by a group of St. Bartholomew parishioners, he said, many Catholics of all ages in central and southern Indiana have learned the story of the Marian apparitions.

The story of Our Lady of Guadalupe’s four appearances to Blessed Juan Diego is accepted by the Catholic Church as miraculous and is one of the best-known Marian apparitions.

Our Lady of Guadalupe left her miraculous image on Diego’s tilma, or cloak. The apparition was the beginning of the first evangelization of America, and brought many miracles and the conversion of millions to the Catholic faith while transforming a culture of death and despair into a culture of life and hope. Juan Diego’s tilma is displayed in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, and nearly 500 years later still shows no signs of decay. The image shows Mary with child.

Today, Our Lady of Guadalupe is venerated by the patronates of Mexico, the Americas and the unborn.

Last month, the missionary image was taken to a number of parish churches and schools, for veneration during Masses and prayer services, in Columbus, North Vernon, Bloomington, Edinburgh, Franklin, Seymour, Madison, Terre Haute and Bedford.

The image also was transported to St. Elizabeth’s Ministry for unwed mothers in Indianapolis and to secular sites that included the Indiana Girls’ School in Plainfield for an educational program, outside a Planned Parenthood clinic in Bloomington for prayers to end abortion, and outside the U.S. Penitentiary in Terre Haute for prayers to end capital punishment.

“[St. Bartholomew parishioner] Mary Parks, who was there as a singer in our musical group, took me by the arm and led me over to the image, where I started to say a prayer. She suggested that I put my forehead on the image and began putting it away. As we venerated the holy image, we all prayed together and they laid hands on me and prayed over me,” McClaine said.

“After our prayers and visit, they folded up the image and began putting it away. As they were lifting it up to put it in the protective bag, a single flower petal fell out from beneath the picture onto our living room floor. We stood in awe at the wonderful surprise only Mother Mary could give us. I truly believe this came from her, and it is a special message to all of us that she is here, always protecting us, praying for us and interceding for us to her son, Jesus.”

Father Davis said, “There are some aspects of the image that I only learned about recently. I am hopeful that there will be a new appreciation for the faith of Hispanic people who are moving to the archdiocese, and also a new appreciation for the timelessness and the universality of the message of the value of life, the preciousness of life. I am also hopeful that it will affect change for the better, to positively affect the people and the times we live in.”

St. Bartholomew parishioner Sarah Lujan of Columbus, who moved from New Mexico to central Indiana a year ago, helped coordinate music for the religious ceremonies with the missionary image.

“In New Mexico, I was used to walking into churches and seeing the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe,” Lujan said. “I grew up having a strong devotion to her. When I moved here, I found it surprising that many Catholics weren’t familiar with the story of her apparition. I think a lot of people seem to see Our Lady of Guadalupe as more of a cultural devotion rather than a Catholic devotion. It’s important to me to be able to expose a lot of people to her story.”

Lujan helps coordinate St. Bartholomew’s annual observance of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. She also prepared a Mexican meal for Rose of Christian Initiation of Adults candidates at the Columbus parish as part of a recent educational presentation.

Last month, two St. Bartholomew parishioners said they were healed when they prayed near the missionary image. Tom McGough said he hit his head quite hard on a low eave outside Holy Trinity Church at Edinburgh because it was dark and rainy on the night of the veneration.

“[St. Bartholomew parishioner] Mary Parks, who was there as a singer in our musical group, took me by the arm and led me over to the image, where I started to say a prayer. She suggested that I put my forehead on the image, which I proceeded to do. Gradually, I started to feel better. By the next morning, there was no sign of decay on my forehead. I consider it a minor miracle.”

Ken McClaine, also a member of the musical ensemble organized for liturgies with the missionary image, said he was ill with pneumonia that week but God healed him within hours after friends brought the missionary image to his home.

“As we venerated the holy image, we all prayed together and they laid hands on me and prayed over me,” McClaine said.

“After our prayers and visit, they folded up the image and began putting it away. As they were lifting it up to put it in the protective bag, a single flower petal fell out from beneath the picture onto our living room floor. We stood in awe at the wonderful surprise only Mother Mary could give to us. I truly believe this came from her, and it is a special message to all of us that she is here, always protecting us, praying for us and interceding for us to her son, Jesus.”

—City and used to BRIEFS, The Criterion. ADT: Greg Ocheltree, 1440 North Meridian, Indianapolis, IN 46202 Deadline for photos: Friday, January 19, 2001, 10 a.m. (No photos will be accepted after this date). All announcements without photos must be received by the same date.

Be a part of our first bridal issue for 2001!

If you are planning your wedding between January 30 and July 1, 2001, we invite you to submit the information for an announcement on the form below.

Pictures

You may send us a picture of the bride-to-be or a picture of the couple. Please do not cut photograph. The picture must be wallet-size and will be used as space permits. Black & white picture preferred; we cannot guarantee the reproduction quality of a color photo. Please put name(s) on the back. Photos will be returned if a stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed.

Deadline

All announcements with photos must be received by Friday, January 19, 2001, 10 a.m. (No photos will be accepted after this date). All announcements without photos must be received by the same date.
Great-grandmother of 29.
Braun. Sister of Barbara
Indianapolis, Nov. 27. Mother
90, St. Roch,
of two.
Fager. Grand-
Father of Jacqueline Barkdull,
Flower, Indianapolis, Nov. 25.
59, Little
and Mark Bell. Grandfather of
Cheryl Lunn, Cynthia Weaver
Ozella (Youg) Bell. Father of
BELL, Francis W.,
Wife of Kenneth Bass Sr.
Annunciation, Brazil, Nov. 28.
in
religious sisters serving our
of archdiocesan priests and
week of publication; be sure to
Please submit in writing to our
THANK YOU
St. Jude & Blessed Michael, St. Peregrine & St. Ann
Blessed Mother, St. Anthony, St.

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THE VILLAGE CHRISTIAN PARKE, located on the west side of Indianapolis in Zionsville is seeking Dietary personnel for the above positions. If you’re serious and want to work in an environment that provides excellent service to our valued guests, then we want you as a part of our CARING TEAM. Please contact Ms. Dee Pinkton or Scott Miles at 317-787-5367 or stop by for an interview. The Village Christian Parke offers excellent wages and benefits.

The Village Christian Parke has immediate openings for experienced individuals in the following Long Term Care areas:

- LPN
  - FULL TIME: 1–Days
  - 2–Evenings
  - PART TIME: 1–Days
  - 1–Nights

- QMA
  - PART TIME: 1–Days
  - 1–Nights

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Worldwide increase in HIV infections, the Vatican released fresh AIDS statistics showing an unexpected increase in the number of people infected with the virus. The document provides Catholics with specific guidelines for how to deal with diverse problems that present themselves. It also emphasizes the importance of promoting education and awareness about HIV/AIDS.

Vatican plans document on AIDS ministry

The Vatican announced plans to publish a document giving Catholics guidelines for AIDS ministry. The document will provide Catholics who serve people with HIV/AIDS with specific guidelines for how to deal with diverse problems that present themselves. Archbishop Javier Lozano Barragan, head of the project, told Catholic News Service Dec. 4 no date had been set to publish the document, but “by the end of next year, we could have something more substantial,” he told CNS.

Bishops condemn prostitution in France amid calls for legalization

French bishops condemned prostitution as a form of human slavery and rejected their opposition to its legalization. In a Dec. 4 statement, the social affairs commission of the French bishops’ conference criticized distinctions between free and forced prostitution. “Cracking down on sexual exploitation only in cases of violence or constraint presents a grave danger,” wrote the group. “This distinction implies the legal establishment of a border between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ prostitution.”

Priest kidnapped, killed in India, says Vatican news agency

A 30-year-old priest was kidnapped and shot to death Dec. 2 in the Indian state of Manipur, the Vatican’s missionary news agency reported. The Vatican, through its news agency, expressed its condolences to the priest’s family and the Indian church. The priest was killed while driving to meet with members of a border between ‘good’ and ‘bad’ prostitution.”

Pope urges debt reduction as step in fighting poverty worldwide

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—As the holy year neared its end, Pope John Paul II vowed continuing efforts to reduce the foreign debt of poor countries—one of his jubilee priorities—as a crucial step in fighting global poverty. “We cannot permit fatigue or inertia to weaken our commitment, when the lives of the poorest in our world are at stake,” he told participants in a Vatican seminar on debt relief. In a Dec. 4 message to the seminar members, whom he received the same day, the pope said debt relief must be carried out in a way which makes the poor themselves the protagonists of their own development.

Religious leaders ask U.S. not to advise against Mideast travel

JERUSALEM (CNS)—A group of 61 American Christian religious leaders has asked the U.S. ambassador to Israel, Martin Indyk, to help reverse or modify the State Department’s travel warning on Israel. “The current travel warning acts as an economic sanction against both Israel and Palestinian Authority,” said the group in a Dec. 2 letter. This is resulting in severe economic hardships upon all parties in the area, it said. The Catholic and Protestant group was on a fact-finding mission sponsored by the Journeys Unlimited tour company which had arranged the five-day trip after the leaders either canceled or postponed planned pilgrimages to the Holy Land.

Maryknoll motherhouse remembers slain churchwomen

MARYKNOLL, N.Y. (CNS)—Maryknollers and friends filled the chapel of the motherhouse of the Maryknoll Sisters Dec. 2 to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the killing of the four missionary women in El Salvador Dec. 2 was the day in 1980 when Maryknoll Sisters Maura Clarke and Ita Ford, Ursuline Sister Dorothy Kazel and laywoman Jean Donovan were stopped by National Guardsmen, taken from their van, beaten, raped and shot. Organizers of the commemoration said Sister Helene O’Sullivan, president of the Maryknoll Sisters, and some family members and friends of the four women were in El Salvador for events at the graves of Sisters Clark and Ford and other places associated with the four women. 1

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